

*Duplicate D.C.*



# LIGHT

## A Lecture

DELIVERED BY

*The Right Worshipful the Provincial  
Grand Master, I.C.,*

*THE HON. J. T. SMITH, M.P.*

*AT THE PROVINCIAL GRAND MASTER'S LODGE,*

**MASONIC HALL, MELBOURNE,**

*ON MONDAY, 26TH APRIL, 1869.*

PUBLISHED BY REQUEST.

Melbourne :

STILLWELL & KNIGHT, PRINTERS, COLLINS ST.

1870.

L I G H T.

Presented by  
David Blair Esq  
March 16<sup>th</sup> 1875



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*Extract from Minutes of Meeting of the Provincial  
Grand Master's Lodge, I.C.*

APRIL 26th, 1869.

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The R. W. the Prov. Grand Master, Bro. J.  
T. SMITH, Esq., then delivered his Lecture on  
“Light.”

RESOLVED :

“That a cordial vote of thanks be given to  
“the R. W. Provincial Grand Master for  
“his Address, and that he be requested  
“to prepare the same for publication.”

A. ELLIS,

*Acting W. M.*

W. SMITH,

*Secretary.*

# LIGHT.



“Let there be light,” so says the inspired word, “and there was light.” Ere these words were spoken “darkness was upon the face of the deep.” The same Almighty Power divided the light from the darkness, and called the light Day. Thus was the Great Artificer’s work accomplished by his almighty fiat—the first day’s work—the creation of light. And well might the inspired word declare, “And God saw the light, that it was good”—pleasant and acceptable and agreeable to the great Creator’s purposes. The darkness was before the light, as the evening is put before the morning; and thus, “the evening and the morning were “the first day.”

Now, my brethren, as Masons you were once specially directed to the contemplation of the Sacred Law as the light; as an unerring standard of truth and justice; and by its divine precepts you were invited to regulate your actions, which teach you your duty to God, to your neighbour, and to yourself; and thus we have a law unto ourselves, teaching the whole duty of man. To the Mason the

rule of faith is plain; and God and our neighbours comprehend the Creator's will and our duty.

Your introduction to Masonry was after due preparation, and on your admission to the Lodge with befitting posture and reverence, you were instructed to lay your hands upon the altar, and invited to be guided by the great light now revealed to you; but material light, including the great emblematic one, was exhibited by symbols, as well as the lesser constellations, the first in the east.

In the speculative field in which we moralize, how much is there to interest, to instruct, to edify. Mark the Master's elevated seat, from whence in the horizon we hail the appearance of the god of day. So sits the ruler, emblematic of the geographic origin of light, to mark the morn and wake up nature from the gloomy slumbers of the night;—so, as the sun enlightens the day, the Master rules and enlightens his lodge. Veiled in mystic light, the emblems everywhere abounding are full of interest and beauty—interest, as exhibiting so many symbols in which the moralist can discern the cardinal virtues typified; as for example the written Word, whereon to moralize, as one of three great lights, adorned with square and compass, thus exhibiting the

word of faith guiding our steps, bringing matter into due form, and regulating actions sanctified by the word and prayer. The very pavement, with its tessellated borders, denotes the varieties of nature as well as the beauties of art. Observe the three grand pillars, and mark their position and their distinguishing appellations. Scan the Omniscient Eye, as it beams from a blaze of glory in the east. Look to the west, and see the worthy Warden ready for the call of duty, to obey commands and close the masonic day, duly observing that every brother has his due—he himself modestly distinguished by his badge denoting equality. And if to this you would add integrity, look to the Junior's chair, where the plumb marks uprightness. In brief, emblems, figures, and characters, serve to make up a mystic whole, supported by its three grand pillars, denominated Wisdom, Strength, and Beauty. So constructed, the harmony is complete. All is order, for here is light ; wisdom to devise, strength to support, beauty to adorn. Enter, then, the First Degree, with salutations from your brethren, and enrol under the banners of our noble craft.

Passing from your initiation into Masonry, which may be and is justly described as an emblematic representation of the entrance of man into

this world and the obligations and duties which follow, you learn, that the bond of union amongst us is such that pride and prejudice can find no place, and that a higher nobler motive of action than is comprised within the narrow limits of institutions, civil or religious, is presented for your acceptance—a recognition that the Almighty Architect is no respecter of persons, but that “in every city he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted of Him.”

