

LADDER OF FRATERNITY.

(PAST OFFICERS' NIGHT CEREMONY)

O. E. S. GRAND
CHAPTER LIBRARY

by

Katharine Curzon Lowman, P. M.

The Past Officers may or may not fill the stations for the evening. This ceremony is to be given *after* the regular meeting. The chairs and pedestals at the Star Point stations shall have been removed. Before this addendum begins, the past officers should be seated in a group on the side(s) of the chapter room. The Warder and Organist enter chapter room together; part, and go to their stations. The Sentinel is in station.

Music.

Entering in couples (the Worthy Matron and Worthy Patron; Associate Matron and Associate Patron; the Conductress and Associate Conductress; the Marshal and Chaplain followed by the Secretary and Treasurer) sing the following hymn while going to their stations. Tune: O God, Help In Ages Past.

1. / O God, we thank Thee for those who
Have served here faithfully;
Forgetting self in loving deeds
To serve both us and Thee.
2. / Help us to speak the words of praise
Which rightly are their due;
So they may know we'll love them all
For-ev-er, fondly, true.
3. / Help us to show them how their work
Inspires us to do
The very best that we know how
For their sakes and for you.

When in stations and song is ended, the officers are seated simultaneously.

The Worthy Matron arises and reads from the bible: Genesis XXVIII; 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, and XXIX; 1. She then speaks as follows:

WORTHY MATRON. This evening has been set apart in honor of Past Matrons and Past Patrons of ----- chapter because step by step, round by round, they climbed the Ladder of Fraternity and reached the stations in the east at the top.

In *his* dream Jacob saw a ladder which reached from earth to heaven; angels were ascending and descending upon it.

Retrospect with me in visualizing those principles which form the ladder of fraternity on which our Past Officers climbed to the top rung of success: the Worthy Matron's and Worthy Patron's stations.

Standing on the firm principles which govern our Order, they began their ascent. Faith caused them to continue their climb. Loyalty took them higher. Love beckoned from the top. Thus they advanced until the last rung was reached and a broader view was obtained from that exalted position. Love's steadying influence, guarding and upholding, kept them there in safety until it was time for them to descend.

Because they ascended and descended we welcome and honor them to-night. (The Worthy Matron is seated and sounds the gavel.)

----- 0 -----

The door in the west opens and Adah enters. She may be dressed in ei-

Ladder of Fraternity.

Katharine Curzon Lowman, P.M.

ther white or blue. She carries the *blue* rung of the ladder which should be about a yard long and about 3 inches wide. It may be made of heavy cardboard or bristol board cut flat or round, painted blue or covered with blue flowers, real or artificial. (If any past officers are filling any Star Point stations this year, have some one else take the part of those officers.)

Music.

Adah goes up north aisle; turns to go in front of dais in the east; turns when even with northeast corner of the altar; and goes towards the altar; stops to stand on the east side of altar, at the northeast front. (The ladder is to be formed between the eastside of the altar and the dais in the east.) When she turns south from north aisle, the Marshal arises and goes toward Adah's chair, turns towards the north and goes to meet Adah but they turn west together leaving a space the length of the ladder rung between them as they go. Marshal stands opposite Adah when they stop.

ADAH speaks to the Past Officers.

Fidelity forms the *first* rung of the ladder of fraternity. It is the *first* principle taught by our Central Star.

Without fidelity our order would have no starting point; our lives would have no stability; and our success would be uncertain and insecure.

As Adah was faithful to *her* obligation or duty, so were you, Past Officers of ----- chapter, faithful to *yours*.

By fidelity to duty and friends you mounted the *first* rung in your ascent to the highest position in our chapter.

In your honor to-night we shall construct the Ladder of Fraternity in our chapter room.

She extends the blue rung to the Marshal who takes hold of the other end.

ADAH continues:

We'll hold the *first* rung of the ladder right here,
And we'll see how 'tis made to bear you to the top,
Where you reached the success which was due you, my dears,
And you gained from us all the love which ne'er shall stop.

The MARSHAL adds:

Thus we build the first rung of this ladder so strong
In whose structure you'll find there is nothing that's wrong.

(They stand holding the blue rung of the ladder between them.)

Worthy Matron sounds gavel and RUTH enters. She may wear white or yellow. She carries the yellow rung of the ladder, same size as blue and painted yellow or covered with yellow flowers. She advances up the north aisle, turns south until even with Adah, then turns west to go and stand next to Adah. When Ruth comes even with the station of the Asso. Conductress, the Conductress leaves her station and goes up south aisle to the east, turns and goes north towards Ruth; (they turn towards altar simultaneously) leaving a space between them — same distance Adah and Marshal left between them — and go to places. Conductress will stand opposite Ruth.

