



THE SPECULATIVE TEMPLE.

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AN ADDRESS

DELIVERED BY

BRO. JOHN A. LODOR, OF CAHABA,

BEFORE THE

Grand Lodge of the State of Alabama,

IN THE MASONIC HALL.

IN THE

CITY OF MONTGOMERY,

ON TUESDAY EVENING, DEC. 3, 1861.

AND OF WHICH

3000 Extra Copies were ordered to be Printed.

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MONTGOMERY :  
ADVERTISER BOOK AND JOB OFFICE.

1862.



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## The Speculative Temple.

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*Most Worshipful Grand Master, and  
Brethren of the Grand Lodge of Alabama:*

Another year has fled. Another wave is spent upon the shore of time. Another link is added to the long chain of years that reach beyond the flood. A year teeming with mighty events, and destined to shape the future of unborn millions, for weal or for woe. A year, whose history when written, will chronicle the convulsion and dismemberment of a great nation—the destruction of one of the fairest temples ever erected to Liberty and dedicated to Freedom—the erection of another, which Phoenix-like, sprung from a portion of its ruins, more just in its proportions, more severe in its beauty, and better adapted to secure the priceless liberties of those it was designed to shelter and protect. The record will tell too, that its perpetuity has been sealed by the holy rite of baptism in patriot and fraternal blood.

It is through such a year we have passed. It is through such events we still are passing; and although as *Freemasons*, and *here*, we will not enter upon any political discussion, yet we cannot, we dare not ignore the startling circumstances by which we are surrounded, or neglect to inquire in what manner, and to what extent, they are calculated to affect our mystic brotherhood. Leaving this high duty, however, to those to whom it properly belongs, we confine ourselves to the less important, but more pleasing task allotted us.

In the very first hour of our masonic career, we were taught the beautiful and salutary lesson, that no man should ever enter upon any great and important undertaking, without first invoking the blessing of the Deity. This lesson commends itself to us as eminently right and proper. It enjoins a duty upon us we all recognize.

It is the homage due from the creature to his Creator, and implies the corresponding truth, that He whose blessing is invoked *before* the commencement of any great enterprise, is also entitled to thanks *after* its performance. Recognizing these duties, it becomes particularly appropriate for us to return thanks to the Great Architect of the Universe, for the manifold blessings and comforts we have enjoyed during the year now past and gone. We thank Him that we have been spared, when so many have fallen like autumn leaves around us. We thank Him for the abundance we have enjoyed and shared with others, when so many around us were destitute and in want. We thank Him for the privilege of again assembling together in the capacity of a Grand Lodge, and of communing once more around the altar of our mystic temple. We thank Him that while our political sky has been covered with dark and lurid clouds, our beloved country convulsed and rent in twain, the soil of our native land bathed in fraternal blood, our masonic firmament has been calm, cloudless and serene, its pure atmosphere untainted by any fitful gust of passion, prejudice or fanaticism. We thank Him that while our national temple has crumbled to pieces before our eyes, and its constituent parts resolved into their original elements, our masonic temple still stands supported by Wisdom, Strength and Beauty, with its foundations unshaken, its symmetry perfect, and the sweet incense of gratitude yet ascends from our altar to Him in whom we put our trust.

The age we live in is progressive. The people among whom we dwell are utilitarian. They rush through life with reckless haste, chafing at the tardiness of railroad speed, and craving still greater rapidity for the electric telegraph. They pause but a moment in their career, to apply the practical test, *cui bono*, to everything under the sun, and unhesitatingly reject all that does not promise an immediate and lucrative recompense. Education, business, pleasure, preparation for usefulness and happiness, are all made subservient to the spirit of haste and the spirit of mammon. The slow, methodical and provident habits of our fathers are scoffed at with mockery and jest, while the impetuosity of Jehu commands unqualified approbation.

Such, in a word, is our age and our people, and such in the main, are their characteristics. There are some, however, who yet find time to step aside from the hurried duties and pleasures of active life, and enter our mystic temple, and learn with profit the lessons inculcated there.

