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MASONIC SONG

by Brother Robert Burns

**Ye sons of old Killie, assembled by Willie,
To follow the noble vocation;
Your thrifty old mother has scarce such another
To sit in that honoured station.
I've little to say, but only to pray,
As praying's the ton of your fashion;
A prayer from the muse you well may excuse,
'Tis seldom her favorite passion.**

**Ye powers who preside o'er the wind and the tide,
Who marked each element's border,
Who formed this frame with beneficent aim
Whose sovereign statute is order,
Within this dear mansion may wayward contention,
Or withered envy ne'er enter,
May secrecy round be the mystical bound
And brotherly love be the center.**

ADIEU, A HEART-WARM, FOND ADIEU

by Brother Robert Burns

Adieu, a heart warm, fond **adieu**,
Dear brothers of the mystic tie!
Ye favored, **ye** enlightened few,
Companions of my social joy!
Tho' I to foreign lands must **hie**,
Pursuing fortune's **slidd'ry ba'**,--
With melting heart and brimful eye,
I'll **mind** you still, though far **awa'**.

Oft have I met your social band,
An' spent the cheerful, festive night;
Oft, honored with supreme command,
Presided o'er the sons of light;
And **by** that Hieroglyphic bright,
Which none but Craftsmen ever saw,
Strong memory on my heart shall write
Those happy scenes, when far **awa'**.

May freedom, harmony and love
Unite you in the grand design,
Beneath th' omniscient Eye above,
The glorious Architect divine; --
That you may keep the unerring line,
Still rising **by** the **plummet's** law,
Till order bright completely shine,
Shall be my prayer when far **awa'**.

And you farewell, whose merits claim
Justly that highest badge to wear,--
Heaven bless your honored, noble name,

To Masonry and **Scotia** dear!
A last request, permit me here;
When yearly ye assemble **a'**,
One round, -- I ask it with a tear
To him, the Bard, that's far **awa'**.

THE LEVEL AND THE SQUARE

by **Brother Rob Morris** *Poet Laureate of Freemasonry*

(This poem, written in August, 1854, is the most popular Masonic Poem of all time.)

We meet upon the Level and we part upon the Square.
What words of precious meaning, those words Masonic are!
Come, let us contemplate them! They are worthy of a thought;
In the very walls of Masonry the sentiment is wrought.

We meet upon the Level, though from every station come,
The rich man from his palace and the poor man from his home;
For the rich must leave his wealth and state outside the Mason's door,
And the poor man finds his best respect upon the Checkered Floor.

We act upon the Plumb - 'tis the orders of our Guide.

We walk upright in virtue's way and lean to neither side;
The All-Seeing Eye that reads our hearts doth bear us witness true
That we still try to honor God and give each man his due.

We part upon the Square, for the world must have its due;
We mingle with the multitude, a faithful band and true.
But the influence of our gatherings in memory is green,
And we long upon the Level to renew the happy scene.

There's a world where all are equal - we are hurrying toward it fast,
We shall meet upon the Level there when the gates of Death are past;
We shall stand before the Orient, and our Master will be there
To try the blocks we offer with His own unerring Square.

We shall meet upon the Level there, but never thence depart.
There's a Mansion - 'tis all ready for each trusting, faithful heart.
There's a Mansion, and a welcome, and a multitude is there
Who have met upon the Level and been tried upon the Square.

Let us meet upon the Level, then while laboring patient here;
Let us meet and let us labor, though the labor be severe;
Already in the Western sky the signs bid us prepare
To gather up our Working Tools and part upon the Square.

Hands round, ye faithful Brotherhood, the bright fraternal Chain.
We part upon the Square below to meet in Heaven again!
What words of precious meaning, those words Masonic are --
We meet upon the Level and we part upon the square

MIND OF GOD

by Brother Rob Morris

And can we know the mind of God,
A window to the will supreme?
And is His purpose all exposed
to human eye, so faint and dim?
Look! Open upward broadly lies
The Word of God -- the unerring Law,
Threatening and promising by turns,
As Masons yield to fear or love,
Oh, be it ours to walk therein,
And at the end have sure reward!

