



LODGE VEGAS # 32

On Education

“It is chiefly the Ignorance of the masses, that fits them to be the ready slaves of despotism, and the prey and instruments of the Demagogue. It has, in whole countries, degraded the populace to a level with the beasts of burden, causing them to bow their necks eagerly to the yoke of the King and Priest, and hug the chains that gall their limbs. It is the potent auxiliary of Tyranny and Hypocrisy, by which the souls and bodies of the multitude are kept in bondage, til they regard themselves as an inferior race, born to toil, that Power and Craft may live in luxury, and Rank and Privilege be pensioned by the Public. It fitted the populace of Rome to be slaves to the Caesars, and howl for bread and the games of the Circus; made the peasantry of France, up to the latter part of the eighteenth century, the peers only of their own oxen; continued serfdom and vassalage for many centuries in England; and has upheld thrones and pontificates in all ages of the world.

In free countries it is quite as dangerous; for it makes the masses the ready instruments of the Demagogue, gives influence to the corrupt, and places in office the base and unworthy, entrusting to the blind the care of the country’s destinies, because they possess the art of pandering to the passions of the populace, and flattering their vanity and prejudices; until the experiment of governing the country by the basest fails, and all rushes headlong into general ruin.

You may well ask how a whole people is to be educated, and what hope is there for permanent Freedom anywhere, if that education is indispensable? – A knowledge of books and letters cannot be given to all the individuals of a nation. Even where there are free schools for all, the education of the masses must always be very limited; and a people would be less ready to be enslaved, because everyone could read and write. What the mass thus learns is hardly worthy to be termed knowledge, unless accompanied with other instruction.

Cheap knowledge for the million, and lectures that give a smattering of information in science, physics and other branches of knowledge, go but a little way to fit a people to be free. The Swiss maintained their independence and their freedom for centuries, without popular education; and

the philosophers of Athens were the true teachers to whom the Athenians owed their love for liberty.

To educate the people truly, is to teach them their rights as men, and their duties as citizens. The pulpit would be the best teacher, if the priesthood would be content with its old office as instructor, and would teach less error and more truth. To be able to read is but to possess the means of obtaining knowledge; and the knowledge the people need is not of chemistry or geology, astronomy or physics, but of their own nature and dignity in the scale of creation, of the characteristics of true and rational liberty, and of the means by which alone it can be acquired and maintained. To a people already free, the knowledge that will enable them to detect the charlatan and imposter among those who seek their suffrages, and to discover the wise and able man among those who do not seek to harm them, is the most valuable of all. To eradicate false ideas and gross errors in regard to religion and government, and replace them with sound and true notions, is the education which the people need. If this could be achieved, Despotism would be dethroned everywhere, and no more republics suffer shipwreck; and the trade of the Tyrant, the Hypocrite and the Demagogue ceasing, every child of God would possess that share in his inheritance to which his intellect, his virtues and his deeds should entitle him.”

“LUX INENS NOS AGIT: The Inner Light leads us on; or, The Light that is in us guides us.”

Albert Pike XXXII; pp. 25-6.

Prepare By, Br. Florian for the benefit of the Craft, NOV, 2012