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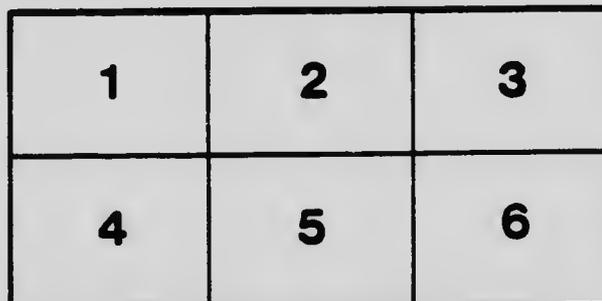
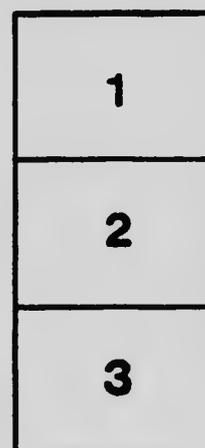
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## *A STANDARD OF VALUE.*

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In the investigation of this subject it is essential, in the first place, to explain certain collateral considerations. A preliminary, but, at the same time, a fundamental question, would be: "What is right"? A frequently heard judgment is: "For this is right," which would lead one to infer that accommodation does not apply. No account is taken of the difficulty. No regard is paid to the actor—the standard is clearcut and straight, without alternative, demanding specific choice at every stage. This life rule has been, in all ages, the inspiration of every noble deed; by it Martyrs have gone cheerfully to the arena or the stake; it has been the solace of the defeated and the comfort of those who have felt themselves out of harmony with the popular thought of their day. Granting such a view, it would be impossible to conclude otherwise than that "Might" is not to be the criterion. Ideas must hold sway through their own intrinsic worth,—not by virtue of the eminence of those who advocate their promulgation.

With such a conception of right, what will be the work of a citizen in state concerns? To answer this interrogation, it would be pertinent to inquire what "State" and "Citizen" mean. The State should be the voluntary union of complementary elements for Mutual culture; that is, it provides the field for individual and collective accomplishment. Though parasites do perform functions in the scheme of nature, a state unit must be the antithesis of such, for a citizen's part in state work, is, to produce his quota for the total return and to considerately consider the contributions of his colleagues.

Having advanced these general characteristics, namely: That ideas are to rule through their intrinsic worth alone, and: That a citizen is necessarily both a participant and a sympathetic, but just valuator of other investors in state weal,—a discussion of "A Standard of Value," falls naturally into place.

What is to be understood by "A Standard of Value"? Governments arrange the conditions which determine units of measurement, so we speak of a standard weight or measure and exchange is based thereon. As contingencies are not invariable, these values require periodic supervision for the fixing and removal of error. Thus an official standard is maintained, which, however, does not obviate the commission of wilful deception.

In the spiritual world is there an adjudicating power? By "Spiritual," one must not understand "Religious," for the latter is only one aspect of the former. Its signification is antonymic of "Material." In the preceding paragraph, the method of determining Material values was explained. Is there a corresponding agency for predicating potency in the realm of the Spirit?

Convention, or Custom, claims allegiance. Frequently, however, in human history, the many have been wrong and the few right when both have been placed in the perspective of the years. Destiny is achieved in various ways, lest one good custom even, should corrupt the world. Authority, with all the prestige that Ceremony has been able to throw around it, has dogmatically claimed its inalienable right to determine the course of life. Nevertheless, some of the vilest crimes have been consummated

in its name, whether exercised by state or ecclesiastical personages. Everything shall be judged by the dream of the Prophet. But there have been many seers and they have often spoken in alien tones. Thus the way has been obscured and the groping must needs be continued. Where then must one search? "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right"? So queried an earnest seeker in the dimness of the long past years. Yet it has ever been the rule to assert the most anthropomorphic qualities of Him "Who lays judgement to the line" resulting in the utilizing of the All-pervading for the furthering of the interests of state or priest craft.

"Still we doubt not through the ages one unceasing  
purpose runs,  
And the thoughts of men are widened with the  
process of the suns."

In this expansion, which has not been constant, nor free from converse movements, expediency has often been selected to bridge the chasms separating thought from fact.

