

## IN MEN'S HEARTS

"Where is the most beautiful Masonic temple in the world?" asked the New Brother of the Old Tiler.

"Wouldn't the answer depend on one's conception of beauty?" retorted the Old Tiler. "I might think, and you another, while an architect or an artist might choose still another."

"Well, which one do you choose?" persisted the New Brother.

"I don't!" answered the Old Tiler. "The House of the Temple in Washington is impressive; Detroit has a wonderful temple; Philadelphia's temple is massive and beautiful, the Albert Pike memorial in Little Rock is considered fine. I cannot choose."

"You think it is one of these?"

"No, I am simply trying to oblige," laughed the Old Tiler. "I know three temples which impressed me more than any of these."

"I asked because I am taking a winter vacation. I'd like to see the wonderful temples Masonry has erected. Tell me where your three are located!"

"One temple that to me is great in beauty is in a town of about 2,000 people in the Middle West. The lodge room is over a country store. The floor is bare of carpet. The chairs are plain wood. The heating plant is one large stove; it is the Junior Deacons' business to feed it during the meetings. The walls are stained, the lamps are kerosene, there is no organ or piano and the ribbons in the lodge jewels are frayed. Not very up-to-date, the members of this lodge.

"But this lodge made a boy of twenty-two a Master Mason just before he went to France in the first world war. After Soissons he lay all night on the field with a shattered leg and an arm so badly mangled that later they cut it off. While he lay there he heard familiar words from the familiar burial service of a Mason; 'this evergreen, which once marked the temporary resting place of the illustrious dead is an emblem of our faith in the immortality of the soul.'

"The wounded boy called for help. Came crawling to him was a man slightly wounded, who had said the service over the remains of a comrade. At the risk of his life he hauled the wounded boy to safety. That wounded boy came back to this little country lodge to tell his brethren of what Masonry means in men's hearts when they carry it into the battlefield. As I listened the plain board walls fell away, the deal floor became tessellated marble, the low stained ceiling became a vaulted archway and the Great Architect Himself entered the East Gate.

"Another beautiful temple I only heard of. Civil engineers were building a railroad in the Andes. One of their laborers, a Mason, had fever and had to be sent home. This party of

five sat out under the trees and the stars and talked on the square. Each of them gave a month's salary to the sick laborer. He had a wife and two babies in Denver, the wife trying to live in spite of the dread disease Denver's high altitude cures. Our ancient brethren met under the stars, where their 'covering was no less than the clouded canopy or starry-decked heaven.' But none of these ever held a more beautiful lodge than those five young men, filled with Masonic charity, giving each more than he could afford for a day laborer in hard luck, because he was a Mason.

"My third most beautiful temple was made of many little tents. There were children in them; children large and small, and there was no distinction between them of race, creed, color. All a child had to be was poor to have two weeks in the open. Nor was this a lodge charity; it was the work of a Masonic club, and run by individual contributions. As I looked I heard the organ peal as I have never heard it in many temples of stone.

"As a teacher said, 'for where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.' Where three, five, seven or more Master Masons gather in the name of Masonry, there is the temple. It is right and wise that we build great temples of stone and carving; which give testimony to all the world that here men gather in brotherhood. Masonic structures play a great part and we could spare them ill. But the greatest Masonic temples are builded in men's hearts.

"If you would visit beautiful temples in your travels. seek less for mighty building and more for a house not made with hands. 'Masonry builds her temples in the hearts of men' and in men's hearts shall you seek for, and find, those most beautiful."

The Old Tiler ceased and looked off into space as if he saw a vision. The New Brother looked at the Old Tiler. "I do not need to travel far to see one of the most beautiful temples," he said.