On the wings of imagination they pass back through the long vista of departed years, until they reach that classic, nay, that holy land, immortalized in story and in song, in sacred and profane history. With path illumined by the sacred and historic page, they

revel amid scenes of surpassing beauty and thrilling association, in which the gorgeous pictures of the Arabian Nights are equaled, and the brilliant vagaries of the opium eater are excelled. With Moses, from Mount Pisgah, they view the promised land overflowing with milk and honey—in the dim distance they behold the blue waves of Galilee, while upon the mountain tops the cedars of Lebanon rear their lofty summits high in the heavens.

They pause upon the brow of Mount Moriah to contemplate the magnificent temple there erected by King Solomon to the living God, and dedicated to His holy name. Its rare and matchless beauty—its massive and elaborate proportions—its faultless symmetry—its rich and costly material—its finished workmanship, all combine to give it more the appearance of being the handiwork of the Supreme Architect of the Universe than of human hands. Around and around it they wander, now advancing, now receding, they pause to scrutinize its most minute details from foundation to turret stone. Each separate part undergoes the severest criticism, and a fault or blemish is in vain sought for by the critic's eye. Its vaults and its arches—its gates and its porch—its massive brazen pillars, with its chapiters of lily, net and pomegranate work—its flight of winding stairs—its mosaic pavement with its tessellated border—its ground floor, middle chamber and sanctum sanctorum—its altar and its oracle—its cherubim with extended wings—its walls and ceiling of burnished gold—its folding doors with cherubim, palm trees and flowers, carved thereon—its windows, spires and domes—its outer courts, its inclosures and its walls, all pass before the scrutinizing gaze, and still, not an imperfection can be discovered. Separately or together, in parts or as a whole, in material or in workmanship, the investigation only discloses its surpassing beauty—its matchless perfection. Admiration gives place to wonder, and wonder to awe, as the conviction sinks deep in the heart, that *this* is indeed none other than the house of God.

The temple site is notable. High upon a mountain top, it commands an extensive range of vision over the lovely land of Judea, whose praise has been so often and so well sung by the bards of the Bible. From afar Mount Moriah was seen towering in the heavens, surmounted by the temple glittering in its effulgent splendor, a venerated landmark for the pilgrim Israelites, who periodically repaired from Dan to Beersheba, to celebrate the imposing ceremonies of their religion upon its hallowed summit. Upon its sides were groves of stately palms and fragrant bowers, where bloomed the peerless rose of Sharon, while by Siloam's shady rill blossoms the lily of the valley. Here it was that Abraham erected an altar, and was about to offer his only son, a sacrifice upon it, typical of that other sacrifice afterward made upon it, the sublimest spectacle ever beheld by man,

the crucifixion of the Son of God. Here too, it was, that David, the poet King of Israel, lived, died, and was buried. Here it was that Solomon dazzled the world with his wisdom, and left a name to be honored as long as time shall last. Jerusalem and the temple were the special objects of love, we had almost said idolatry of the Jews. The first was their holy city, the latter their house of God. As was the sepulchre to the Christian, the tomb of the prophet to the Moslemite, even so was the temple to the Jew.

The appointments of the temple were in perfect consonance with its magnificence. A multitude of Levites of high and low degree were constantly engaged in its ministrations. The more than regal splendor of the high priest arrayed in his sacerdotal robes, the stately and imposing character of their forms and ceremonies, the inflexible rigor with which they were observed, the beautiful order and harmony with which the services of the temple were conducted, the number, variety and costliness of the holy vessels, the scrupulous care everywhere apparent, the habitual and universal reverence manifested by the Jews, all combine to command our admiration.