THE MODEL MASON

by Brother Rob Morris

**There's a fine old Mason in the land, he's genial, wise and true,
His list of brothers comprehends, hear brothers, me and you;
So warm his heart the snow blast fails to chill his generous blood,
And his hand is like a giant's when outstretched to man or God; --
Reproach nor blame, nor any shame,
has checked his course or dimmed his fame --
All honor to his name!**

**This fine old Mason is but one of a large family:
In every lodge you'll find his kin, you'll find them two or three;
You'll know them when you see them, for they have their father's face,
A generous knack of speaking truth and doing good always; --
Reproach nor blame, nor any shame,
has checked their course or dimmed their fame --
Freemason is their name!**

**Ah, many an orphan smiles upon the kindred as they pass;
And many a widow's prayers confess the sympathizing grace;
The Father of this Brotherhood himself is joyed to see;
Their works -- they're numbered all in Heaven, those deeds of charity!
Reproach nor blame, nor any shame,
there check their course or dim their fame --
All honor to their name!**

THE MASON'S PLEDGE

by Brother Rob Morris

**Brother, hearken, while I tell you
What we Masons pledged to do
When, prepared at yonder altar,
We assumed the Mason's vow!
Foot and knee, breast, hand and cheek --
Hearken while I make them speak!**

**Foot to foot, on mercy's errand,
When we hear a brother's cry,
Hungry, thirsty, barefoot, naked,
With God's mercy let us fly.
This of all our thoughts the chief,
How to give him quick relief.**

**Knee to knee, in earnest praying,
None but God to hear or heed,
All our woes and sins confessing,
Let us for each other plead;
By the spirit of our call,
Let us pray for brothers all.**

**Breast to breast, in sacred casket,
At life's center let us seal
Every truth to us entrusted,
Nor one holy thing reveal!
What a Mason vows to shield,
Let him die, but never yield.**

**Hand to back, a brother's falling,
Look, his burdens are too great.**

**Stretch the generous hand and hold him
Up before it is too late.
The right arm's a friendly prop,
Made to hold a brother up.**

**Cheek to cheek, in timely whisper
When the temper strives to win.
Urge the brother's bounden duty,
Show him the approaching sin.
Point to him the deadly snare,
Save him with a brother's care.**

THE FIVE POINTS OF FELLOWSHIP
by Brother Rob Morris

**Joyful task it is, dear brothers
Thus to take upon the lip
With full heart, and fitting gesture,
All our points of fellowship.
Foot and knee, breast, hand, and cheek
Each a measured part shall speak:
Speak of answering mercy's call;
Speak of prayer for Masons all;
Speak of keeping secrets duly;**

**Speak of stretching strong hand truly;
Speak of whispering the unruly.**

**Foot to foot: 'tis mercy's mandate,
When is heard the plaintive sigh,
Hungry, thirsty, homeless, naked,
On the wings of aid to fly;
Hasten, mitigate the grief --
Hasten, bear him quick relief!
Quick with bread to feed the hungry;
Quick with raiment for the naked;
Quick with shelter for the homeless;
Quick with heart's deep sympathy.**

**Knee to knee: in silence praying,
Lord, give listening ear this day!
Every earthly stain confessing,
For all tempted Masons pray!
Perish envy, perish hate,
For all Masons supplicate.
Bless them, Lord upon the ocean;
Bless them perishing in the desert;
Bless them falling 'neath temptation
Bless them when about to die!**

The Work

by Brother Montford C. Holley

The gavel sounds
and all is still:
The Master speaks,
proclaims his will:
Each one obeys,
takes up his tools.
Inspects the plan,
consults the rules:
With trowel and level,
plumb and square,
Each stone is set
exactly where
The plan provides,
the drawing shows
And day by day
the Temple grows:
The porch is finished,
pillars placed;
The strands of net-work
interlaced;
The chambers furnished,
pavement laid,
The sacred vessels
all displayed:
The walls are standing
straight and true;
The roof is on,
the labor through:
The Master speaks,
The work is done:

**The gavel sounds,
God calls us home.**

*Thanks to WBro. Ross Schacher,
Franklin Lodge AF&AM
Grafton, MA*

IN THE GLORIOUS HOUR OF DAWNING

**In the glorious hour of dawning
When the sun begins to peep
From above the farthest hilltops,
To arouse us from our sleep;
Then we pray to God our Master
To direct us through the day,
To avoid the trials and pitfalls
That assail us on our way.**

