

## Why Men Love Freemasonry

THE New Brother sat near the Old Tiler in the anteroom, crossed his legs and took out his cigar case.

"Have a smoke and unpuzzle me."

The Old Tiler accepted the proffered cigar with a smile.

"I am often puzzled, too," he sympathized. "Tell me."

"I am quite crazy about Masonry. I love it. So do a lot of other men. And I don't know why. I can't find anyone who will tell me why. Old Tiler, why do men love Masonry?"

The Old Tiler got up and crossed the room to a bookcase, extracted a volume and returned.

"I read that question in this little book, 'The Magic of Freemasonry,' by Arthur E. Powell. Let me read to you-

The Old Tiler fluttered the pages. Finding his place he sat and began:

"Why do men love Masonry? What lure leads them to it? What spell holds them through the long years? What strand is it that tugs at our hearts, taut when so many threads are broken by the rough ways of the world? And what is it in the wild that calls to the little wild things? What sacred secret things do the mountains whisper to the hillman, so silently yet so surely that they can be heard above the din and clatter of the world? What mystery does the sea tell the sailor; the desert to the Arab; the arctic ice to the explorer; the stars to the astronomer? When we have answered these questions mayhap we may divine the magic of Masonry. Who knows what it is, or how or why, unless it be the long cable tow of God, running from heart to heart.' "

The Old Tiler closed the book and waited.

"The cable tow of God," repeated the New Mason. "That's a beautiful phrase."

"It's more than a phrase, I think," the Old Tiler answered. "As I see it, the heart of Freemasonry by which all manner of men are attracted and held, is just that-the longing for communion with the Most High."

"Oh, you must be mistaken. Men who want God go to church."

"Do you go to church?"

"Er, oh, well, sometimes."

"Yet you never miss coming to lodge."

"No, I don't, but-"

"Never mind the 'but.'" The Old Tiler smiled: "A lot of Then come to the lodge who do not find heart's case in the church. The lodge is not a substitute for church. Masonry is not a religion, although it has religion. If the church fails, occasionally, it is because all human institutions must fail at times. No minister or church can satisfy all men. Some men find communion with the Most High in Masonry a greater satisfaction than in a church. I think that is the real reason some men love Freemasonry so much."

"You give me credit with being a lot more religious than I do," retorted the New Mason.

"Men are incurably religious," asserted the Old Tiler. "Many don't know it and refuse to call it by that name, like you, for instance! In a church, men are told various things about God. In a lodge they are allowed to tell themselves what they will. In a church you are taught a creed, a dogma. In a lodge there is neither. In a church you are quiet and respectful and whisper if you speak at all. It is kept high, unspotted from the world. A lodge is more intimate, personal. You can be jolly in a lodge, except during a degree. Here are just other men, brothers. They think as we do; they believe in the one God, as we do. They repeat the same words, think the same Masonic thoughts, do the same Masonic acts, as we do. We feel at home with them in consequence,

"Through years of simple, profound degrees, we weave the Mystic Tie. We cannot say of what it is composed. We cannot put a name to it. St. Augustine, asked of God, answered, 'I know until you ask me-when you ask me, I do not know.' In your heart you know, and I know, what the Mystic Tie is-what Freemasonry is. But you cannot say it, nor can I. It is too deep for words. It is the reason we use symbols, for words cannot express it.

"Deep in us is something which understands what brains cannot think; something which knows what our minds cannot comprehend. Masonry speaks to that something in its own language. If we must put it into words, God is the only syllable which seems to fit. But when we say God we mean no special deity, but all that is beautiful in life, in friendship, in charity, in brotherhood.

"So, my brother, there is no reason for you to be puzzled; no man can answer your puzzle. Freemasonry is loved by men because it strikes deep into the human heart, and supplies the answer to the question, the food for the hunger, which the tongue cannot express...

"Unless it is the tongue of a wise, wise Old Tiler," finished the New Brother thoughtfully. "And thank you. I am not puzzled now."