"For all the past of time, reveals  
A bridal dawn of thunder peals,  
Whenever Thought has wedded Fact."

A Power is imminent in the Universe. The human story is but a tracing of the adjustment of man to that Power. First, there was the appreciation of individual worth by the individual. In its crude beginnings, this principle was shown among primitive peoples in reckoning

everyone an enemy. Kill first was the ideal. Only through the destruction of opponents, was the individual rendered immune from harm and his progress assured. A long and bloodstained way was travelled, ere there was any extensive comprehension of the hypothesis: "I am my brother's keeper." The gift was:

"That man should conceive of truth  
And yearn to gain it, catching at mistake,  
As midway help, till he reach fact indeed."

But, in the issue of the years, there came anon, the faint glimmerings of social solidarity. The vision grows clearer, so that one may now say, with hope of some endorsement, that not only is individual enlightenment not antagonistic to the progress of others, but that it is indissolubly dependent upon the advance of the general mind. Hence, the discovery of one's own merit, deserving of the utmost cultivation, becomes identified with associating kindred value with fellow members of the racial unit, as evinced by a due regard for them, that they, too, may have that opportunity for advancement which is consonant with their personalities. Paralleling the growth of the idea of social unity, and keeping step in the march has come the understanding, that the only adequate explanation of individual and communal progress lies in a reverential recognition of the Infinite, define such as one may, as "The Source of Life," "The Nameless of the Hundred Names," the "I am that I am," the "Pantheos," or "The Great Architect of the Universe," for all definition means limitation. Thus is discovered a solution involving

a trinity of attitudes—Self-worthiness, General Value, and the Ideal.

Conscious life learns, in due time, that Kindred Being does not represent merely a prior stage, but is indicative of a process whose course in the retrospect becomes lost in impenetrable mists. Two relations toward this life chain have been suggested, as witness the quotations:

1. "Past, 'tis a stupid word.  
Why past?  
Past and pure nothingness are one, I trow.  
Of what avail creation's ceaseless play?  
Created things forthwith to sweep away?  
"There now 'tis past"—'Tis past, what may it  
mean?  
It is as good as if it ne'er had been."
  
2. "'Tis delightful to transport  
Ourselves into the spirit of the past,  
To see in times before us how a wise man thought,  
And what a glorious height we have attained at  
last."

The thoughtful mind knows, that it is no part of wisdom to summarily dismiss the monuments of the race with a mere wave of the hand. The past must be studied. The traces left upon the years, through the efforts of mankind, are of inestimable value, for they declare what standards have governed at successive epochs in the story and indicate the reasons why one conduct guage was supplanted by another. Two far-reaching propositions

will thus be discernible, namely: "That the Faith of one age becomes the Superstition of its successor," and, "That Tradition grows into the record through the aid of Ordinances."

A broad analysis of the ethnic struggle, will indicate how these two great generalizations have manifested themselves.

A very early form, yet one that, among certain peoples, persisted even when development had attained a very advanced state, was "Ancestralism," or the worship of ancestry. The power which the father exercised while living was, through fear, ascribed to him when he had entered the world of shadows. He retained the wants and felt the pleasures and sufferings of his former life, while his power to do harm was even greater than while he was living. Elaborate ritualistic observances, growing out of the funeral displays, were held, with the object of securing propitiation and protection. Each generation adding embellishment, the superstition grew as the event receded into the past. The accepted founder of the family became, therefore, the family deity and the worship of the same was exhibited in pilgrimages to his tomb and in sacrifices before the hallowed hearth. The perpetuity of the line being a requisite of this doctrine, the eldest son succeeded to his father's position, but ruled only as his viceregent. In the eldest male member was thus constituted the task of carrying out the wishes of the family's founder. The ordered sequence of the generations led to the formation of new groups by the younger sons, the ever

diverging total becoming the tribe or clan, with the representative of the eldest branch as King.