**When the sun at high meridian,
The glory of the day,
Informs each weary pilgrim
That he's half along the way;
Then we turn to God all glorious**

**For strength to stand the test
That will give us welcome entry
In that dwelling of the Blest.**

**The sun in the west at evening
Marks the closing of our day;
Then we cry to God our Father
And to Him humbly pray
For grace that's all sufficient,
For love that's all sublime,
That will guard us through the Valley
And bring us Home in time.**

*Thanks to Bro. David Wallace in England, I can
now give proper credit for this fine poem.
It was written by J. F. Clendening, P.G.M. of Tenn.
This poem is also published in
www.phoenixmasonry.org/the_builder_1922_march.htm*

Last Night I Knelt Where Hiram Knelt

**Last night I knelt where Hiram knelt
and took an obligation.
Today I'm closer to my God
for I'm a Master Mason.**

**Though heretofore my fellow men
seemed each one like the other,
today I search each one apart.
I'm looking for my brother.**

**And as I feel his friendly grip
it fills my heart with pride.
I know while I am on the square
that he is by my side.**

**His footsteps on my errand go
if I should such require.
His prayers will lead in my behalf
if I should so desire.**

**My words are safe within his breast
as though within my own,
his hand forever at my back
to help me safely home.**

**Good counsel whispers in my ear
and warns of any danger.
By square and compass, Brother now**

who once would call me stranger.

**I might have lived a moral life
and risen to distinction
without my Brothers helping hand
and the fellowship of Masons.**

**But God, who knows how hard it is
to resist life's temptations,
knows why I knelt where Hiram knelt
and took that obligation.**

(author unknown)

Further note....

Researchers at the GL of Tennessee have assured me that there was never a PGM of TN by the name of Clendening. The final credit for this fine poem must simply be J.F. Clendening. This does not detract from it's quality and Masonic content. *RPD*

I See You've Traveled Some

**Wherever you may chance to be;
wherever you may roam:
far away in foreign lands
or just at Home, Sweet Home;
It always gives you pleasure,
it makes your heart strings hum
just to hear the words of cheer -
"I see you've traveled some."**

**When you get the brother's greeting
and he takes you by the hand,
it thrills you with a feeling
you cannot understand.
You feel that bond of brotherhood;
that tie that's sure to come
when you hear him say in a friendly way,
"I see you've traveled some."**

**And if you are a stranger
in a strange land, all alone
If fate has left you stranded,
dead broke and far from home,
if a stranger stops and takes your hand,
it thrills you - makes you dumb,
when he says with a grip of fellowship,
"I see you've traveled some."**

**And when your final summons comes
to take a last long trip.
Adorned with Lambskin Apron white**

**and gems of fellowship.
The Tiler at the Golden Gate
with square and rule and plumb
will size up your deeds and say "Walk in,
I see you've traveled some."**

(author unknown)

Let's Go To Lodge Tonight

My brother, let's go to Lodge tonight;
You haven't been for years.
Let's don our Lambskin Apron white
And sit among our peers.

I feel a kind of longing, see,
to climb those creaky stairs;
I know it'll be a thrill for me
to lay aside my cares.

We'll meet the Tyler at the door
and though he'll hesitate,
we'll hear him say just as before,
"Come in or you'll be late."

I'd like to get out on the floor--
Come on, let's get in line;
I want to face the East once more
And give the same old sign.

I want to hear the gavel rap
the Craftsmen to attention
and see the Master don his cap;
a night without dissention.

So come! Pass up that picture show,
or your wrestling bout or fight;
Switch off that TV set! Let's go!
Let's go to Lodge tonight.

(author unknown)

(Webmaster's note: A poem with the same name but entirely different stanza)

*layout, rhyme scheme, and construction was sent to me by V. Wor. Bro. Bruce Miller
Twin City Lodge No. 509 G.R.C.. That poem was written by R. Wor. Bro. Charles
Fotheringham. Although somewhat similar, they do not appear to be the same
poem. Brother Fotheringham's poem may be found in his book, "Ramblings in
Masonry"*

The Mother-Lodge

by Brother Rudyard Kipling

There was Rundle, Station Master,
An' Beazeley of the Rail,
An' 'Ackman, Commissariat,
An' Donkin' o' the Jail;
An' Blake, Conductor-Sargent,
Our Master twice was 'e,
With 'im that kept the Europe-shop,
Old Framjee Eduljee.

