

## WHAT'S WRONG WITH OUR LODGES?

(By Rabbi H. Geffen, 32°, F.P.S.)

There is now in existence a great movement, and some Masonic writers are criticising the Lodges and the officers for admitting too many men into Masonry, and they have their motive, saying that it is better to have more Masonry in Masons, than more Masons in Masonry.

The Master Mason who just became initiated and raised to the Sublime Degree is like a medical student who has just graduated from the university of medicine and received his diploma. He is already a doctor, but he can not yet practice medicine; he lacks experience and practice. He must first of all study hard; he must write some dissertation on and about diseases and medicine; he must be an interne in a hospital a few years; he must get familiar and acquainted with the nature, development and consequences of all ailments; he must also become affable with the character, habits, temper and caprices of his patients. And only then will he be a real medical man.

The same is true of the Master Mason. He has no experience in Masonry; he knows very little about the Craft.

What about all those rites, rituals, symbols, allegories and ceremonies? What do they mean? What do they represent? Why do we need them?

In order to know all about them, the Mason must study; he must be an interne in the Lodges; write dissertations on and about Masonry. He must learn and dig deep in the spiritual mines of Masonic study.

There are published thousands of volumes on the history, development, philosophy, theology, psychology and even the philology of Masonry. We have also in our country hundreds of Masonic periodicals, magazines and journals of Masonry.

It is our duty to encourage the freshman M.M. to read and study those books and periodicals thoroughly and diligently.

We must try to have speakers and lecturers after every degree work. We have to arrange Masonic Clubs where the Master Masons shall prepare papers on various subjects anent Masonry. We must influence the Mason that he shall practice Masonry. Learning by heart the ritual is not worth while if we cannot reach the high pinnacle in order to present the various tenets of Masonry, trying to translate the mystical into the practical interpretation of life. By a series of frequent lectures, we must try to enable the M.M. to reach the highest beauty and spirituality in the dissertation of Masonic creed, which is symbolised by our sublime ceremonies.

The new M.M. must also be commanded to practise the virtues of Masonry and live according to Masonic commandments, precepts, rules and regulations.

He must also be informed that he must be a Mason not only when he is within the four walls of the Temple, but also outside: in the street, in the club, in his office, at home, in his church or synagogue; wherever he goes he must act as a Mason, exercising tolerance always.

And if it will not impress him, then we have erred that we have admitted such persons into Masonry; for it is known to all that the strength of Masonry is not in its numbers, but in the virtual wisdom exercised by its members.

We mark now a rapid increase of Masonry, both Ancient Craft and Royal Arch, throughout our country, which ought to be a source of gratification to every Mason. But in all our prosperity we would like to have worthy candidates. We must not forget that Masonry is a science, requiring deep and severe study to be understood and appreciated, and that by their admission they have but laid the foundation upon which to build their future moral and Masonic edifice.

There is in every ceremony and in every word of Masonry something intended to convey some great and solemn truth. Conscientious Masons see in every expressive phrase of our sublime ritual the peculiar symbolic teachings of the Craft. Masonry claims a humble station as co-worker in inculcating the true principles of morality, acting as a powerful agent of virtue.

At our meetings and lectures, in order to enlighten the brethren and make them visit the Lodges regularly, not by approximately 10 per cent., but by 80 or 90 per cent., we must show to them the greatest beauty of Masonry; the beauty of universality, which unites us, cements us close together, in the bonds of brotherly love and fidelity.

—"Masonic Tidings."