

The Benefits of "Lectures" in The Lodge-Room?

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LECTURES

W. Bro. F. J. P. Facey, P.M. (Lodge of Sincerity, No. 179), moved: "That at least one night a year be set apart for a lecture on some aspect of Freemasonry." He said that it was a very important matter. At the present time there were poor attendances in Lodges, and if lectures were given, more interest would be taken in the regular meetings. The education imparted by experienced Brethren by means of lectures was beneficial, and helped the members to understand more about the Craft. At the last Quarterly Communication of Grand Lodge a long list of Brethren excluded was read, and a good number of these exclusions were due to the fact that Brethren became tired of ordinary ritual work and wanted instruction on the meanings of the ceremonies. He was in favour of at least one lecture a year in every Lodge.

V.W. Bro. F. C. Beck, P.P.B.B. (United Press Lodge, No. 281), said that his experience was not altogether in favour of lectures, and he had known cases where, when a lecture was announced to be delivered, there was a falling off in the attendance. He believed that the Brethren were not tired of Degree work. The witnessing of Degree work each night was always refreshing, just the same as listening to the same clergyman Sunday after Sunday. (Laughter) He would not like to see lectures made a compulsory addition to the work in the Lodges. **There was the Lodge of Research, which met in Melbourne, and lectures were regularly delivered in that Lodge, but it would be somewhat surprising to find out how many Brethren attended those lectures.** That was worth consideration.

M.W. Pro Grand Master: We have lectures given in various Lodges, and the attendance of Brethren on the occasions when the lectures were delivered was less than at Degree work. It would not be conducive to our Degree work if lectures were made compulsory.

Bro. Rev. F. E. H. Tolhurst (Cobden Lodge, No. 381), said the idea of the motion did not seem quite clear to him. When they spoke of lectures they referred to the lectures on the T.B. He had never heard a lecture on a T.B. delivered, and the reason of that was that none of the Brethren had the ability to deliver them. The T.B. lectures might be allowed to be delivered by members other than Past Master.

M. W. Pro Grand Master: The Grand Masters had for some years urged that lectures should be delivered of an instructional nature, especially to the younger Brethren. Some of the Brethren complain that Degree work becomes monotonous, and ask for lectures to be delivered. It is desirable that lectures on the T.B. should be delivered at least once a year. I have heard of Brethren who were Freemasons for many years who had never heard a lecture on the T.B.

The motion was lost.

(Extracts from the Report of Proceedings, Conference of Secretaries 26th Sept **1928**) – (from Friends of the Archives 33)

The following remarks of WBro David Fletcher (PAGDC) are worthy of quotation:- "...In the large majority of Lodges little more than the workings of the three degrees are communicated to the Brethren, The young Mason of today...wants to know more. Lodges of Instruction fall far short of their duty in this respect. Most of them are mainly, if not exclusively, concerned with the learning of the particular brand of Ritual they affect and repeating it meticulous accuracy of detail and action, generally speaking with an entire absence of understanding. (AQC, XLV (**1935**), p. 305 cited in *A Commentary on the Freemasonic Ritual* – E.H. Cartwright p.37)