

# Our "Working Tools"

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Memorial Lodge No. 90

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Masonry, unlike other fraternities, has working tools. This is why it has withstood all vicissitudes and the ravages of inhuman and barbarous assaults from its birth since time immemorial, it being founded upon a rock. But unlike the farmer, the carpenter or the mechanic who actually work with their tools, the tools of Masonry are symbols of noble virtues for exemplary moral and spiritual conduct. They are the constant reminders to every Mason of his commitments to the fraternity.

For the benefit of the brethren and others who may be curious, I am sure there are many, I have tried to make a transcription of what the working tools signify.

## TWENTY-FOUR INCH GAUGE

This is an instrument for measurement. As the name indicates, it is divided into twenty-four equal parts. It reminds us of the twenty-four hours of the day. Because of its equal division, it teaches us to divide our time into twenty-four equal parts. Masons are taught to divide their time into three ways, namely: First, they must have a time for the service of God and man, particularly the distressed worthy brethren. Second, they must have a time for their own work so as to provide themselves and families the necessities of life. Third, they must have a time for leisure and rest.

It must be noticed that the first thing that occupies our time is God and man. The writer recalls that before he entered Masonry, he heard

people say that this is a Godless fraternity. But when he first attended the ceremony of Masonry, he saw the Holy Bible at the center of the Lodge. He proved the falsity of what he heard. A Godless fraternity does not use the Holy Bible, much less place it on the altar of the Lodge to guide its deliberations. A Godless fraternity does not pray. Masons do pray. They believe that "Real prayer is the release of the Divine Power, not an endeavor to alter the purpose of God, but that the will of God be done through us". Masonry, although not a religion, is very religious. It believes in the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of men, hence Masonry is trying to draw peoples of various religious groups, social and educational levels to witness its public ceremonies so as to erase from their minds the impression and belief that Masonry is Godless.

## THE COMMON GAVEL

This instrument of Masonry is a symbol of great moral significance. Masons who construct structures of stones and hollow blocks use this instrument to break the unnecessary parts of stones and hollow blocks so as to fit them for the building. The noble and glorious lesson it imparts to us is that we have to do away with vices, divest our hearts and consciences of all unnecessary things — works of the flesh, which are "adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, hatred, variance, wrath, strife and heresies." These things

will make us unfit for that "spiritual building, that house not made with hands, eternal in heaven."

#### THE PLUMB

This instrument symbolizes a divine, moral and spiritual virtue — Righteousness before God and men. This is the emphasis of Jesus' preaching, knowing that men have gone astray from the Father, followed their own desires, their whims and caprices which will lead them into "the outer darkness where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth". Masons are required to live righteous lives.

When righteousness is the dominant spirit of men and practice it, we have no need of police forces and big armies for which our government appropriates huge amounts every year. If righteousness is the dominant spirit of those in the employ of the government, especially those in the higher echelons, graft and corruption are unknown. If Masons are given chances to occupy positions of trust in the government, because of the proven righteousness of Masons, they surely will do honor to the government and to their fraternity and most of all, to their God. The only hope of erasing or eradicating graft and corruption and all sorts of crookedness in the government or elsewhere, is the employment of men who are highly motivated by honesty and devotion to duty, men who are God-conscious like Joseph of old who preferred to be imprisoned rather than soil the purity of his conscience, the dignity of the trust reposed in him and his loyalty to His God.

#### THE SQUARE

This instrument teaches that all Masons, and all people for that matter, must act and live upon the square. It symbolizes truth and moral-

ity. What is TRUTH and MORALITY? Truth, according to Webster is the "quality or state of being true, hence, fidelity, constancy, or conformity to fact or reality, or rule." And morality, according to the same source is, "that which conveys moral lessons or sentiments, rectitude of life or ethics". The Golden Rule may be appropriate to illustrate the lesson of truth and morality. First, the golden rule of Christianity states, "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them". "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself". The golden Rule of Buddhism: "One should seek for others the happiness one desires for one's self. Hurt no other in ways that you yourself would find harmful". The golden rules of Confucius, Jewish, Hindu, Brahmanism, Taoism, and the rest, are identical with these golden rules of Christianity and Buddhism.

As all know, the four sides of a square are all equal. This is why Masons treat men equally irrespective of their social, economic and educational levels, irrespective of race and religious affiliations. A true Mason is only aristocratic in his moral and spiritual conduct and behaviour, but democratic in his dealings with his fellowmen. This is the reason why not all persons who want to enter Masonry are admitted. Those who want to enter must come from tongues of good report and well recommended, who have proven their righteousness and integrity of character and with the high and noble motive of service and are willing to make sacrifices.

#### THE LEVEL

This instrument is used to prove horizontals. The important lesson it imparts is that, as we travel upon the level of time to the eternal abode

above, we must always show our fidelity and loyalty in the observance of the high moral and spiritual virtues of Masonry. These high moral and spiritual virtues are not proved in the proficiency in reciting the obligations, nor in writing nice articles and making good advices and speeches. They are rather proved in the daily conduct in the discharge of our work and the dealings and associations with our fellowmen. We must prove to God and men that we are worthy members of this noble fraternity. Then at the end of our journey, we shall hear the benevolent soft words, "Come, ye blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world". This is the ideal place which Masons are striving to enter.

#### THE TROWEL

The lesson we get from this instrument is to spread the cement of brotherly love and affection. Love is the greatest thing in the world. When people all over the world understand the meaning of love and apply it, then there will be no more wars or rumors of wars. Harmony and peace will reign. This is a great mission of Masonry — disseminate and propagate love, charity.

#### NATIONAL SOJOURNERS....

Among the organizations in our midst predicated its membership on Master Masons is the National Sojourners. This is an organization "pledged to the ideals of patriotism and to the security of the nation." Its membership is open to Master Masons who were former or present officers of the uniformed services of the United States. The local organization admits those Master Masons who have served honorably as commissioned officers of the former USAFFE, including recognized guerrillas.

According to the May issue of the New Age Magazine, a group of commissioned officers met together at Manila as early as 1900, organized informally as a club and gave it the name Sojourners; out of which group arose in 1901 the formation of an American Masonic Lodge in the Philippines. This became the nucleus of our present Grand Lodge in the Philippine Islands.

Anyone interested in becoming a Sojourner should contact Bro. J. J. de Guzman who is the present Secretary, whose address is P. O. Box 577, Manila, or Tel. 3-95-96.



*Masonry's mission, therefore, to the individual is to uplift his character and establish a nobler manhood.*

—Owen Scott.

*If one advances confidently in the direction of his dreams, and success comes unexpected in common hours . . . If you have built castles in the air, your work need not be lost; that is where they should be. Now put the foundations under them.*

—Henry David Thoreau