RUTH speaks:

'Twas by working so patiently there in the field
And by being both constant and true

Ladder of Fraternity.

Katharine Curzon Lowman, P.M.

That our Ruth *gained the good* which those virtues must yield
And which came for the same cause to *you*.

Thus the *second* sound rung of our ladder is made
(She extends it to the Conductress)
Of the principles which she has taught,
And by both Ruth and you it was clearly displayed,
And to both, much success it has brought.

CONDUCTRESS adds:

Thus the *second* strong rung of our ladder was made;
And you felt you could climb without being afraid.
(They stand holding the yellow rung. Same directions for all the rungs.)

Worthy Matron sounds gavel and Esther enters. She should wear white. She carries the white rung of the ladder. As she goes across room in front of the dais in the west, in passing she bows her head slightly to the Associate Matron who arises and leaves her station, goes to north aisle, turns east and goes up aisle to turn towards the south to face Esther who has come up the south aisle to come across the east. Stop in places: Esther next to Ruth; the Associate Matron next to the Conductress.

ESTHER speaks:

By her beauty and purity Esther, the queen,
Rose to heights majestic and sublime;
But she did not forget in her grander estate
Her own folk in distress at the time.

So you too have been loyal to chapter and friends,
And like Esther, the queen, you are true
To all those who had need of your counsel or aid,
And who came in their troubles to you.

For the *loyalty* which you have always display'd
To all friends whether happy or sad,
We now pledge you our love and our loyalty while
The third rung of our ladder we'll add.
(She extends the white rung to the Associate Matron who takes hold.)

The ASSOCIATE MATRON adds:

And you find in the *third* virtue taught in our Star,
A support which no malice can break, bend, nor mar.

The Worthy Matron sounds the gavel. Martha enters. She may wear green. She carries the green rung of the ladder. She goes across west end of the room to south aisle; turns east and goes up aisle; when she comes even with the station of the Conductress, the Associate Conductress leaves her station and goes up north aisle to east, turns south and goes towards Martha. They follow same line of march as those preceding them and go to positions: Martha next to Esther; Associate Conductress opposite Martha and next to the Associate Matron.

MARTHA speaks:

Without *faith* in each other, without faith in our Star
Not much could be accomplished, not much could be done
For the good of the Order, for friends near or far
Who've united their interests so good may be done.

For the faith which has governed you all in the past,
For your *present* faith and for our deep faith in you
We shall add the green rung for the faith which shall last

Ladder of Fraternita.

Katharine Curzon Lowman, P. M.

Just so long as we all live our principles true.
(She extends the green rung to the Associate Conductress who takes hold.)

The ASSOCIATE CONDUCTRESS adds:

Thus the *fouth* rung is made. It is both strong and true,
And in sorrow or joy it will carry you through.

The Worthy Matron sounds gavel. Electa enters. She may wear red or white. She carries the red rung. She goes across west end of room, turns and goes east in south aisle; turns north, when the Chaplain will arise and come towards her; they will turn towards west and go to take their places: Electa next to Martha and the Chaplain next to the Associate Conductress.

ELECTA speaks:

Oh, the power of *love* is both mighty and strong,
For it triumphs for right while it overcomes wrong.
'Tis the power which attacks while it surely defends,
And it never forsakes one who really depends

On its care. You have found that it help'd you, my dears,
In your ascent and struggle throughout the past years;
'Twill be placed in this ladder to make the top round;
For when you reached the top, it was love there you found.
(She extends the red rung and the Chaplain takes hold) Electa continues

Thus you rose, step by step, and supported each day
By the hope and the faith which are Love's help and stay,
You each learn'd that those principles, steady and true,
Had made safe the ascent of our ladder for you;
So we'll dedicate it, with its colors so bright,
To you, Past Of-fi-cers, whom we honor to-night.

Though you climb'd to the top, just a year there to spend,
You released your position when 'twas time to descend;
But we know you've retained the exalted broad view
Which this point of advantage has given to you;
So we honor you gladly; we think you are fine
And most worthy of praise in this chapter of thine.

The Worthy Patron arises and addresses the Secretary.

