

He who seeks all things

Companion Hodson's report on Correspondence is as entertaining as usual, and he gives to Canada for 1902 his close attention. He quotes our remarks to Companion Barlow, of Connecticut, on the dependent membership question, and comments thereon with the customary supporting pleas. "While we are with him on the desirability of every Mason retaining his connection with the lodge, we are still of the opinion that it was never intended that he should be legislated into doing so. The perfect freedom which is enjoined at his initiation should not be violated later. Our objection is directed solely to the assault on a principle, and, to our mind, a fundamental principle. The Brother can only come in of his own free will, and Masonry requires a perfect freedom of inclination in every applicant for its mysteries. That freedom of inclination should not be taken, from him after his admission, no matter to what height his ambition may have brought him.

Brethren who achieve the distinction of Knighthood by the payment of fees and then desire to get out of the Lodge are dubbed by Companion Hodson "cold-hearted, white-livered sneaks," "sordid, stingy, selfish fellows." Yet he would cling to them. If they are as he describes them, we incline to the opinion that the Lodge would benefit by their absence.

The real truth is that the desire of these "upper crust" bodies to receive acquisitions is at the bottom of the evil. The young Mason, before he has had time to absorb the teachings of the Craft and realize their beauty and value, is "approached"— there is no use blinking the fact— and his mind is soon filled with the idea of becoming a "sword." He wants his identity as a Brother or Companion to be sunk in the greater honor of climbing to the dizzy altitude of a feather-tipped organization, which numbers "three hundred swords," and would like to make it four hundred. If the young Brother were given time to reflect, and a proper interval enforced between the Blue Lodge and the Chapter, and a longer period between the Chapter and the Commandery, the rushing process would cease, and we would have not only better Lodges and Chapters, but better Masons to support them.

But then the chapeau and the fez would suffer, and that, of course, would never do. Whence would come recruits for the drill corps and the escorts? Whence the ever growing "class" for the hot sands and the jamboree ? Perish the thought.

*'The man who seeketh one thing in life, and but one, may hope to achieve it before life be done; but he who seeks all things, wherever he goes, only reaps from the hopes which around him he sows, a harvest of barren regrets.'*

### **Sources**

Proceedings of the Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of Canada at the annual convocation, 1903, report on Foreign Correspondence - Oregon