

ASSISTANCE LIGHT AND KNOWLEDGE

During the conferral of the M.E.M. degree, the candidate gives an undertaking that he will “. . . dispense assistance, light and knowledge to all destitute and uninformed brethren always, so far as it may be in my power. . . .” This statement can have several interpretations according to the Masonic light revealed to each of us.



First is the physical or material application. Destitute and uninformed brethren may be considered as those who are in physical or financial want. Without the necessities of life, and with no knowledge of how to remedy the situation. In such case we have undertaken to give them the benefit of our advice and knowledge. To help them find a solution to their difficulties, and, meanwhile, out of such resources as we have, minister to their physical wants.

Secondly, there is the intellectual aspect. “Destitute and uninformed brethren” literally, they lack knowledge and understanding and cannot meet and overcome the challenges of life. Our duty and responsibilities are to teach and instruct, to open the channels of knowledge. To bring light, to dispel the gloom of ignorance. To render such advice and counsel that will improve the ability to cope with the difficulties and decisions of everyday living.

Then there is the application to Masonic duty, particularly to those of us who are Royal Arch Masons. Our Craft brethren have received only substitute secrets. They have travelled only part of the way to understanding. They have not completed the Master Masons degree and they lack the light and knowledge that we as Capitular Masons possess. It is therefor the privilege and duty of every Royal Arch Mason to invite his less informed brethren to increase their Masonic light and understanding by receiving the Capitular degrees. Be assured, that one who has shared with us the teachings of the Royal Arch are better and more informed Masons who will, in turn, “dispense assistance, light and knowledge to destitute and uninformed brethren.”

Again there is an interpretation that has to do with spiritual things. Unfortunately many men, even Masonic brethren, have not found an abiding faith to live by. They are groping for something that gives meaning and purpose to life. They have not yet experienced the light that illumines the heart and soul. Each man must find his faith for himself. Our undertaking is, to do all in our power to help him to find that light, that knowledge, that faith that will make life so much more worthwhile. Inculcating a proper understanding and appreciation of the teaching of Freemasonry will be of great assistance in bringing destitute and uninformed brethren to light.

Finally, let us remember that there are two ways of imparting light and knowledge - by precept and by example. It is perfectly proper for us to teach and instruct, to tell others what they could or should do. Our responsibility to “dispense assistance, light and knowledge” implies a more serious undertaking. We must develop our own characters, and live our daily lives to be shining examples to all destitute and uninformed brethren. Living our Masonry is our surest form of teaching, our surest way of expressing our belief in the principles we profess.