Outside -- "Sergeant! Sir! Salute! Salaam!"
Inside -- "Brother", an' it doesn't do no 'arm.
We met upon the Level an' we parted on the Square,
An' I was Junior Deacon in my Mother-Lodge out there!

We'd Bola Nath, Accountant,
An' Saul the Aden Jew,
An' Din Mohammed, draughtsman

Of the Survey Office too;
There was Babu Chuckerbutty,
An' Amir Singh the Sikh,
An' Castro from the fittin'-sheds,
The Roman Catholick!

We 'adn't good regalia,
An' our Lodge was old an' bare,
But we knew the Ancient Landmarks,
An' we kep' 'em to a hair;
An' lookin' on it backwards
It often strikes me thus,
There ain't such things as infidels,
Excep', per'aps, it's us.

For monthly, after Labour,
We'd all sit down and smoke
(We dursn't give no banquits,
Lest a Brother's caste were broke),
An' man on man got talkin'
Religion an' the rest,
An' every man comparin'
Of the God 'e knew the best.

So man on man got talkin',
An' not a Brother stirred
Till mornin' waked the parrots
An' that dam' brain-fever-bird;
We'd say 'twas 'ighly curious,
An' we'd all ride 'ome to bed,
With Mo'ammed, God, an' Shiva
Changin' pickets in our 'ead.

Full oft on Guv'ment service
This rovin' foot 'ath pressed,
An' bore fraternal greetin's
To the Lodges east an' west,

**Accordin' as commanded
From Kohat to Singapore,
But I wish that I might see them
In my Mother-Lodge once more!**

**I wish that I might see them,
My Brethren black an' brown,
With the trichies smellin' pleasant
An' the **hog-darn** passin' down;
An' the old **khansamah** snorin'
On the **bottle-khana** floor,
Like a Master in good standing
With my Mother-Lodge once more!**

**Outside -- "Sergeant! Sir! Salute! Salaam!"
Inside -- "Brother", an' it doesn't do no 'arm.
We met upon the Level an' we parted on the Square,
An' I was Junior Deacon in my Mother-Lodge out there!**

The Palace

by Brother Rudyard Kipling

When I was a King and a Mason, a Master Proven and skilled,
I cleared me ground for a Palace, such as a King should build.
I decreed and dug down to my levels; presently, under the silt,
I came on the wreck of a Palace, such as a King had built.

There was no worth in the fashion; there was no wit in the plan;
Hither and thither, aimless, the ruined footings ran.
Masonry, brute, mishandled, but carven on every stone,
"After me cometh a Builder; tell him I, too, have known."

Swift to my use in my trenches, where my well-planned groundworks grew,
I tumbled his quoins and his ashlar, and cut and rest them anew.
Lime I milled of his marbles; burned it, slaked it, and spread;
Taking and leaving at pleasure the gifts of the humble dead.

Yet I despised not nor gloried, yet, as we wrenched them apart,
I read in the razed foundation the heart of that Builder's heart.
As he has risen and pleaded, so did I understand
The form of the dream he had followed in the face of the thing he had planned.

When I was a King and a Mason, in the open noon of my pride,
They sent me a Word from the Darkness; they whispered and called me aside.
They said, "The end is forbidden." They said, "Thy use is fulfilled.
Thy Palace shall stand as that other's, the spoil of a King who shall build."

I called my men from my trenches, my quarries, my wharves, and my sheers;
All I had wrought I abandoned to the faith of the faithless years.
Only I cut on the timber; only I carved on the stone:
"After me cometh a Builder; tell him I, too, have known."