Viewing thus this magnificent edifice, remembering the beauty of its site, and the hallowed associations connected with it, we involuntarily pause to run a parallel between the Jews and ourselves; to compare their temple with ours, and thus to estimate the reverence each felt and manifested for the living God. Involuntary as is the act, the effect is most startling. In vain we cast our eyes around in search of a visible temple. In vain we look amid our piles of wood and stone, of marble and granite, for one whose form, or size, or beauty, will allow us, with all our partiality, to compare with that on Mount Moriah. So far, then, the evidence of love and devotion is with the Jews, and to them we must award the meed of praise. We attempt, however, to excuse ourselves for our omission, by the plea that we have no site on which to build, no quarries of stone, no forests of timber, no treasures of gold, silver, or precious stones, no hewers of wood or bearers of burdens, no craftsmen, or cunning workmen, with which to perform this arduous labor, no means with which to procure them, and therefore, we can erect no temple to our God, and make no dedication of it to His holy name. This is the natural, and almost involuntary excuse, and yet, like most pretenses set up for omitted or neglected duty, it is wholly insufficient; nay more, it is untrue. We have the site on which to build, higher and holier than Mount Moriah, in a lovelier clime than that of Judea, beneath a softer sky than that of Palestine. We have materials inexhaustible in quantity, and treasures of untold value. We have architects of wondrous skill. We have all the means at our command, and we should use them. We can erect a temple more spacious and magnificent than that of Solomon—one that time cannot

affect, that barbarous force shall never destroy, that shall endure forever.

He whose voice we recognize in the whirlwind and the storm, in the gentle breeze that rustles the leaves above us, as well as in the muttering of the ocean wave, and pealing of the distant thunder, He hath said, in the great light that shines upon every altar, GIVE ME THY HEART. It was *there* we were first prepared to be masons, and *there*, in the human heart, with its atmosphere of love, its wealth of passion and feeling, its pure and lofty aspirations, its yearnings after immortality, beneath the sky of a terrestrial Paradise, we can erect a temple to our God, and dedicate it to His holy name.

As freemasonry was originally operative, but is now speculative in its character, even so, the temple we can build is not a visible one, composed of wood or stone, but is a spiritual, a speculative one—one composed of beautiful thoughts and acts, and adorned with still more beautiful virtues. A temple whose foundation is laid in Time, and whose superstructure continues in eternity; its base the purest morality; its elements the happy combination of all the virtues that adorn human nature; its loftiest pinnacle that unfeigned piety, so beautifully represented in Hiram, the widow's son.

Speculative as is freemasonry, and we love it for its speculative character, for its speaking emblems, and significant symbols, which open so wide the doors of thought, we yet hope it is not too speculative. We fondly trust we have not mistaken the boundless wealth of the human heart, or over estimated its capacity for earth or heaven, for time or for eternity. The whole range of science, literature and art, furnishes us no subject of study more interesting, more varied, or more beautiful than the heart, and yet, strange as it may appear, there is scarcely a subject we study less, or of which we know so little. We hardly pause to consider the wonderful precision and regularity with which its physical functions are performed, and still, sleeping or waking, in youth, manhood and age, it throbs and palpitates in cadence with the march of time, and only ceases to beat when the icy hand of death is laid upon it. We fail to comprehend that it has an empire and a ruler of its own, a ruler who often wields the sceptre with despotic sway, and by fostering the good, and curbing the evil passions, disciplines his realm into beautiful order, regularity and happiness, or who by casting loose the rein, gives unrestrained license to a horde of evil passions, and permits them, like an irruption of Goths and Vandals, to ravage, lay waste and destroy his fair dominions. We fail to realize the power of the passions, whose home is in the heart of man. Unseen, it may be, but still with resistless force, they drive us onward through the years of life. The heart, however, has its elysian fields, its sunny places, its shady groves, as well as its rugged rocks and unfathomable recesses. It

has its springs of sweet and bitter water, its fountains of love as well as hatred, its fragrant flowers and luscious fruits, as well as its deadly upas tree; its fruitful fields, as well as its arid desert.

