

*Address by the Deputy Grand Master of Cabanatuan on October 29, 1966.*

We have, all of us, a high duty to perform during our short sojourn on this Earth — to God, to our Country and to ourselves. This duty may be described by some as our duty to uphold the dignity of the human race. It is a duty, therefore, to God because He made us like unto His own image; to our Country because it nourishes and protects us; and to ourselves because we are the instrument itself.

To perform this duty we have all been endowed with two vital forces — the force of Reason and the force of Conscience. Reason derives from the brain; Conscience derives from the heart. So as the brain cannot function without nourishment from a healthy heart, so cannot Reason survive without nutrition from a healthy Conscience.

Without the power of Reason to evaluate and direct our actions, and the power of Conscience to differentiate between right and wrong, we would not be, in the generic sense, a "human race" at all. We would have dignity, no doubt, but our dignity would be such as would apply, perhaps, to a thoroughbred steed; or to the King of Beasts; or to the majestic elephant; or to the soaring eagle.

We are a "Human race," therefore, because we have the power to reason, and because we have a conscience; and with these two attributes, the word "dignity", as applied to the human race, takes on a very special meaning.

We, of the human race, can all think without reasoning, but none of us can reason without thinking. So that thinking becomes a mere process, whereas Reasoning becomes a power.

The power of reasoning, though inborn, must be developed to become a force. This is accomplished at first by parental teaching, guidance and example, and later supplemented by the established educational processes. After our formal schooling comes to an end, we should be so thoroughly equipped mentally that the power of Reason becomes a *force* of Reason by the application of everything we have assimilated to the conduct of our lives, and to our behavior in our community to which we must lend strength with our knowledge.

Now let's go back to Conscience. We, of the human race, can all think without differentiating between right and wrong; but we cannot make this differentiation without thinking. So that, again, as in the case of Reason, thinking is a mere process whereas Conscience is a force. And conscience is a force from the very beginning, ingrained from birth. Conscience wields its force over Reason throughout our life. It influences the evaluation and direction of our actions which were prompted by Reason. Were it not for Conscience, Reason could justify evil as well as good.

Conscience is honed, not developed, through parental influences and religious education, and continues to hold

Turn to next page

a tight reign on our reasoning abilities, especially where they apply to business and social relationships with others.

Dignity — the dignity of man — is the state or quality of being excellent, worthy or honorable. Thus, the more man develops his reasoning powers, the greater becomes his *force* of Reason; the more finely honed is his Conscience, the more beneficial becomes his impact on society; the more respected his status in the society of men, the higher the level of his dignity — and it is this level of dignity that must be achieved, upheld and maintained if we are to fulfill our duty to God, Country and ourselves.

Just how does Masonry apply in our efforts to reach this goal? It must be obvious to you. Are not all of our rituals, and teachings, and lectures in the degrees designed to improve our reasoning powers? Does not the symbolism, which is our way of teaching, cause you to exert a strenuous mental effort if you will understand our meaning? Has not everything you have finally discerned on your own from our symbolism

not improved your powers of reasoning, and caused you to delve more deeply, thereby again improving yourself? Is not the force of Conscience honed to a fine edge if we understand, absorb and live up to the Obligations taken at the Altar?

What more is there to say? Those of us who profess to be Masons, and are; i.e., in name only, cannot ever achieve the level of dignity we should and could. Those of us who never tire to seek all the light there is in Masonry still may not reach the ultimate goal of excellence, which is dignity in its fullest, because life is short and the Masonic road is long and arduous.

But let us strive ever harder to become the men we *ought* to be. Let us not give the lie to the belief that "Masonry will make us better men." Let us use the powers God has given us — that the force of Reason and the force of Conscience shall prevail and give us the satisfaction of knowing, at the sunset of our lives, that we will have done our part to uphold the dignity of the human race.



Pictured above is the awarding of Teacher-of-the-Year Diplomas held in Dagupan City. The audience was made up of teachers for the most part. In inset, in the middle are Urbano Tuates, awardee for Elementary Teacher and Rosario Tabuno, awardee for High School.