Banquet Night

by **Brother Rudyard Kipling**

**"Once in so often," King Solomon said,
Watching his quarrymen drill the stone,
"We will curb our garlic and wine and bread
And banquet together beneath my Throne,
And all Brethren shall come to that mess
As Fellow-Craftsmen-no more and no less."**

**"Send a swift shallop to Hiram of Tyre,
Felling and floating our beautiful trees,
Say that the Brethren and I desire
Talk with our Brethren who use the seas.
And we shall be happy to meet them at mess
As Fellow-Craftsmen-no more and no less."**

**"Carry this message to Hiram Abif-
Excellent master of forge and mine :-
I and the Brethren would like it if
He and the Brethren will come to dine
(Garments from Bozrah or morning-dress)
As Fellow-Craftsmen-no more and no less."**

**"God gave the Cedar their place-
Also the Bramble, the Fig and the Thorn-
But that is no reason to black a man's face
Because he is not what he hasn't been born.
And, as touching the Temple, I hold and profess
We are Fellow-Craftsmen-no more and no less."**

**So it was ordered and so it was done,
And the hewers of wood and the Masons of Mark,
With foc'sle hands of Sidon run
And Navy Lords from the ROYAL ARK,
Came and sat down and were merry at mess
As Fellow-Craftsmen-no more and no less.**

**The Quarries are hotter than Hiram's forge,
No one is safe from the dog-whip's reach.
It's mostly snowing up Lebanon gorge,
And it's always blowing off Joppa beach;**

**But once in so often, the messenger brings
Solomon's mandate : "Forget these things!
Brother to Beggars and Fellow to Kings,
Companion of Princes-forget these things!
Fellow-Craftsmen, forget these things!"**

"My New-Cut Ashlar"

by Brother Rudyard Kipling

**My New-Cut ashlar takes the light
Where crimson-blank the windows flare.
By my own work before the night,
Great Overseer, I make my prayer.**

**If there be good in that I wrought
Thy Hand compelled it, Master, Thine--
Where I have failed to meet Thy Thought
I know, through Thee, the blame was mine.**

**The depth and dream of my desire,
The bitter paths wherein I stray--
Thou knowest Who hast made the Fire,
Thou knowest Who hast made the Clay.**

**Who, lest all thought of Eden fade,
Bring'st Eden to the craftsman's brain--
Godlike to muse o'er his own Trade
And manlike stand with God again!**

**One stone the more swings into place
In that dread Temple of Thy worth.
It is enough that, through Thy Grace,
I saw nought common on Thy Earth.**

**Take not that vision from my ken--
Oh whatsoe'er may spoil or speed.
Help me to need no aid from men
That I may help such men as need!**

The Thousandth Man

by Brother Rudyard Kipling

**One man in a thousand, Solomon says,
Will stick more close than a brother.
And it's worth while seeking him half your days
If you find him before the other.
Nine hundred and ninety-nine depend
On what the world sees in you,
But the Thousandth man will stand your friend
With the whole round world agin' you.**

**'Tis neither promise nor prayer nor show
Will settle the finding for 'ee.**

Nine hundred and ninety-nine of 'em go
By your looks, or your acts, or your glory.
But if he finds you and you find him.
The rest of the world don't matter;
For the Thousandth Man will sink or swim
With you in any water.

You can use his purse with no more talk
Than he uses yours for his spendings,
And laugh and meet in your daily walk
As though there had been no lendings.
Nine hundred and ninety-nine of 'em call
For silver and gold in their dealings;
But the Thousandth Man he's worth 'em all,
Because you can show him your feelings.

His wrong's your wrong, and his right's your right,
In season or out of season.
Stand up and back it in all men's sight --
With *that* for your only reason!
Nine hundred and ninety-nine can't bide
The shame or mocking or laughter,
But the Thousandth Man will stand by your side
To the gallows-foot -- and after!

THE LODGE ROOM OVER SIMPKIN'S STORE

Lawrence Greenleaf

The plainest lodge room in the land was over Simpkin's store,
Where Friendship Lodge had met each month for fifty years or more.
When o'er the earth the moon, full orb'd, had cast her brightest beam
The brethren came from miles around on horseback and in team,
And Ah! what hearty grasp of hand, what welcome met them there,
As mingling with the waiting groups they slowly mount the stair
Exchanging fragmentary news or prophecies of crop
Until they reach the Tiler's room and current topics drop
To turn their thoughts to nobler themes they cherish and adore
And which were heard on meeting night up over Simpkin's store.