Like an æolian harp, it vibrates and responds to every breath of feeling and of passion. Subservient to a well regulated mind, its thousand strings are attuned to perfect harmony, and responsive to the power of friendship, love and truth, of sympathy, charity and gratitude, its low, sweet notes are heard, lingering like an angel's whisper on the ear, and anon swelling with delicious cadence into an anthem of praise, vibrating in other hearts, and ascending the electric scale of thought, through the realms of space, to the very throne of Omnipotence. When, however, unbridled passion rules the hour, and the fierce blast of the tempest and the storm is spent upon it, it responds only in discordant notes—fitful notes, in which are mingled the harsh voices of anger, envy and hatred; the wail of sorrow, the sharp cry of pain, the howl of agony, and the fearful shriek of despair.

As fire and water are useful servants, but wretched masters, even so are the passions to man. They are the motive power that propel him onward; the engine on the railroad of life. Subdued, their capacity for good is preserved, and their power for evil is divested. Thus regulated, we have at our command the power to press onward and upward to high and noble ends, the power to fulfil the destiny for which we were created.

The human heart may be compared to a rich garden. There we find in abundance the sweetest fruits, most fragrant flowers, and rarest exotics. With care and labor, we can develop its wealth, and beauty and fragrance; without them, we shall have neither. They may exist, it is true, but their growth will be checked and stunted, their necessary nourishment be absorbed by noxious weeds, which grow rapidly and luxuriantly in its rich soil. These require neither care nor attention. They flourish best by neglect; but as they grow and flourish the sweetness of the fruit and the fragrance of the flower diminish, and finally become extinct. As the permitted growth of such weeds in a garden is injurious, if not fatal to it, even so is the kindred growth in the heart of man. They transform the purity and sweetness of Eden into the barrenness and desolation of the desert.

Again, the human heart may be compared to a huge folio, in which Truth writes the story of our lives, and Memory photographs its every event. From the cradle to the grave, not an incident is omitted; and in its succession of pictures not a shade of false coloring can be found. As we turn over its pages, we pause, fascinated by the sweet images representing our childhood, and our childhood's home; the loved ones then around us, the dear friends of our youth,

our pleasures and sports, our hopes and fears, our thoughts and feelings, all are there—there, too, is the future of youth, bright with the gilding of hope, and rich with the decorations of fancy. As we again turn over its pages, how changed the picture! The boy is transformed into the man, with all the man's associations, duties and responsibilities. We see him eagerly engaged in the race of life, pursuing his favorite phantom, wealth, pleasure, fame, or whatever it may be. We note, too, that the pictures have lost that dreamy indistinctness characterizing those of childhood, and acquired clear, bold, and decided lines. The color is deeper, and more solid, the general expression more harsh and unattractive. Still further onward, are pictures of a still more sombre hue. The bright coloring is almost gone; the decorations of fancy, no longer visible; the faces and forms of youthful friends are few and far between; the flowers faded; the leaves sere and yellow. The man, now old, leans heavily upon his staff, and his bent form and silvery locks tell their own story. Many and varied as are the pictures, the subject is still the same, and they form the panorama of human life. Truth has written the narrative impartially, and Memory illustrated it well. Chequered are its scenes as the mosaic pavement, and so changed from first to last we scarce can realize the fact that the venerable patriarchs who move so slowly and feebly before us were once young and happy children.

And yet again, the human heart is like the ocean, deep, boundless and illimitable. Its surface is another

“Glorious mirror, where the Almighty's form  
Glasses itself in tempests.”

Moved by virtue, by high, pure principle, its waves softly undulate and with a gentle swell ebb and flow upon the beach of time. Beneath that surface are the coral caves, the Peri's home, where the gems of the sea are gathered together, and around them are the hidden reefs and rocks, like walls for their protection. Calm, placid and beautiful, as is the ocean at times, we yet know there is danger beneath its treacherous bosom—that the maelstrom has drawn many an unwary mariner within its vortex, and engulfed him in its unfathomable abyss—that the whirlwind's wrath, and the tempest's fury have marred its beauty, lashed its waves to madness, and gathered its waters into mighty, scething billows, which rolled on with resistless violence, making many a shipwreck upon its reefs and rocks. How sublime the ocean in its placid state! how terrible in its tempestuous wrath!