It was but a step from this to the realization, that the race was superior to other units of mankind. It had been designated for some unique work and any interference from without received the most cruel treatment. The idea of a "Chosen People" stimulated tribal pride and tribal exclusiveness. Virtue consisted in subservience to tribal aggrandisement. The enslavement or extermination of those beyond the pale became the sole aim of statecraft. Only in very special cases were the barriers removed which cut off the stranger from the rights of citizenship. Thus, in times of peace, jealousy and suspicion dominate intertribal relations and war became a crusade with all its horrors intensified. Hence, we read that a tribal singer of the long ago, in contrasting two leaders, eulogized one because he had slain his ten thousands whereas the other had accomplished the destruction of but thousands. And at a far later date, a military leader could say, "Now let God arise and let his enemies be scattered," when the tactics of his opponents had placed the result of the battle at his disposal. While the instances just cited represent the usual form which the idea assumed, there is no doubt that every race has been affected by it, in some measure.

A natural outcome of the idea of "A Chosen People," was the centralization of ethical value in a "Religious Hero," who became the expounder of precepts which were, by his followers, narrated later in Scriptures, when the voice of the Master had been hushed. These writings become the bases for the work of propaganda, to be sup-

plemented by interpretative expositions, which turn the simple stories into theological treatises. These reasoned explanations often antedate the narratives and have greater value attached to them. Religious systems have thus been built up, into which imposing ceremonies become grafted, the latter, in course of time, being the teacher of the maxims involved, though generally succeeding in detaching attention from the tenets to themselves. It is worthy of comment that no Western religious system has prevailed, all having fallen before the march of the contemplative teaching of the peoples of the East. White with the adoration of the centuries, Confucianism, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Christianity, Mohammedanism, still live in the devotion of millions of their followers, while the Polytheistic creeds of Greece, Rome, and the Teutonic world, long since disappeared. It must be noted, however, that only one of these forms has had any pronounced success in dealing with the social units of the Western world—the faith of the Prophet of Nazareth. Flushed with its triumphs in the Occident, it has been pitting itself against the more ancient types of the Orient, in an attempt to establish its claim to the indisputable obeisance of mankind.

In the course of the dissemination of a new Belief, there comes a time, when the powers of the State where it is being propagated, must elect between the old and the new. This decision transfers the protection of civil authority from the former to the latter, from which time the old view of a world power in temporal affairs becomes a dogma of religious administration. The ancient world was obsessed with the idea of world dominion, so that war was

the normal occupation and conquest became the criterion for estimating value. This tendency grew to be the ruling force in spiritual concerns, so that when the Unity of Empire crumbled before the sway of barbarism, its mantle was thereafter worn by the church leaders, with the result that the control of the "Hierarchy" was substituted for the rule of Kings and a world religion acquired the powers of a world state. Thus faith, which knew no national bounds, took the place of loyalty to monarch and the edicts of the Sacred College were felt where formerly were the King's commands.

The two great generalizations, to which reference has been made, disclosed themselves along the lines just defined. In Ancestralism, A Chosen People, A Religious Hero, and a Hierarchy, they have permeated all history. To these ideas must be credited the advance which the race has made. It is essential, therefore, to consider what the whole course of civilization has had to offer man, as he lived his life under the varied conditions operating upon him.

Examine the treasure trove as one may, no other conclusion is possible than that the economy of the social structure has, in every age, placed before the units that compose the same nothing higher than a battle. The panoply of war and conquest has furnished the impetus for endeavour, has provided the figures for the lessons learned. The attack, the counterfoil, the tactical plans of an army commander, have been the illustrations used. Life has been likened to a battle and man to a warrior. The explanation is, that the phraseology employed has been

taken from an age when war and victory, ally and foe, were the customary experiences, and such a high value was placed thereon that attempts to introduce a variation have been but haphazard and spasmodic.

The national units that arose from the chaotic night of European Mediaevalism laid permanent foundations through the active or tacit inculcation of the war call: "Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori," just as their progenitors of centuries earlier had done in their day. The means appropriated to fire the blood of the nations youth, was this reveille to valour, to sacrifice themselves on the altar of their country.

In the interregine contests that characterized the growth of Sectarianism, the same spirit was rampant. That which one cult condemned in its masters was practised with equal vehemence against those who questioned its sway, when from being the protester, it had passed on to be the object against which the criticisms were levelled. The Puritan, who had fled to the New World to escape from the oppressor, countenanced the horrible delusion of Salem witchcraft, which stained New England history with the darkest hues, suspected persons having been fiendishly done to death on charges as fanciful as the hallucinations of a disordered mind.

