

The Hull That Conceals The Corn

"Our principal tenets are Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth. What can be sounder and more deeply moral than our creed? What more beautiful and simple than our tenets? That institution built upon the sand (we have from high authority) must fall, but that which is built upon a rock resists all floods and storms; and, amid crumbling empires and falling dynasties, still lifts its time honored head above the ruins, pursuing those labors of love and good will to the human family, that have characterized Freemasonry in all cries of its existence, Dr. Oliver very truly says: 'There is something in Masonry deeper and better than words and signs and ceremonies;' and I say that he who is content with merely knowing how to work his way into a Lodge room and to pass himself as a Brother, will never see the real living beauties of Masonry - will never behold the dazzling glory of the Mystic Temple - its moral, its Scriptural excellencies.

I admit that the outward defenses thrown around our institution are absolutely necessary to preserve the secrets of the Order from unhallowed hands, and the approach of the impostor and the unworthy; and all Masons should be perfect in a knowledge of them; but then we must bear in mind that they are but the casket that contains the precious jewel - the hull that conceals the kernel - the shell to preserve the egg. The destruction of the one is the inevitable ruin of the other. Preserve both.

Masonry itself is a living, active principle, possessing both a body and a soul, as well as outward adornments. Its paraphernalia and mystic signs are but the robes that enshrine and cover its vital, living principles, with which every Mason should be deeply imbued. We should all stand by and contend for the old land marks of the Order, and never recognize the existence of any power under the canopy of heaven to change those features of the Masonic Ritual which mark its distinctiveness as a systems and give it universality in the three symbolical Degrees.

The world may and ought to progress in the arts and sciences, in philosophy and morals. In our efforts to do good, to alleviate the sufferings of our species to dry the widow's tears, to educate and relieve the orphan, to hush the sighs of affliction and human woe, to shelter the homeless, feed the hungry, clothe the naked and instruct the ignorant - in all these, as the divine mission of our Order, we may progress. There should be progression. But in the observance of our Ritual we should be 'Old Fogies.' While it behooves us to preserve, with vestal vigilance, all the words, signs and ceremonies of the Ritual, we should also dig deep for the pearls that lie concealed at the bottom, and familiarize ourselves with our great principles, and become well acquainted with those sublime doctrines so beautifully taught and illustrated by our symbols. To do this satisfactorily requires great diligence. We must not only commit to memory our lectures, but should avail ourselves of all the Masonic publications and authorized Masonic literature, to which we can gain access. Time and perseverance accomplish all things; and the beauties and moral excellencies of Masonry are only to be discovered and rightly appreciated by the industrious and diligent student. A lazy Mason is a misnomer."

– POTS

Freemasonry is an order whose leading star is philanthropy, and whose principles inculcate an unceasing devotion to the cause of virtue and morality. – LAFAYETTE.