As is the ocean, so is the human heart. It has its glassy surface, its boundless extent, its hidden treasures, its gentle ebb and flow, and alas! it has its maelstrom, in which thousands of the unwary have been swallowed. Evil passions to it are the whirlwind's power

that lashes its waves to frenzy, and makes shipwreck of temporal and eternal happiness upon its hidden rocks and reefs.

And still again, the human heart is like a mine of untold wealth. Deep within its recesses are vast beds and quarries of stone, strata upon strata, of every texture and quality. Here and there, are veins of glittering ore, surpassing in value the far famed gold of Ophir or of California. Here, too, may be found priceless gems, more brilliant and beautiful than the diamonds, rubies, emeralds and sapphires of any regal diadem. These beds of rock and stone are our ash-lars in their native quarries; the ash-lars we must bring to light, and make perfect by the tools of the fellow craft, as fitting stones for our speculative temple. Its priceless gems are the Cardinal Virtues; bright planets amid a galaxy of glittering stars; jewels of thought and action, which, if we but polish with the lapidary's care, are more brilliant and more beautiful, more, far more valuable, than the far famed Kohinoor, and all its kindred gems. It is with these we propose to ornament our speculative temple, and adorn and beautify it, with all that is costly and rare in the spiritual world.

The form, size, and character of our speculative temple, each of us must determine for himself. It may be massive and grand as Doric art; beautiful as Corinthian taste, or light, airy and elastic as the spider's web. Each of us is his own architect and builder. Each of us must select his own materials; fashion them for use, and use them; must place a keystone in the highest arch; a spire on the loftiest pinnacle; and sooner or later, must look fairly and squarely at the sum total of his own labor, and calculate its true value as our speculative temple, erected to God, and dedicated to His holy name.

No apprentice's zeal or fellow craft's skill is sufficient here. It requires all the master's knowledge and ability. His great trestle board lies open upon our altar, and from its speaking pages he may gather wisdom from on high, to guide him in his glorious undertaking; STRENGTH commensurate with his task, to support him—strength to labor and endure, to persevere unto the end. With these, and the liberal arts and sciences at his command; with industry, skill, and the experience of cunning workmen, surely his speculative temple will rise in all the splendor of artistic BEAUTY, and be "a thing of joy forever."

The erection of our speculative temple is a matter of vital importance. However faithfully and zealously we may labor; however skillful and expert we may be in the use of our tools and implements, we must not forget that it requires the more consummate wisdom, and greater experience of the master builder. It is not the work of an hour, a day, or a year; it requires time, patience and perseverance, perhaps for years, to build it. The Jewish temple required an army of workmen, who were engaged seven years in its

erection. Physiologists tell us, our physical temple is periodically reconstructed in the same length of time. With us, the time necessary to form a *fixed and permanent character*—the character we bear through life, among our fellow men—the character we must bear through the countless ages of eternity—that is the time occupied in the erection of our speculative temple. Indeed and in truth, human character is our temple. We may disguise it as we will; we may evade a scrutiny of it; but *our character as it is*, with its faults and blemishes, its weaknesses and infirmities, its vices and its stains, together with its redeeming traits, its better parts, is our speculative temple. Again we repeat, it is for each of us to look well upon it—to weigh it, and realize its just value.

If the proposition heretofore made be true, that we can erect a temple more spacious and magnificent than that of Solomon; if it be further true, that human character is that temple, then it follows necessarily that it should be pure, spotless, and irreproachable; combining the innocence of childhood and the wisdom of age; that it should approximate perfection as near as the frailties of human nature will allow. We know that perfection on earth has never been attained; that the wisest as well as the best of men have erred; and yet, with an abiding faith in Him in whom we put our trust—before whose altar we bend the knee; whose name we never mention, but with that reverential awe due from a creature to his Creator; and whose aid we implore in all our laudable undertakings, we should make the effort to attain it. Our speculative temple should ascend in all the glittering splendor of Friendship, Morality, and Brotherly Love, and shine, not with meteor glare, but bright, steady, planetary light, winning the reverence and love of every beholder by its elegance, its purity, and its worth. Like the exemplar temple on Mount Moriah, it should be preserved as a hallowed shrine, and guarded with the same vigilant care. It should be our pearl of price, set round with walls and inclosures, even as was the Jewish temple, and the impure, the vicious, the guilty and profane, be banished from even its outer courts. A faithful sentinel should be placed at every gate, a watchman on every wall, and the first approach of the cowan and eavesdropper be promptly met and resisted.