WORTHY PATRON: Sister Secretary,

You will now read the names, and will you please give the year
Of these Past Of-fi-cers whom we all think are dear?
And our ladder we'll raise in their honor to-night,
For those virtues they lived while they stood on the Right

The Secretary arises and reads names and dates of service of the Past Officers, beginning at the most remote. Divide the number of names to be read and dedicate each round to that number. Thus: if you have 25 Past Matrons, you will read the names for the first five years and Adah and the Marshal will raise the *blue* rung slightly higher than they have been holding it. When the names for the next five years are read, Ruth and Conductress will raise the yellow rung about six inches (or more if you wish) higher than the blue rung, and hold it there. For the next three groups read, the white rung, then the green, then the red, will be elevated six or eight inches above the one below it, thus making a ladder. The distance between the rungs can be decided upon when you practise. After the ladder has been made by elevating the rungs, one at a time, the Chaplain offers the following prayer.

CHAPLAIN: Prayer.

Ladder of Fraternity.

Katharine Curzon Lowman, P. M.

To-night we thank Thee, Father,
For these dear members who
While climbing up the ladder
Retained their hold on *you*.

We thank Thee for their courage,
And their fi-del-i-ty,
Besides all else which they have
Exemplified of thee.

Although they climbed our ladder
And reached the highest round,
No hint of arrogance
In them was ever found.

And so we thank Thee, Father,
For folk like these who stay
Unspoiled by fame or riches
Because they're made that way.

Bless them each day, dear Father,
With health and peace of mind;
Into Thy care we leave them
Because we know they're thine.

Response - "So may it ever be".

The ASSOCIATE PATRON arises and speaks:

Though they climbed to the top just a year there to spend,
They released their position when 'twas time to descend.

At the word "descend" the hands begin gradually to lower the ladder until it is back on level in first position. by the end of the next two lines.

But we know they retained the exalted broad view
Which that point of advantage had brought as their due.

The ladder will next be gradually lowered to the floor. Electa and the Chaplain begin by lowering the red rung slowly. The other couples work as though they are holding and lowering a real ladder; the red rung touching the floor first then the others in order until the blue and last rests on the floor. A little practise will time it perfectly and make it seem like a real ladder is being laid down. The colored rungs are left upon the floor.

The ASSOCIATE PATRON continues *while the above directions are being followed*:

From the heights of success to the common place road,
They came down just to help us to carry the load
Which the lack of experience sometimes may bring;
But their presence and help have caused our hearts to sing.
Yes, we'll love them for aye for the good they have done,
And we'll ask them to climb once again, just for fun.
(The ladder is on the floor by the time these lines are ended.)

Music.

The ten who have formed the ladder will leave their places and go in single file to the Past Officers whom they will escort to the east where the Worthy Matron and Worthy Patron will throw a Hawaiian lei over the head of each Past Officer as she or he comes to the east after being led to the west, then east through the Ladder of Fraternity. The Past Officers step between the rungs which are on the floor between the altar and the dais in the east. The escorts walk at ends of rungs. The following words are sung while the

Ladder of Fraternity.

Katharine Curzon Lowman, P. M.

Past Officers are being led to the east and return to their seats.

Tune "ALOHA OE" - (Farewell to Thee.)

1. To the east again you shall be led
To hear the praise which is your due;
So we'll ask you to climb once again
The ladder which we built to-night for you.

Refrain. Please come with me,
Please come with me,
Unto the East where you have served so well;
For we would say, you're dear to us today,
'Tis this we wish to tell.

2. We have built a ladder strong and true,
Of principles which shall endure
Like the love of God which changes not,
In whose love you shall ever dwell secure.

Refrain. The lad-der of Fra-ter-ni-ty
Shall bear you safely up above all ill;
'Twill fail you not
Whatever be your lot,
Make it your refuge still.

----- 0 -----

The Hawaiian leis may be placed where they are easily accessible to the Worthy Matron and Worthy Patron or they may be placed on or near the Secretary's desk and she may assist them if necessary, or the escorts may assist. If more entertainment is desired it may be added.

----- 0 -----

The following original poem may be dedicated to the Past Officers by the Worthy Matron.

1. We love you much, Past Officers;
We hope this makes you glad;
It's all we have to offer,
We trust you'll not be sad.

2. We give our thanks, Past Officers:
This not pay the bill,
But if our thanks don't pay you
I fear we never will.

3. You're welcome here, Past Officers:
These words are most sincere;
We speak them joyously because
You're very welcome here.

WORTHY PATRON. Your Worthy Matron has just said,
"You're very welcome here".
So I shall have to back her up,
Just as I have all year.

Indeed, you're welcome of-fi-cers,
Called "past" though "present" too,
I know of none we'd rather greet
Than you, Past O's, than you.

----- END -----