Now, in what special manner, on admission to Masonry, is the apprentice or the initiate enjoined to undertake new duties, and new works; to prosecute higher aims; to act from nobler motives firmer resolutions? and how is he prepared to do the work? In all societies, there necessarily must be rules; in ours there is a Constitution for the universal government of the craft, and each particular lodge may make its own rules, subject to the Constitution.

The entrance to any society, necessarily implies a pledge to conform to the laws by which it is governed. Once admitted into Masonry, and advanced to the Master's Degree, the principles of the order are unfolded, and should the light thus obtained fail to attract, then the seeker after knowledge is bound only to remain with us by the bonds

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there only, as it may be, they take root, are nevertheless, lessons of the utmost magnitude and value. These are typified by the ladder Jacob saw, which *faith* will enable us to look up to, *hope* to ascend, and *charity* the crowning virtue to furnish us with our reward. It is no vain boast to say every emblem, figure, and character in a Masons' Lodge has a moral tendency.

If in the First Degree in Masonry our vision is limited, it is natural and proper it should be so, but as Masonry is an advancing study, so by perseverance we progress to more light, until finally we obtain as it were a glimpse of the Master's light, truly there portrayed as but darkness visible; for we look for the light which is from above, and even then only realize somewhat more of the sublimity of our order, and more and more perceive how deep and firm and lasting are the obligations which bind us in the common cause of God and humanity. God, as the Fountain of life and light—the Omnipotent, who sitteth between the cherubims, surrounded by light ineffable, which no man can approach unto,—the great I AM, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob.

When I say "humanity," let me call to mind that, circumscribed as we may be, our order claims for man universal equality—discarding party prejudices

or institutions (which sever or bind together) the Mason is taught to look upon every son of Adam as a brother born to die.

It may be asked why, if Masonry can be thus extolled, if its teachings are in accordance with the word of truth, if we have the Lord for our God and His word for our guide, and glory to Him in the highest, and peace and good will to men for our watchword, why hide this light under a bushel? To this I answer, our society is not exclusive. No creed, no country, no colour can exclude; but whilst we ask none to join our ranks, the portals are open, and the tongue of good report will gain admission.

But none should seek it for idle pleasure or vain curiosity; and let all be assured there is work to do, and there is a reward to follow, if the great grand principles of Masonry are carried out,—the great principles of brotherly love, relief, and truth. If we band ourselves together for such great purposes, then surely will we have undertaken the noblest purpose (next to its chief) for which the great Architect created man.

So vastly has our fraternity extended, that everywhere it is honoured; for Masons are necessarily good citizens and obedient subjects, always respecting authority.

The Heir to the Throne of the greatest empire under the sun has followed the Royal pleasure of many of England's kings, and we are called upon to hail him as our Illustrious Brother.

Mark, my dear brethren, the march of our order, and its extension, and wonder not if its principles tend to the subjection of the whole family of man to one common brotherhood, and hope then, and not till then, for the Millennium ; for when earth shall be filled with the knowledge of His will ; the heavenly temple shall be filled with songs of unutterable joy. And is it a stretch of imagination to feel assured, that as there shall be many to join in the song of glory and honour from every kindred, tongue, and people ; and to fall down and worship in His kingdom ; some there will be whose efforts to serve their Master received their earliest lessons of love and charity here ?

My brethren, some may say again, since Masonry is so estimable a thing, should it not be spread far and wide ; yea, proclaimed from the house-top ? why this mystery ? We can but answer, that so it was in the beginning, at the building of the Temple. I might as well ask a question, why were all things prepared for the building of the Temple, and no sound of axe or workmen to be heard ? Was it not that the great Architect

prompted and directed that thus silently and majestically should the holy Temple be erected upon holy consecrated ground, that it should not be desecrated by the sound of instruments of labour ; that where the Holy of Holies deigned thereafter to appear, no discordant noise should ever break the silence of that hallowed spot, but that the first homage should be paid with raised hands and uplifted hearts, crying " Grace, grace unto it."

If in an infinitesimal degree, the Masonic Lodge typifies that event, or if within our portals, those only come who desire there to worship, it is as free as was the temple of old, for all may come who will ; but they must come with hearts prepared and disposed to enter into a solemn covenant.

The Leper, you remember, who was directed to wash in Jordan to be cleansed, at first disdained the offer, flattering himself he knew a purer stream ; so likewise might it possibly be said of Masonry, if it solicited men to enter. This would be against our fundamental principles, which require a perfect freedom of inclination upon the part of all candidates ; the only recommendation, my brethren, you can offer to others is by your life and conversation, to show what Masonry has done for you ; that it has made you a better citizen and better man, by expanding your heart and disposing

you to help your fellows on the road of life, to assist those who are drooping, and to aid them on the rugged way. By hand and heart then may we pray for the weary traveller as he journeys onward to the dark valley.