With the erection of our temple, but half our duty is performed. It must be dedicated and set apart for its appropriate use. And here how widely we differ in the dedication of *our* temple. No holy day is set apart; no gathering of the multitude; no army assembles with gleaming spears and waving banners; no horsemen and chariots of war; no beating drums, or pealing of artillery; no pomp and ceremony; no sacrifice of oxen and of sheep; no burnt offering; no meat offering; no peace offering; no feasting or revelry solemnizes

the occasion; but in silence, it may be in solitude, in deep humility, in all our sinfulness and unworthiness, with penitence and prayer, we humbly dedicate our heart, our spiritual, our speculative temple, to the Great Jehovah, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. It thus becomes a consecrated place, requiring only a high priest to minister at its altar, and perform its solemn ceremonies.

The selection of our high priest is a matter of the gravest importance. We have no tribe of Levi, from which the choice can be made, but we have a greater than the Levite, in Emmanuel, the Prince of Peace, the great  $\Gamma$  AM, to whom we dedicate our temple; to whom, and whom alone, in his triune character of Prophet, Priest and King, we bend the knee, and render the homage of our heart of hearts. With the Omnipotent for our high priest; with Faith, and Hope, and Charity, together with all the bright virtues that dignify and ennoble human character, as its lesser ministers, we may rest assured, if we are but true to ourselves, the service of our speculative temple will be no less beautiful than pure; no less pure than holy.

Our speculative temple erected, and at least nominally dedicated to the living God, it may not be an unprofitable lesson to learn at whose altar we in truth are worshipping. "Know thyself," was the injunction of a heathen philosopher, given as the most difficult duty for man to perform; and yet, it is no less than this we must do, to realize the just value of our temple, and the identity of our altar. We have an aid, however, in Truth, who holding her mirror before us, bids us examine for ourselves. She strips off the flimsy coverings with which we have deluded ourselves; shows us that our foundation is laid on sand; indicates the faulty materials; points out its want of symmetry and beauty; and exposes the almost utter worthlessness of our speculative temple; then entering the edifice, she remorselessly presses home upon us the humiliating fact that we have hushed the still small voice of conscience; displaced the faithful tiler from our temple door, and tolerated impostors at our altars; impostors who have assumed the sacerdotal robes and place of our great High Priest, and desecrated our speculative temple, by offering sacrifices to Moloch, Mammon and Baal, or it may be, to Venus or Bacchus.

Impostors

"Who stole the livery of the court of Heaven,  
To serve the Devil in."

If such should be the result of self-investigation; if our Faith be weak and wavering; our Hope faint and feeble; our Charity palsied; our Brotherly Love cold and formal; if no Relief be extended to the suffering and distressed; no word of sympathy poured like balm on wounded hearts; if Truth be not the principle on which we act; if Temperance be but a license to commit irregularities and excesses; if Prudence characterize not our lives and actions; if we

have not Fortitude to bear the adversities incident to human life; if Justice has been tutored to kick the beam in our favor, and never against us, we may be satisfied the foundation of our speculative temple is not well laid; our corner stone not well formed, true and trusty; that our ashlars were unwisely selected and negligently prepared; our edifice unskillfully erected; our jewels tarnished and lustreless. Then may we be likened unto the foolish man which built his house upon the sand; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell; and great was the fall of it.