The same force has been at work in every department of social effort. Witness the amalgamations for sectional gain. The power which centralized capital has been able to exert, has been counterparted in Trades' Unionism, with its employment of the Boycott and the Strike. The professions, generally, through their power of influencing

legislation, have been placed comparatively free from attack, yet the offensives are being made, even though those who direct them often feel the futility of their labours. The food producer openly affirms that all other elements have combined to deprive him of a legitimate return for his work, while the consumer sees extortion in the former's demands. In the business world safety seems to lie, only in suspicion, integrity having to suffer because dishonesty exists. The politician is expected to see virtue in his own motives and platform alone; his opponent is all guile and unworthy of support. Everywhere this purblindness is in evidence and the battle continues with a mere shifting of the attacking standards. The creation of iron in the blood appears to be the be-all and the end-all of human striving, as it is in other categories of the animal kingdom. Hardness is the Summum Bonum. In the great philanthropies a different picture is noticed, but the purposes here seem more like side-issues than universal aims, for, though many participate, the main current of life moves onward unaffected.

The cultured poet and literary critic of the last century expressed himself once thus: "Calm's not life's crown, though calm is well." There seems to be some need for asseverating an opposite:- Storm's not life's crown, though storm is well.

In the review of the subject thus far, attention has been called to the meaning of "Right," to the parts which the "State" and the "Citizen" are to play, and as to what is implied in "A Standard of Value." It has been also indicated, that to know what man has done is of concern

in determining what shall constitute the "Measure" for further growth. The story of the race has outlined general principles and delineated the avenues along which they have proceeded as mankind strove upward. Finally, the conclusion was drawn, that the contribution of "Civilization" to the solution of the problem, lay in the emphasis which had been placed upon the creation of valor, the power to endure hardness as the soldier knows it.

The discussion has progressed sufficiently far, to enable one to present the articles that should be considered in framing a Standard of Value. An essential feature is, that any criterion advanced should admit of different applications. It must be progressive thus allowing for the acquisition of new light and the incorporation of the results of such for the better guidance of man. That one age should prepare the platform upon which all subsequent ages must stand is unthinkable.

"Transmitted usage, ancient right

• In these the time for complete confidence is past."

"Man could not what he knows now, know at first;  
What he considers that he knows to-day,  
Come but tomorrow, he will find mis-known."

This standard must be evolutionary, not revolutionary. There is a vast difference between these two terms. The former signifies a developing or drawing out, the latter an overthrowing or destroying. With the one, life is a process or related series; with the other, it is composed of constant beginnings; thus the former is mature, while the latter is youthful. One sees extensively, or a total; the

other observes intensively, or a part. The former eschews haste; the latter esteems delay as evil. One sees good in all, though evil be also present; the other concludes that the presence of evil is proof of total depravity. Both believe in reform, but one bases everything on continuous training, while the other seeks its goal through constant elimination. The former has for its motto:

"Leave now for dogs and apes;  
Man has for ever."

while the latter believes that,

"The Bird of Time has but a little way  
To fly—and Lo! the Bird is on the Wing."

and so exhorts to work while it is yet day for the night cometh when no man can work.

The Standard, further, must stress the part which the individual has in his own ascent. Responsibility has been explained, as an attitude which must be assumed toward an outside power, thus saving the individual from punishment. As regards Institutional Relationship, this is a plausible theory, but in the unfolding of the Personality it must, in time, be rated as defective and leading to stagnation. Duty, eventually, has to be treated subjectively, that is from the standpoint of the agent himself. Preparedness alone, gives justification for advancement. "Come and ye shall see," has always been the challenge of life. Discovery must follow investigation, even though that which is found be unlike that which was sought. These statements do not minify those sudden and seemingly unrelated factors that cross the course of individual

existence, shedding gleams upon the common roadway of life with all the heartening uplift that light amidst prevailing gloom may occasion. On the contrary, they provide a warranted interpreter for the "Vision Splendid," and so more than hint that human personality is a determining influence in world movements.