Creator, Lord, as first Thy word,  
In Majesty and might  
Didst harmonize and make a world,  
Oh ! say, " Let there be light."

Take a retrospect, you who have advanced to and beyond the Master's Degree. How natural your introduction, and how suggestive of the entrance of man into this sublunary abode ; and how impressively the circumstances fix themselves upon the mind in after times when calamity or distress overtakes a brother. Then you call to remembrance scenes long since passed, but so indelibly stamped on the memory, that every brother may be said to keep the key. Mark here also the many subjects upon which to moralise : In the first place, man's natural equality is asserted as demonstrated by unerring rule ; pass on another step, where having previously hewn from the quarry, you are to exercise your industry in the preparation of the rough stone which, by persevering industry, can only be fitted for the intended structure, reminding you that labour is man's lot. Here also learn how Masons

mark the day and apportion it; ascend the steps as handy craftsmen, and without diffidence or distrust seek the reward of your industry. The noble pillars on the right and left afford stability and strength, and you are reminded of one whose mission to the chosen race was to deliver Israel from the galling yoke of Egyptian bondage and to set them free; so also of another who prayed for longer light, "Sun, stand thou still," and it stood still, until the overthrow of the enemies of Israel was complete.

Still advancing, for Onward is our motto, you reach the sublime, and become a Master; then, as in a blaze of light from a figurative representation of the end of life "man's inevitable destiny," to a re-union with your companions, you become a perfect Master. The lessons taught, the means used to impress the mind and sanctify the heart, are so abundant and so adapted to accomplish the design, that whilst memory holds her place, they are ineffaceably impressed on the mind, producing in a more or less degree such noble resolutions, that signs and symbols serve to unite us as brethren; dispose us to seek to be worthy of our exalted rank, and to magnify our office; the symbols truly and emblematically representing our calling and our character, teaching, it may be silently yet

surely. "How good and pleasant a thing it is, "brethren, to dwell together in unity."

Who of us but remembers the first desire ever made in a lodge, when the heart is invited amidst the gloom to express its yearnings, when recumbent at the pedestal in the east, the response was—Light?

Truly may the brother say, whereas I was blind, now I see—see and, in part only, appreciate the glories of the symbolic light, which burns and brightens to a purer flame as knowledge increases by the light conveyed; animating man to press onward in the march of duty, pointing always upwards to that Light which no man can approach unto, yet here endowing the frail creatures of His providence with glimpses of His Majesty, in the contemplation of His works, and teaching us divine Charity, the Crown of all the virtues.

He rules where is no night,  
Omnipotent in power;  
Reigns in unbecclouded light:  
Brethren, let us adore.

The morality of Masons may be, and is, peculiar; yet it is pure—in allegory veiled—and symbolically illustrated. Here then is a field in which the student may moralize; with his natural eye he may view the wonders of creative power, the beauties in nature, the perfection of all creation,

“the round world, and all that is therein;” and beyond, with the eye of faith, he may pierce the veil, and behold the power and majesty of Him who created all things. There are now many things past our finite comprehension; yet, if we diligently seek for light and truth, the darkness shall flee away. What is light? And a like inquiry may be asked as to truth. “O, send out “thy light and thy truth,” said one of royal race. So may we seek, that the light may shine; shine, to illumine the day; shine, to enliven our hearts; shine, to exterminate the darkness of our moral and spiritual vision; shine, to remind us it is day, and that we must devote it to the duties we are called to fill; shine, to daily remind us at Whose creative fiat all things first were made, and that this glorious light was given that we should “work “whilst it is yet day.” That the opportunities are given us wherewith to profit, and daily as it comes so brings it with it work to do. Redeem, then, the time; let your light shine joyfully, cheerfully. Use it to the high purposes for which it is given; weary not in well doing. Onward, should be our watchword; forward, our motto. Troubles will beset us, some will faint by the way, some will hide their light, and some also may prefer the darkness; yet the mystic light points not only onward and for-

ward, but upward ; and in view of His word our vision would look backward with wonder and amazement to the beginning, to the Omnipotent Power which out of nothing created all things ; and who, in the simplicity of words yet sublimity of power said, "*Let there be light.*"

Before the morning's dawn,  
Earth without form and void,  
Eternal fiat made.  
Enveloped in primeval night,  
Outspoke majestic voice and said,  
"Let there be light."




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