And here, perhaps, it is proper we should advert to an error that prevails in reference to the object and aim of Freemasonry. By many it is considered as synonymous with Christianity, and then utterly condemned for failing to come up to that high standard of excellence. Christianity, however, is of divine, while Masonry is of human origin. Christianity is a matter pertaining to Eternity as well as Time, while Masonry is a thing of Time only. The moral teachings of both are the same. The one as applicable to Time and Eternity; the other as applicable to Time alone. As the hour is merged in the day, and the day in the year, even so is time lost and blended in eternity, although an integral portion of it. Within its appropriate sphere, Masonry is an invaluable adjunct to Christianity. The panoply of Christianity is broad enough to cover every mason on earth; that of Masonry, though a broad one, merely places its votaries in that position, where by advancing a few steps, they pass from the Altar to the Cross. The duties of the one end with the grave; of the other, a preparation here, for the endless cycle beyond it. It was well said "that the best mason makes the best christian, and the best christian makes the best mason."

Masonry is characterized by its universality, and yet the *individuality* of every mason is still preserved. In the church, the lodge, and other kindred bodies, the individual too often acts as though he had no character; as though by membership he had surrendered it, and retained only an undivided interest, a portion of its general character. He acts as though it was not incumbent upon him to maintain and preserve the high purity of character of the body to which he belongs. Every individual *has* a distinct character of his own, and yet it is an *integral* part of the universal character. Every mason should assiduously labor to preserve his own individuality; should give plain, clear and unmistakable marks of his own separate existence; should make his own

"Footprints on the sands of time;"

should *act* as though the universal character was exemplified and illustrated by his own; should *feel* as if all the responsibility rested upon himself alone, and thus, and thus only, will its exalted charac-

ter be sustained. It is no excuse for one, that another fails to do his duty. It is no excuse, even though all others fail to do so. Sodom was destroyed because ten righteous men were not found in it. There the individual was merged in the general character—character so stained by iniquity as to excite the wrath of the Almighty in a manner so terrible as to be a warning forever.

No man should ever be allowed to enter our fraternity *in search of character*; on the contrary, he should bring character to its support. It is not mere familiarity with the minutiae of masonic language and ceremonies that forms masonic character. That is but the drapery with which it is clad; the casket in which the jewel is set. That character is *the habit of life*; the same everywhere; at home and abroad; in the lodge, and in the world. It is evidenced by the fountains that gush forth from the heart, pure, sparkling and free; by the fraternal love, that glows like a live coal upon the altar; by the attentive ear, ever open to the cry of distress; by the fraternal hand extended to succor and to save; by the instructive tongue that promptly utters words of wisdom, sympathy and caution. The true mason strives to fulfill his duties to his God, his neighbor and himself, not with, but without ostentation. It is thus our speculative temple should rise, like its beautiful exemplar on Mount Moriah, where

“ No hammers fell, no ponderous axes rung;  
Like some tall palm, the mystic fabric sprang.”

It is these, and such as these, who bring and give character to a Lodge. It is these, and such as these, who are the perfect ashlar in our temple. It is these, and such as these, who have erected a speculative temple, in all the splendor of spiritual beauty, in their hearts, more spacious and magnificent than that of Solomon, and dedicated it to the living God. A temple that time cannot affect—that barbarous force shall never destroy—that shall endure forever.

High as we have attempted to raise the standard of Freemasonry, we trust it is not too high. We fondly hope there are many who have attained the full stature of Masonic manhood—we trust there are many such within the precincts of this Grand Lodge, many, who with a modesty equal to that of the violet, would blush to have their merit known. If my honored and revered friend and brother, the M. W. Grand Master, \* he at whose command, long years ago, we first beheld the rays of masonic light, and at whose feet we sat, even as did the student at the feet of Gamaliel, was absent, we might say much of his merit as a neighbor, a friend, a man, and a mason. We would that we could add, as a christian, but as he is present, it would be indelicate to say anything in his praise, and we have nothing else to say.

\* M. W. Wm. H. NORRIS.