The criterion employed must properly define the term "Sacrifice." This has been explained as a principle added to life, when some valued lesson has been learned. Such a view is more than of doubtful utility; it is dangerous. Sacrifice is not simply an element in a larger total; it is a synonym for the latter, or, more correctly speaking, it is identical with it. Life is nothing other than a series of choices, each one of which must mean the giving up, of every other possible direction of conduct presented at the time. Instead of a call to a career of sacrifice, which really is meaningless, the standard should summon to an examination of courses of action, that their probable effect upon the trend of endeavour may be considered.

Further, the standard of value must announce the existence of a Higher and a Lower. Great teachers have explained the Universe as the stage upon which two rival Powers are in ceaseless conflict, with mankind as the Victor's reward. Others have maintained that the presence of defect in us and about us, simply indicates our inability to see to the close of the World Drama. Still others claim, that what is called "Evil," was due to a fatal choice made by the reputed head of the race, which entailed sad consequences upon all, necessitating a change in the great Plan. War should not be waged over mere words, for positivism,

though powerful, slips sometimes. Excepting Institution-  
alism, what have been defined as "Good" and Evil" must needs have a subjective relation, that is, reference to the agent himself. The vital truth is, that there are presented to the individual at least two possible lines of effort and upon him rests the responsibility of choice. History shows, that one class tends to retard, the other to aid development. It would be erroneous, however, to say that the actor will always know which would be the better course to pursue. It is the price that one has to pay for the self-determining power. Experience teaches, but often through the imposition of cruel blows.

The rule of value must also elucidate what live truly means.

"Not enjoyment and not sorrow  
Is our destined end or way;  
But to act that each tomorrow  
Find us farther than to-day."

Life is more than flitting in the sunlight like the butterfly lately emerged from its chrysalis. Life is real. There is no possible retreat. What is, is for ever, past recall. Each moment is a total of all the past. The past colours not only the character but the influence of choices. The retarding and blighting effects of thoughts and actions, are only rendered powerless or circumscribed by the cumulative result of years of contrary aims and deeds. What is true of that which impedes is similarly operative with that which impels, so that there is some import in the declaration, that the path of right reason may grow brighter and brighter toward the realization of the splendour of the noonday sun.

To summarize the treatment of the subject. A Standard of Value must, at every stage, refer itself to the Supervisory Power, which has been postulated as a trinity of attitudes or viewpoints, namely, Selfworthiness, General Value, and the Ideal. Through such procedure it becomes evident that the Life Test must change through the process of Evolution. This process proclaims the power of Choice as an individual prerogative and places the Responsibility for the same upon the actor. Acknowledging the principle of Choice, the inclusion of a Higher and a Lower therein becomes indubitable. With the identification of Sacrifice with Life and the admission of the Indelible Effects of thoughts and actions upon Personality, the content of the Standard becomes complete.

How does Freemasonry stand when thus estimated? If there is worth included, which calls for thoughtful recognition and endorsement, then there should be an approximation, at least, to the criterion which the life of the race presents to those who form on its foremost files. An examination of the Order should reveal its claim should such be held therein.

Freemasonry is not a Philosophy; it is, on the contrary, a Science. While each of these terms is the complement of the other, their significations are widely apart. To neither belongs what is called Proof, though such is claimed by the tyros in each. Proof appertains solely to Mathematics or the exact sciences, which are not included in the term Science as contrasted with Philosophy.

"Thou canst not prove the Nameless, O my son,  
 Nor canst thou prove the world thou movest in,  
 Thou canst not prove that thou art body alone,  
 Thou canst not prove that thou art spirit alone,  
 Nor canst thou prove that thou art both in one;  
 Thou canst not prove thou art immortal, no  
 Nor yet that thou art mortal—nay my son,  
 Thou canst not prove that I, who speak with thee,  
 Am not thyself in converse with thyself.  
 For nothing worthy proving can be proven,  
 Nor yet disproven."

Philosophy is concerned with explanations, while  
 Science has to do with observations. Freemasonry con-  
 tains no explanations as such and so cannot be styled a  
 Philosophy. It portrays a series of great observations  
 upon human life. Underlying these, however, one finds  
 the simplest, yet paradoxically, the most profound of all  
 philosophies.

What does Freemasonry present for study? In the  
 First Act, the highway of life is followed from the help-  
 lessness and immaturity of the social unit, through  
 organization, practical activity, and intellectual training,  
 till its climax is reached in the discovery:

"That there is Something more than Nature Man  
 requires."