To city eyes, a cheerless room, long usage had defaced
The tell-tale line of lath and beam on wall and ceiling traced.
The light from oil fed lamps was dim and yellow in its hue
The carpet once could pattern boast, though now 'twas lost to view;
The altar and the pedestals that marked the stations three
The gate post pillars topped with balls, the rude carved letter G,
Were village joiner's clumsy work, with many things beside
Where beauty's lines were all effaced and ornament denied.
There could be left no lingering doubt, if doubt there was before,
The plainest lodge room in the land was over Simpkin's store.

While musing thus on outward form the meeting time drew near,
And we had glimpse of inner life through watchful eye and ear.
When Lodge convened at gavel's sound with officers in place,
We looked for strange, conglomerate work, but could no error trace.
The more we saw, the more we heard, the greater our amaze

To find those country brethren there so skilled in Mason's ways,
But greater marvels were to come before the night was through,
Where unity was not mere name, but fell on earth like dew,
Where tenets had the mind imbued, and truths rich fruit age bore,
In the plainest lodge room in the land, up over Simpkin's store.

To hear the record of their acts was music to the ear,
We sing of deeds unwritten which on angel's scroll appear,
A WIDOW'S CASE--Four helpless ones--Lodge funds were running low--
A dozen brethren sprang to feet and offers were not slow.
Food, raiment, things of needful sort, while one gave loads of wood,
Another, shoes for little ones, for each gave what he could.
Then spake the last: "I haven't things like these to give-- but then--
Some ready money may help out" and he laid down a ten.'
Were brother cast on darkest square upon life's checkered floor,
A beacon light to reach the white--was over Simpkin's store.

Like scoffer who remained to pray, impressed by sight and sound,
The faded carpet `neath our feet was now like holy ground.
The walls that had such dingy look were turned celestial blue,
The ceiling changed to canopy where stars were shining through.
Bright tongues of flame from altar leaped, the G was vivid blaze,
All common things seemed glorified by heaven's reflected rays.
O! Wondrous transformation wrought through ministry of love--
Behold the LODGE ROOM BEAUTIFUL!--fair type of that above.
The vision fades--the lesson lives--while taught as ne'er before,
In the plainest lodge room in the land--up over Simpkin's store.

TELL HIM NOW!

**If with pleasure you are viewing
any work a brother's doing;
if you like him or you love him,
tell him now!**

**Don't withhold your approbation
Till the parson's grave ovation
as he lies with snowy lilies o'er his brow.**

**Makes no matter how you shout it
he won't really care about it -
He won't know how many teardrops
you have shed.**

**More than fame and more than money
is the comment, kind and sunny,
and the unmistakable handshake of a friend.**

**If you think some praise is due him
now's the time to tell it to him -
for he cannot read his tombstone
once he's dead.**

author unknown

My Religion

author unknown

**When talk turns to religion
I have notions of my own
Have my versions of the Bible
And things I think alone.**

**And I find them satisfying,
Find them comforting to me,
Though I wouldn't lose my temper
If you chose to disagree.**

**For religion as I see it
Is a pathway to the goal,
And its something to be settled
Between each man and his soul.**

**Now I'm not a Roman Catholic,
But I wouldn't go so far
As to fling away the friendship
Of the ones I know that are.**

**I've lived and neighbored with them
Come to love them through and through
I've respect and admiration
For the kindly things they do.**

**I've known Methodists, Baptists,
Scientists and Jews,
Whose friendship is a treasure
That I wouldn't want to lose.**

**So when the people talk religion,
I just settle back and see
Every helpful, loyal friend
Each Church has given me.**

The Past Master

author unknown

**"Who's the stranger, Mother, dear?
Look, he knows us - ain't that queer?"**

**"Hush, my son, don't talk so wild -
"He's your father, dearest child."**

**"He's my father? It's not so!
Father died six years ago."**

**"Dad didn't die, Oh love of mine,
He's been going through the line.
But he's been Master now so he
Has no place to go you see -
No place left for him to roam.
That is why he is coming home.
Kiss him, he won't bite you child.
All Past Masters are quite mild."**