Here we might appropriately close, hoping, trusting and believing the foundation of our speculative temple is laid upon the "Rock of Ages"—with its superstructure faultlessly symmetrical, and radiant with beauty—its materials incorruptible, and its ministrations marked by simplicity, fervor, and devotion; but we cannot resist the temptation to trace the parallel yet a little further.

Josephus informs us, the destruction of Jerusalem and its celebrated temple was preceded by many events, so remarkable in their character, the narrative seems almost fabulous. He tells us, that at the feast of Pentecost, as the priests were entering the inner courts of the temple, to perform their usual ceremonies, the earth was felt to quake—a mighty noise was heard, and the voices, as of a multitude, saying 'LET US DEPART HENCE! LET US DEPART HENCE!'

He also tells us, that at a time when the city was surrounded by peace and prosperity—when no dark cloud appeared to threaten approaching danger, one Jesus, the son of Ananus, as with a prophetic foreboding, of the awful, impending fate of the holy city, began of a sudden to cry aloud, "A voice from the east, a voice from the west, a voice from the four winds, a voice against Jerusalem and the holy house, a voice against the bridegrooms and the brides, and a voice against this whole people!" By day and night, at the temple, in the city, through its streets and lanes, and upon its walls, he ever uttered his mournful refrain. When taken before the Roman procurator as a disturber of the peace, and scourged until his very bones lay bare, his only answer was, "Woe, woe to Jerusalem!" Dismissed as a madman, absorbed in his own gloomy anticipations, and insensible alike to the kindness of those who cared for, and the cruelty of those who maltreated him, he continued to wander around, ever chanting his melancholy song. At length, when more than seven years had passed since first his warning voice was raised, when peace had departed, and prosperity given place to the horrors of war—when Roman legions environed the city, and the engines of war hurled missiles of destruction against its ramparts, he still stood upon the wall, and uttered for the last time his melancholy prediction, "Woe, woe to the city again, to the people, and to the holy house!" then pausing a moment, he added, as though conscious of his own impending death, "Woe, woe to myself!" Scarcely were the words uttered, when he was killed by a stone from one of the Roman engines. His mission was ended. His allotted task performed. Through long years of derision, mockery and abuse, his warning voice was raised like that of the Grecian Cassandra, only to be disregarded. Like the dying swan, his sweetest note was his last, for when uttered, his troubled spirit was at rest.

Let the skeptic sneer, and the scoffer rail—let them deride the idea, if they will, that

“Coming events cast their shadows before;”

we still prefer to indulge in the pleasing delusion, if indeed it be one, that the voices thus heard by the priests were the voices of the guardian angels of the temple, consulting together ere they plumed themselves for their lofty flight, and abandoned the magnificent temple, so soon to be laid in ashes, and which had been erected in happier days, under brighter auspices, by King Solomon, and dedicated to the living God.

Shall we, my brethren, when our priests retire to the inner courts of our speculative temple, shall we hear the fluttering of angel wings—the murmuring of angel voices, deliberating ere they abandon it forever? Shall we be insensible to the symbols and emblems by which we are ever surrounded? Shall the anointed priest from the altar, and the beloved dead from the grave, utter no note of warning in our ear? Shall we be heedless and indifferent, as were the Jews to the voice of Jesus, the son of Ananus? Forbid it! oh, forbid it, Supreme Grand Master! We know but too well, our physical temple, like its prototype on Mount Moriah, will soon be laid in dust and ashes; but still we would not have our guardian angels depart and leave us to our fate. We would have them ever present, infusing spiritual life, and light, and hope within us, that we may be enabled to discard the dim light of reason, or religion of nature, which teaches us that man dies as the beast, and at his death there is no more of him—as well as that other creed, which inculcates the idea of the resurrection of the soul, but not of the body; and firmly relying on the merits of the Lion of the tribe of Judah, espouse that beautiful faith which teaches the immortality of the body as well as the soul. With such hopes as these, such faith as this, surely our speculative temple, like Elijah of old, may be transplanted from this vale of tears, to the New Jerusalem, that beautiful City of God, not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.



