

**ADDRESS TO THE BRETHREN
OF THE
SYDNEY LODGE OF RESEARCH.**

Delivered by the First W.M., R.W. Bro. J. C. Heighway,
G.S.W., at his Installation, March 10th, 1914.

I WISH, before passing on to welcome the Most Wor. the Grand Master and to thank him for having granted this, the Sydney Lodge of Research, its Charter, and for his attendance here with his Grand Lodge officers to bring this Lodge into existence, to address a few words to the members of the Lodge who have honoured me by placing the reins in my hands for the first twelve months. At all times it must be a pleasure to receive the choice of the brethren and to be entrusted with the government of a Lodge, more so must it be a pleasure to be the first Worshipful Master of a Lodge, and still more so, as in the present instance, when perhaps many obstacles are to be overcome, new ground is to be broken and fresh history made. My object, however, in addressing you is not on personal grounds. I dismiss that subject by thanking the members very sincerely for their confidence, and will assure them that my best efforts will be put forward during the year to promote the interests of the Lodge.

Now, and throughout our proceedings to-night, I wish all to remember that this Lodge is not (and indeed no Masonic Lodge should be) formed for the personal aggrandisement of the W.M. or any of his officers. In our later proceedings the orthodox toast of the W.M. will give place to that of the Sydney Lodge of Research, and I hope all our remarks here and in the south will be devoted to that subject.

I have heard that a doubt has been expressed as to the utility and necessity for such a Lodge as this. Might I say in reply that I think our Grand Lodge, in not having a Lodge for the study of Masonic subjects and for the enlightenment of the Craft, has lagged behind our sister Grand Lodges. We pride ourselves on our mother State of New South Wales, and on our Grand Lodge, and yet for 25 years we have been content with our Lodges conferring degrees—making Masons who, in turn, would make other Masons—and allowing the slur to rest upon us that we have no Lodge organized solely to exploit that social side of Masonry which provides for the interchange of thought and the benefitinc, of each other for the more serious side of this world's affairs. Could we justly claim that our Grand Lodge was exercising its full function as a sovereign Grand body until this necessary adjunct to our Masonic work was provided ?

This Lodge will, I hope, make the circle of our Masonic knowledge, if not complete, still nearer to complete than it has been. I know we have the material, and in future we will, as a Grand Lodge, point with pride not merely to a Lodge bearing the name of the Sydney Lodge of Research, but to the work which it will be doing, and the opportunity provided to those who wish to extend their researches and to look upon the better side of Masonry, and who, till now, have lacked that opportunity. Hitherto we have deplored the passing out of active service of Grand Lodge officers and Past Masters of Lodges, many of whom were capable of rendering good service to the Craft ; to these the opportunity of continuing their studies is now presented, and to them chiefly this Lodge will look for guidance, instruction and enlightenment on the subjects which will be discussed. So has the Sydney Lodge of Research removed the dead end which our brethren have found themselves up against, and thus will it justify its existence.

At the same time I would like to remove what I understand is a very wrong impression which has gained ground, that this Lodge is for Past Masters only. To-night we have invested our officers, some of whom are not Past Masters. Our Bro. Secretary, on whom the detail work of the Lodge will fall, and to whom I am looking for much interesting research work, is not a Past Master. In fact, the only qualification for membership is that of a Master Mason affiliated to another Lodge, and every member will naturally have full opportunity for taking part in our work and discussions.

We start to-night without any traditions, but it must be remembered by each of us that in the next few months we will be the makers of traditions. In doing so let us look not only to the present, but bear in mind that in our deliberations we must seek to place the Lodge on a firm foundation, laying down traditions that will bear the scrutiny and respect of those following us. In ordinary new Lodges the work has been clearly defined by our ritual, and the first W.M. brings to his aid his previous experience, which is at the disposal of the members. In our case we start without experience. We may study the methods of other similar Lodges, but as

the talent available to us will not be the same, nor other conditions equal, we must map out for ourselves a course which our successors will regard as the traditions of the Sydney Lodge of Research. In doing this, I am sure we will bear in mind the possibilities and probabilities of the future and endeavour to blaze a track free from all dogmatical ideas, but with a clear and earnest wish that as we start so may our successors (as we pass out of the sphere of usefulness) continue, that they may look back on the founders of the Lodge as those who have handed down something to revere and cherish, something which must not be brushed aside to meet the caprice of the moment.

In commencing work in such a Lodge, some doubt might arise in the minds of the members as to the subjects suitable, as to their ability to handle the subject, and as to the length of the papers. Might I say by way of encouragement to those brethren who are only *thinking*, that the Lodge will appreciate the brother who even thinks. Presently his thoughts will bring knowledge, he will receive encouragement to greater effort, he will become a student and a teacher. In his early stages let him not overburden himself on too deep a subject, let him not wear himself on a subject which might puzzle the most seasoned lecturer, and let him be assured that a paper dealing thoughtfully and carefully for even a quarter of an hour will be quite as welcome and quite as appreciated as the longer and more ambitious effort of the brother of experience. And let me assure him that from those brethren of experience to whom we are naturally looking for much of our enlightenment he will receive every help and assistance. Knowing them, I can say that they wisely recognize that the time must come when they will be unable to continue the work, and their desire and fervent wish is to educate the novice, that he may take up the work when their time approaches to lay it down. Thus do we ask for the confidence of our young members, thus do we hope to lay a sure foundation for our Lodge.

