

- 1 -

A SHORT LESSON OF OUR STAR

When we prepare to enter our Chapter room we approach the outer gate where we are met by the Sentinel - this action teaching us that we should stand guard over our minds; that our thoughts may always be pure. The Sentinel wears the crossed swords. One sword represents human justice and demands "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth", but the other sword is thrust forward at the gate to keep out that which is unclean. From this we learn that petty spites, hatred and all manner of grievances should be left outside when we enter the Chapter room.

The Warder who wears the Dove of Peace teaches us to bring all new thoughts into harmony with our ideals of justice; that we must not be narrow, biased or prejudiced in our opinions; and that love teaches us to receive criticism with love, even though it is often unmerited.

The Associate Conductress teaches us much needed discipline. We must discipline our own personal desires so that we may be in harmony with our companions in the great work we are striving to accomplish. The baton symbolizes the control of a great choir leader who teaches us to raise our varied voices in the great chorus of love by praising God with united, yet greatly diversified service.

The Conductress teaches us that constant and steady endeavor alone establishes perfection. The scroll teaches us that our plans should be carefully and wisely made and that these plans should be carried out harmoniously.

The Marshal teaches us that order is necessary for fulfillment of any good purpose. The marshal's baton of direction, united with harmony, teaches us that labor lovingly given is best bestowed. He who loves best serves best.

From the Organist we learn that the harmony in our lives reacts upon those around us. Music upon the heart strings brings best service, while discord only brings sorrow and trouble.

From the Chaplain we learn that to know the will of God we must study His word. In order to be able to have ears to hear we must know that man does not live by bread alone, but by the will of God, as revealed in His Holy Book.

The Secretary writes our book of record which corresponds to memory's book of life.

She wears the crossed pens. One pen is the pen with a broad point that we use to erase the shortcomings of our companions. The other pen is the pen with the diamond point which we engrave on our hearts the good deeds of our sisters and brothers.

The Treasurer conserves and distributes the funds symbolically representing the outpouring of goodness. She wears the crossed keys. One key is of brass with which to lock up the dragon of selfishness and the other key is the Golden Key to the storehouse of love, teaching us that we should pour on others the good we have in store, realizing always that ceasing to give we cease to have and enjoy our blessings.

The Gavel represents the hammer, and teaches us that we are led by the guidance and wisdom of the Worthy Matron and Worthy Patron who drive home the purposes for which we are organized; and that the W. Matron can weld the diverse and complex opinions of the members into one harmonious whole so that the structure called a Chapter may reflect the glory of God in all its undertakings.

As our Chapter is governed, so should our lives be ordered by wisdom, strength and love. At each step we learn a lesson, even as life teaches mortals a lesson if they only lift their tired gaze a little above the road.

First, obedience to the demands of honor and justice: The sword represents the human tongue which sometimes, yes, often, cuts like a two-edged sword, injuring perhaps unintentionally, those nearest and dearest to us. The veil is the cloak of charity, and from this we learn to guard well our tongues.

Second, unselfish love: Choose the right path though it may lead to deprivation and poverty, rather than the path of least resistance, as did Orpha who turned back when her companionship and love were most sorely needed.

Third, fidelity to principle: Choosing the right, forgetting self in our love for others. Esther typified in the modern society women who is called upon to defy conventions and stand for principle and right. If we only had more Esthers in these trying times; only too few women respond to the call.

Fourth, faith in the living God and his promises to man: Are we becoming a nation of unbelievers, or are we just marking time before greater revelations of God's wisdom and power shall open our eyes?

Fifth, Electa represents the Christian Church without which the entire world structure would end in utter destruction and chaos.

The Associate Patron with his Star within a Star is an added guidance toward the fuller accomplishment of our aims.

The Worthy Matron, Worthy Patron and Associate Matron represent the Trinity in unity symbolized by wisdom, strength and love.

The Worthy Matron is placed in the East, figuratively to represent light and enlightenment. The garden of the Lord was planted eastward in Eden, and there he placed the man whom he made, and the woman who had been created to walk by his side -- neither before or behind, but on equality with him. Thus, from the cradle of the race in the East came the first knowledge, and so to the East do we look for the rising of the sun of righteousness, and the dawn of wisdom.

Finally, when we have to drink the cup of life to its bitter dregs we can carry our cross on our breasts and say -- "I have seen His star in the east and have come to worship Him."