The observations do not end there. Worth does not  
 efface jealousy; honour is rarely unaware of dishonour;  
 the steps of truth are ever dogged by the shadows of  
 falsehood. Virtue meets vice at every turn; knowledge

is incessantly preyed upon by ignorance. There is no possible reconciliation between these opposites; they are always at variance and success often rests upon the banners of the lower. The victory, however, is only transitory for crime is discovered; evil reveals itself and its fate is of its own choosing. Still, it is quite evident that violence ever results in loss; yet, though all ravages are not repaired, loss involves recovery. Deprivation, further, leads to new endeavour, but much extra energy will have been expended before standing ground is again secured, in which work, temporary policies are adopted. Thus initiative is given to the endless quest which life seems to betoken. The observer soon becomes aware, that upon all human effort there is the shadow which the tragedy of the grave casts.

“Mid youth and song, feasting and carnival,  
Through laughter, through the roses, as of old,  
Comes Death, on shadowy and relentless feet,  
Death, unappeasable by prayer or gold.  
Death is the end, the end!”

These are the observations which the first division offers for allocation. What deductions may be drawn therefrom? What is the implied or underlying Philosophy? Brotherhood through kindred origin and experience; the discovery of the Ideal through life's revelation; and the linking of the Finite and the Infinite in the Hope of an Endless Life. No other interpretation gives so adequate a meaning to the scenes in the great drama.

“What was before us we know not,  
And we know not what shall succeed.”  
but,

"Haply the River of Time  
 As it draws to the Ocean, may strike  
 Peace to the soul of the Man on its breast—  
 As the pale waste widens around him,  
 As the banks fade dimmer away,  
 As the stars come out, and the night wind  
 Brings up the stream  
 Murmurs and scents of the Infinite Sea."

With what does the Second Series deal? What are the marks which are impressed by the institution under whose auspices this Convocation is held? What does it add to that which has been found to characterize the elementary stage? There are the panegyrics upon virtue in its many phases. Those principles which the life of the race has listed as advantageous are dramatized. In contrast, vice in every form is anathematized through the medium of the same method of instruction. There is, besides, the discovery of the Lost.

In the First Plot the adjudicating Power is presented; in the Second the Standard of Value is explained. Both are philosophies or deductions from the records of mankind. The First has its climax in Loss, or an apparent End; the Second culminates in Discovery, providing a fresh Beginning. As the Loss typifies the unending quest of man for a Satisfying Philosophy, which, however, is not to go on forever without success, the Discovery, which symbolizes that reward, does not mean the termination of Mystery. Some minds crave for exactitude, but immutability is the direct opposite of life. Others desire free scope for idealism,

which represents life's normal expression. In Search and Discovery, in Exercise and Restraint, the two viewpoints unite. Discovery does not end Mystery; it is rather a Motive for further investigation, a Talisman for increased vigour in seeking for Truth. Does not Freemasonry, then, meet the Standard which the course of human history teaches those who carefully study its annals?

"The time of life is short!

To spend that shortness basely were too long,

If life did ride upon a dial's point,

Still ending at the arrival of an hour."

So the Freemason's work is ever to construct a Spiritual Temple, of which his Lodge is the physical emblem. In doing this work he needs must consider the history and progress of mankind, linking himself in sacred and sublime comradeship with the mountain tops and the beacon lights which fix the planes of demarcation in racial evolution and guide the pilgrims from Calvary to Calvary in the march of the centuries. This Universe or Temple must be pillared with eternal principles. Wisdom must be its constant support, that it may not suffer from the bewildering chaos of phenomena that press unceasingly for consideration. Only by vigilant effort and unflinching Strength may false elements be excluded, which mean retardation and consequent impairment to the Structure, should their insidious pretensions be recognized. And by means of the sacrifice of the Lower for the Higher is it possible that he so Beautify the petty round from day to day as to fit it

for the Unseen Edifice which he is building. In the gradual evolving of the purport of his mission, in the varied vicissitudes that comprise his life, come prosperity, come adversity, he never fails to keep in mind the Great Designer and his beneficent plans, and, led by this Star of Hope—

“That lights his desert pathway, yours and mine,  
He follows till he finds the highest human nature is  
divine.”