Here I might mention that I have asked Wor. Bro. O. C. Beale, a brother whose ability as a lecturer many of us know, to deliver the first lecture, which will be at our regular meeting on Friday, April 10th. His subject will be " Pax Romana : Our Civilization in the First Half Century of Roman Peace," when special allusion will be made to Jerusalem under the Empire.

In the matter of subjects, our Brother Secretary has made to me what I think is a valuable suggestion, and which I will ask him to give effect to immediately. He proposes to establish a register of subjects suitable for discussion, or subjects on which brethren seek for instruction or knowledge. To this end he will circularize the members, and I feel sure that by this means some subjects which perhaps have been overlooked will be suggested, while some members who through their own learning have passed over such subjects as unworthy of serious comment will be prompted to impart their knowledge to others. We have all experienced how even a casual remark has opened out a new line of thought, and so I hope that this register of subjects will in itself provide much food for reflection.

In a Lodge of this nature it appears to me that we require three classes of members :-

- Those who can teach.
- Those who can criticize justly.
- Those who can listen and learn.

Some brethren may be fortunate enough to belong to each class, some to two, but every brother should be able to listen and learn. Masonic subjects are so deep that no brother has yet attained such wisdom that there is nothing left for him to learn. But each class is necessary for the welfare of the Lodge, and it will be a tradition of the Lodge that each class shall be encouraged. Those who can teach, I look to, to impart their knowledge to others. Knowledge is not a commodity which should be stored for the use of the possessor only, it is not granted nor acquired for such purpose, but should be passed on to others, and so will the possessor reap a reward for his labours.

And having passed on the result of his research I am sure he will welcome the just criticism of the members. If his work is accepted he will be fortified, if not he may be saved from following a line of argument which started with a wrong basis. The critic will act for the good of all, his work will not be one of destruction but of construction ; his place will not be to ridicule and ruthlessly put aside what may have been a great labour to secure, but to guide and open out fresh channels of thought, perhaps for himself, but certainly for the brethren generally.

And those who come simply to listen and learn will have an equally important duty—that of encouraging by their presence and attention those who are in the other classes. Those who are working quietly in the sphere of research will be encouraged and aided to renewed effort by those who sit to listen and learn. There is a traditional place in the Lodge for every brother.

Speaking generally on the *personnel* of the Lodge, it will be noted that our Grand Master has made an endorsement on the charter with the object of confining its membership only to subscribing members of other Lodges. This condition to our charter is a welcome one to the founders of the Lodge. Throughout the preliminary discussions this point was continually before them, and although it was intended to make it one of the traditions of the Lodge that such a qualification should exist, it was realized that changed circumstances might arise whereby the work of the Lodge could be diverted into other channels. Although we still have the right to ballot for and initiate members, we lay it down as a tradition that this right should only be exercised under extraordinary conditions.

And now a few words to the officers of the Lodge. Traditions may become irksome if all other interests are made subservient to them without consideration of the requirements of the moment ; but there is one tradition which should never fall into disuse, and that is that the W.M. shall sound his gavel at the hour appointed in the by-laws. I trust when the by-laws are being framed that our time for opening will be fixed at such an hour that will allow officers to be in their places punctually to time. Nothing is more distressing and disheartening than to hasten from business to the suburbs and back again, only to find that there was no need for the hurry. I ask the officers to carefully assist me in this. Beyond the opening and closing of the Lodge we will not have any ritual work, but I hope the officers will remember that the position this Lodge will occupy in Masonry makes it urgently necessary that this little work be performed correctly.. Our officers will naturally be brethren of experience, but oftentimes I fear that officers of experience rely on their experience more than that experience warrants. The very fact that this Lodge will no doubt be mainly composed of brethren of Masonic standing will at once lead visiting brethren to quote what is done here as correct. Let us then as officers realize our responsibility to the Craft and establish the tradition that we must not mislead or allow wrong impressions to be carried away.

In this connection, too, I trust the members will set up a standard worthy of the Lodge, and which, too, will become a tradition. How often do we see good work done by officers of a Lodge spoiled by the slovenly and careless methods of the members. I know it will be agreed that the reputation of the Lodge will be considerably enhanced by officers and members working together to promote a high standard in the little ritual work we have to perform.

And as the last tradition I wish to speak about to-night, may I remind the brethren that all our work, all our discussions and deliberations, must be conducted with a view to the peace and harmony of the Lodge. In our papers and our lectures we must avoid subjects which will lead to unkind and uncharitable controversy. It must be remembered that our members will be drawn from various Lodges—Lodges with different views and different friendships. They will meet here on a new platform, but one on which I trust they will find at all times the spirit of good comradeship. In our discussions I hope our views will be put forward with all humility, remembering that our efforts will be better rewarded if submitted in that humility of spirit which our teachings inculcate. In that spirit I am sure better friendships will be formed, and peace and harmony will always be with us.

And now I have only to appeal to all, to our Grand Master and his officers, to the officers of the Lodge, to the members of the Lodge, and to the Craft as a whole both in the city and in the country too—for our work is in the interests of Freemasonry generally—to look with a kindly and fraternal eye on this baby Lodge, to foster it and nurse it in its childhood, to bear with it in its youthful stages, till in its ripe manhood it may develop into a useful adjunct to our Masonic work and a lasting ornament to our Grand Lodge.

And may the G.A.O.T.U. bless and aid us in our work.