IF

by Brother Rudyard Kipling

**If you can keep your head when all about you
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you;
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,
But make allowance for their doubting too;
If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,
Or, being lied about, don't deal in lies,
Or, being hated, don't give way to hating,
And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise;**

**If you can dream - and not make dreams your master;
If you can think - and not make thoughts your aim;**

**If you can meet with triumph and disaster
And treat those two imposters just the same;
If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken
Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,
Or watch the things you gave your life to broken,
And stoop and build 'em up with worn out tools;**

**If you can make one heap of all your winnings
And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,
And lose, and start again at your beginnings
And never breath a word about your loss;
If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew
To serve your turn long after they are gone,
And so hold on when there is nothing in you
Except the Will which says to them: "Hold on !";**

**If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,
Or walk with kings - nor lose the common touch;
If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you;
If all men count with you, but none too much;
If you can fill the unforgiving minute
With sixty seconds' worth of distance run -
Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,
And - which is more - you'll be a Man my son!**

The Lamb Skin

It is not ornamental, the cost is not great,
There are other things far more useful, yet truly I state,
Though of all my possessions, there's none can compare,
With the white leather apron, which all Masons wear.
As a young lad I wondered just what it all meant,
When dad hustled around, and so much time was spent,
On shaving and dressing and looking just right,
Until mother would say: "It's the Masons tonight."

And some winter nights she said: "What makes you go,
Way up there tonight through the sleet and the snow?
You see the same things every month of the year."
Then dad would reply: "Yes, I know it my dear.
Forty years I have seen the same things, it is true,
And thought they are old, they always seem new,
For the hands that I clasp, and the friends that I greet,
Seem a little bit closer each time that we meet."

Years later I stood at that very same door,
With good men and true, who had entered before,
I knelt at the altar, and there I was taught,
That virtue and honor can never be bought.
That spotless white lambskin all Masons revere,
If worthily worn grows more precious each year,
That service to others brings blessings untold,
That man may be poor though surrounded by gold.

**I learned that true brotherhood flourishes there,
That enmities fade 'neath the compass and square,
That wealth and position are all thrust aside,
As there on the level men meet and abide.
So honor the lambskin, may it always remain,
Forever unblemished, and free from all stain,
And when we are all called to the Great Father's love,
May we all take our place in that Lodge up above.**

author unknown

The Lodge Where I Belong

**Though my lodge may lack the splendor
Of a Temple or a Shrine,
Or possess the gaudy fixtures
that are classed as superfine,**

**Yet the fellowship it offers
is in a price beyond compare.**

**And I wouldn't trade it ever
for life's treasures rich or bare!**

**The handclasp firm, the word of cheer,
Oh, such meanings they impart,
The mystic ties of brotherhood
that links us heart to heart!**

**You'd really have to travel far,
For the friendships quite so strong,
As those one always find right here
In the Lodge where I belong.**

**When all my earthly travels end,
And at last I'm borne to rest
Where mortal hands no longer toil
and I cease life's endless quest**

**Why there's nothing I'd like better,
should I join the heavenly throng,
than to meet with all the Brothers
of the Lodge Where I Belong.**

Arthur R. Herrman

Masonic Sermon

(Inscription on a large medal struck in December, 1838 in response to an interdict against the Masonic Order by the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Mechlin. Around the border is inscribed a Latin phrase meaning "*Masonry will Live, God wills it. Grand Orient of Belgium, 5838*")

Masonic conduct is to adore the Grand Architect of the Universe:

Love thy neighbor: Do no evil: Do good: Suffer man to speak:

The worship most acceptable to the Grand Architect of the Universe consists of good morals and the practice of all the virtues:

Do good for the love of goodness itself alone:

Ever keep thy soul in a state so pure as to appear worthily before the presence of the Grand Architect, who is God:

Love the good, succor the weak, fly from the wicked, but hate no one:

Speak seriously with the great, and prudently with thy equals, sincerely with thy friends, pleasantly with the little ones, and tenderly with the poor:

Do not flatter thy Brother, that is treason:

If thy Brother flatter thee, beware that he doth not corrupt thee:

Listen always to the voice of conscience:

Be a father to the poor: Each sigh drawn from them by thy hard-heartedness will increase the number of maledictions which will fall upon thy head:

Respect the stranger on his journey and assist him, for his person is sacred to thee:

Avoid quarrels and forestall insults:

Ever keep the right on thy side:

Respect Woman, never abuse her weakness: Die rather than dishonor her:

If the Grand Architect hath given thee a son, be thankful, but tremble at the trust He hath confided to thee: Be to that child the image of Divinity: Until he is ten years old let him fear thee: Until he is twenty let him love thee and until death let him respect thee: Until he is ten years old, be his master, Until twenty his father and until death his friend: Aim to give him good principles rather than elegant manners, that he may have enlightened rectitude, and not a frivolous elegance: Make of him a honest man rather than a man of dress:

If thou blushes at thy condition it is pride: Consider that it is not the position which honors or degrades thee, but the manner in which thou dost fill it:

Read and profit, see and imitate, reflect and labor:

Do all for the benefit of thy Brethren, that is working for thyself:

Be content in all places, at all times, and with all things:

Rejoice in justice, despise iniquity, suffer without murmuring:

Judge not lightly the conduct of men, blame little, and praise still less:

It is for the Grand Architect of the Universe who searches the heart to value His work:

DESIDERATA

Go placidly amid the noise and haste,
and remember what peace there may be in silence.
As far as possible without surrender, be on good terms with all persons.
Speak your truth quietly and clearly; and listen to others,
even the dull and ignorant; they too have their story.

Avoid loud and aggressive persons; they are vexations to the spirit.
If you compare yourself with others, you may become vain and bitter;
for always there will be greater and lesser persons than yourself.
Enjoy your achievements as well as your plans.

Keep interested in your own career, however humble;
it is a real possession in the changing fortunes of time.
Exercise caution in your business affairs; for the world is full of trickery.
But let this not blind you to what virtue there is;
many persons strive for high ideals;
and everywhere life is full of heroism.

Be yourself. Especially do not feign affection.
Neither be cynical about love;
for in the face of all aridity and disenchantment,
it is as perennial as the grass.

Take kindly the counsel of the years,
gracefully surrendering the things of youth.
Nurture strength of spirit to shield you in sudden misfortune.
Do not distress yourself with imaginings.
Many fears are born of fatigue and loneliness.
Beyond a wholesome discipline, be gentle with yourself.

You are a child of the universe, no less than the trees and the stars;
you have a right to be here.
And whether or not it is clear to you,
no doubt the universe is unfolding as it should.

**Therefore, be at peace with God, whatever you conceive Him to be.
And whatever your labor and aspirations, in the noisy confusion of life,
keep peace with your soul.**

**With all its sham, drudgery and broken dreams, it is still a beautiful world.
Be careful. Strive to be happy.**

Max Ehrmann, 1927

*(Although this is not strictly a Masonic Poem,
it is included here because of it's obvious merits)*

**Thanks to Brother Matthew Lowe, SW
Riley Lodge No. 390, F. & A. M., Riley, Indiana
for informing me of the true origin of this marvelous work.**

THE OLD MASTER'S WAGES

**I met a dear old man today,
Who wore a Masonic pin,
It was old and faded like the man,
It's edges were worn quite thin.**

**I approached the park bench where he sat,
To give the old brother his due,
I said, "I see you've traveled east,"**

He said, "I have, have you."

**I said, "I have, and in my day
Before the all seeing sun,
I played in the rubble, with Jubala
Jubalo and Jubalum."**

**He shouted, "don't laugh at the work my son,
It's good and sweet and true,
And if you've traveled as you said,
You should give these things their due."**

**The word, the sign the token,
The sweet Masonic prayer,
The vow that all have taken,
Who've climbed the inner stair.**

**The wages of a Mason,
are never paid in gold,
but the gain comes from contentment,
when you're weak and growing old.**

**You see, I've carried my obligations,
For almost fifty years,
It has helped me through the hardships
and the failures full of tears.**

**Now I'm losing my mind and body,
Death is near but I don't despair,
I've lived my life upon the level,
And I'm dying upon the square.**

Sometimes the greatest lessons

**Are those that are learned anew,
And the old man in the park today
has changed my point of view.**

**To all Masonic brothers,
The only secret is to care,
May you live your life upon the level,
May you part upon the square.**

by N. Neddermeyer