

## Superficial Resemblances

It is a well known fact that a small hole in a dike can ruin the whole structure. The small trickle opens the way for the cutting, devouring, devastating flood raging behind it.

Just so it is with the character of a man. A little break in the defenses built around it to hold back the flood of hatred, jealousies, selfishness, unworthy ambitions, greed and false pride and soon the dikes are down, the ruinous torrent comes pouring through.

The dikes protecting character must be built of strong materials held in place by the best substances. In the case of Masons a special substance is provided which, if used, results in a wall of great strength and security. It is the substance of brotherly love and affection; that substance which unites us as friends and brothers, among whom no contention should ever exist but that noble contention, or rather emulation, of who best can work or best agree.

A dike held together with that substance will stand secure. But it must be the pure material. When contaminated with impurities, danger of breaks is ever present. Nearly every case of cracked up character can be traced to some impurity in the substance.

There are any number of these superficial qualities that may be

found in our dikes, but the most treacherous and destructive one is insincerity. It is often used because it can be made to look exactly like the real thing. A wall built with it looks perfect, appears strong, seems dependable. The truth is it has no strength at all and is certain to crumble under pressure.

The dikes of the entire structure of civilization are weakened by this corroding, false substance of insincerity. Its effects are visible everywhere, in social, political, industrial, educational, even religious and fraternal experience. We have become past masters in the sorry practice of substituting it for the genuine thing and the inevitable is happening. Confidence and trust have largely disappeared or if given are violated with disheartening frequency. The floods of selfseeking, greedy, ambitious passions run riot in the hearts of men, driving them to acts of corruption, injustice and iniquity abhorrent to any true sense of decency.

Freemasonry has not escaped. No one knows how many men have come into the Fraternity to use its standing and their membership as a shield behind which all kinds of abominations have been and are being practiced. Many who have come in with honest hearts and noble purpose have been discouraged to find around them insincerity, dissimulation and emp-

ty pretense where they expected and hoped for help in fellowship and true brotherhood.

It may be felt such things should not be said publicly; that if any evil of this kind exists it should be hushed and hidden. That view is fallacious and itself bears the mark of insincerity. Evil doing may be hushed within the Lodge but it cannot be hidden there. Any attempt to do so only brings the Craft under public contempt. When gentle warnings do no good the Lodge itself should be the first to expose wrong doing and the wrong doer. Corruption loves dark silence and thrives in it. An unworthy villain feels very safe in the belief he will not be publicly denounced and his deeds uncovered. To such a one, step in insincerity, brotherly admonition means nothing and expulsion is rarely ordered for less than outright criminal acts. Such odious things as, under some thin shelter of law, stealing from widows and orphans, using power of position to filch, cunning stirring up discord and dissension to promote personal ambitions, by crafty maneuvers robbing a brother of credit and

honor justly his due, these things are winked at and frequently the guilty ones are honored with special preferment or high rewards.

We have condoned, even nurtured, this insincerity so long that some of us begin to look like the ancient Pharisee who stood in the Temple offering thanks he was not as other men are when, in truth, we should be standing with the publican asking mercy for our sins. To those Pharisees it was said: "Ye blind guides which strain at a gnat and swallow a camel. Woe unto you for ye make clean the outside of the cup and extortion and excess... even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity."

Any man who, professing Masonic principles, practices insincerity inside or outside of the Lodge is a blind guide and a discredit to the Fraternity.

Tolerance of such men and their superficial resemblances is weakening the dikes of Masonry.

*Editorial in The Masonic Chronicle*



## The Church And Freemasonry

*The following paragraphs are excerpts taken from an address delivered at the Grand Master's Breakfast, St. Louis, Missouri, May 6, 1956 by Bro. and Judge Fred L. Wham:*

Between the Church and Freemasonry, thinking of their relative importance to humankind and to the civilization we seek to improve,

I am sure that none of us would hesitate to put the Church first by an immeasurable margin. Without the Church and its influence upon