



Advertising

A dialogue between a new Brother and an experienced, knowledgeable Past Master.

Things are not always as obvious as they might first seem!

Based on the Old Tiler Talks
by Carl H. Claudy
(published in the USA in 1925)

ADVERTISING

The New Brother leaned against the wall in the ante room near a Past Master and said, "We would do more good in the world if we advertised ourselves more," he said.

"Why?" asked the Past Master.

"So that those not members of the fraternity would know more about our work."

"Why should they?"

"The more people know about us, the more regard they have for us, the more men would want to be Masons, the larger we would grow, and so the more powerful we would be!" answered the New Brother.

"So, you would advertise us until all men became Masons?"

"Well- er- I don't know about all men; but certainly until most men applied."

"If all men were Masons at heart there would be no need for Masonry," answered the Past Master. "But not all who call themselves Master Masons are real Masons. What we need to do is advertise ourselves to our own Brethren."

"But we know all about Masonry," protested the New Brother, "the world at large does not."

"Oh, no, we don't know all about Masonry!" cried the Past Master.

"Even the best-informed don't know all about Masonry. The best-informed electricians do not know all about electricity; the best-informed astronomers do not know all about astronomy; the best-informed geologists do not know all about geology. We have much to learn."

"But electricity and astronomy and geology are sciences. Masonry is- is - well, Masonry was made by men, and so men must know all about it," says the Brother

"Can a man make something greater than himself?" countered the Past Master. "Our ears hear sounds translate vibrations of air or other material to our brains - as noise or music. But the ear is limited; we do not hear all the sounds in nature; some animals and insects hear noises we cannot hear. We have eyes, yet these imperfect instruments turn into colour and light but a tiny proportion of light waves. Scientific instruments recognize vibrations which physical senses take no account of - radio and x-ray for instance. Yet our whole conception of the universe is founded on what we see and hear. Very likely the universe is entirely different from what we think. The ant's tiny world is a hill; he has no knowledge of the size of the country in which is his home, let alone the size or shape of the world. A dog's world is the city where he lives; not for him is the ocean or the continent or the world. The stars and the moon and the sun are to him but shining points. Our world is bigger; we see a universe through a telescope, but we can only speculate as to its extent or what is beyond the narrow confines of our instruments.

"Masonry is like that. Our hearts understand a certain kind of love. Talk as we will about brotherhood of man and Fatherhood of God, we yet compare the one to the love of

two blood-brothers and the second to our feelings for our children. We measure both by the measuring rods we have.

"Real brotherhood and real Fatherhood of God may be grander, broader, deeper, and wider, than we know. Masonry contains the thought; our brains have a limited comprehension of it. If this be so then we know little about Masonry, and what even the most learned of us think is probably far short of reality."

"All that may be so," answered the New Brother, "and it is a most interesting idea; but what has it to do with advertising to the outside world?"

"Does a scientist make any progress by advertising his science?" countered the Past Master. "Will a geometrician discover a new principle by advertising for more students? Will the astronomer discover a new sun by running placards in the newspapers? Will a geologist discover the mystery of the earth's interior by admitting more members to the geological society?"

"Masonry needs no advertising to the outside world, but advertising to its own members. Now, I use the word in your sense, but I do not mean publicity. Masons need to be taught to extend Masonry's influence over men's hearts and minds. We do not need more material to work with, but better work on the half worked material we already have.

"Masonry is humble and secret; not for her the blare of trumpets and the scare head of publicity. To make it other than what it is would rob it of its character. To study, reflect, and labour in it is to be a scientist in Masonry, discovering constantly something new and better that it be more effective

on those who embrace its gentle teachings and its mysterious power."

"Oh, all right!" smiled the New Brother. "I won't put it in the paper tomorrow. Past Master, where did you learn so much?"

"I didn't," smiled the Past Master. "I know very little. But the little I did learn was by keeping an open mind and an open heart - which was taught me by-"

"Don't tell me! By your teachers in school?" interrupted the New Brother.

"No, not all," answered the Past Master, "not school, but by Masonry itself."