

Beautiful Adventure

THEY are forming a study club in there!" announced the New Brother, disgustedly, to the Old Tiler. "Get all I want of study in school. Can't see why men in lodge want to make a job out of Masonry!"

"Maybe they want to learn something about it," suggested the Old Tiler. "Some people do like to know something about the religion they practice, the organization they belong to, the truths they embrace."

"Is that a dirty dig?" demanded the New Brother. "It isn't deserved. I am not one of those careless Masons who wear the pin and pay dues and end their activity. I attend regularly. I do what I am called upon to do. I learned the work and learned it well. I even learned all the third degree, although it wasn't demanded of me. But to get together evenings in a study club and go all over it again and learn it some more-not for mine!"

"Well, no one is going to hog-tie you and throw you into a study club," answered the Old Tiler. "It's not only a free country, but a free lodge."

"I am properly thankful for it," answered the New Brother. "But I can't understand the complex these fellows have."

"Suppose you change the subject and give me a definition of the philosophy of Masonry," suggested the Old Tiler.

"Why, the philosophy of Masonry is . . . it's er . . . why, I suppose it's . . . I don't know what it is."

"Well, tell me then, what the religion of Freemasonry is?"

"That's easy," laughed the New Brother. "Fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man."

"Brotherhood of man cannot be a religion," answered the Old Tiler, "because a religion is a system of belief and worship of Deity. And the Fatherhood of God is taught in a dozen different religions, including the Christian religion, the Jewish, the Mohammedan and most of the pagan religions. You'll have to dig deeper than that for the religion of Freemasonry."

"As that sticks you, you might explain to me the real origin of the letter 'G' in Freemasonry; I don't mean the ritualistic reference to it, but its connection with the symbols of the first and second degrees."

"I didn't know it had any other origin than what we give it in the Fellowcraft degree," answered the New Brother.

"Seems to me there are several things you don't know about this craft the work of which you are so self-sufficiently proud to have learned," scoffed the Old Tiler.

"Can you give a history of Freemasonry? Do you know anything about the first Grand Lodge?"

"You mean the one at Jerusalem?"

"No, I mean London!" was the sharp answer. "Can you tell me anything about Ars Quatuor Cororiorum? Do you know the story of Price and Coxe and Freemasonry in the United States? Who Morgan was? What Freemasonry had to do with Mormonism? What other patriots besides Washington, Warren, Lafayette and Paul Revere went to a Masonic lodge for help in the Revolutionary war?"

"Do you know anything of the Egyptian and Syriac origins of any of our ceremonies and symbols? Do you understand the connection of the myth of Isis and Osiris with our lion's paw and Lion of the Tribe of Judah? Do you know why clandestinism is mentioned in our ritual or anything about Cerneauism and other spurious Masonry?"

"I know you do not! And therefore, it seems to me that you are among the many to whom attendance in a study club would be of the greatest value.

"Freemasonry is much more than a system of lodges. It is a system of living. It has many secrets to give you . . . you have learned only, the exoteric secrets; the secrets which all initiates are taught. You have nothing more from your Freemasonry than any of the rest. Yet the simple and few secrets given you in our degrees are keys with which to unlock doors behind which lie other secrets of untold value. They cannot be told to you. You wouldn't know how to understand them if you had them told to you. The only way a Mason can learn these, the inner, esoteric secrets of Freemasonry, is to use the keys we give him and unlock the doors and enter the holy of holies for himself.

"A man can do this alone. Many men have. A man may study medicine or engineering or stenography or house building or anything else alone, if he has the wit and the determination so to do. But it's easier to study such things in the company of others and with a teacher. Teaching is an art and so is study. Not all of us know these arts. Hence, we have schools and colleges to help those who want to learn but don't know how.

"A study club is a Masonic school. It makes Masonic study easier. Unfortunately, there are many to whom the word 'study' is anathema; it is connected in their minds with tiresome days in School, when some teacher taught an uninteresting subject uninterestingly. If I should form a club, I'd call it the Beautiful Adventure Club. I'd try to make its members feel that instead of hard, laborious hours studying something, they were setting out on a beautiful adventure to find the end of the Masonic rainbow, to look for the pot of hidden gold, to learn the secrets which may not be told, to get the knowledge that each man must find for himself. That's what the right kind of a study club is; a means of having ail adventure which the casual-minded man can never have. But, of

course, it's only for the Masons who like adventure and who want to see behind the locked door to which they hold the keys - where are you going?"

"You know perfectly well where I'm going!" retorted the New Brother scornfully. "I am going inside to join that club before they close the list of members! If there are any adventures to have in Freemasonry I want them, and if there are any locked doors I want to open them!"

The Old Tiler smiled. He had been an Old Tiler for a long, long time.