

BOOK REVIEW

OPERATIVE FREEMASONRY

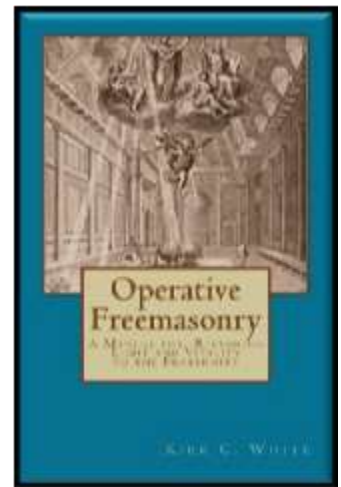
By Kirk C. White

With *Operative Freemasonry*, W. Bro.: Kirk White joins the ranks of contemporary Masons shining a light towards a more robust and fulfilling Blue Lodge experience. What distinguishes Bro.: White's book from others, however, is its supporting documents. Moving from the source Monitorial material of Bro.: William Preston and the Grand Lodge of Vermont, towards such luminaries as Albert Mackey and W. Kirk MacNulty, and later incorporating the tenets of modern psychology, it seems that Bro.: White is attempting an odd marriage of sources. By the book's completion, however, it is clear that Bro.: White has deftly combined each of these disparate inspirations, presenting a clear and convincing argument that 1) the purpose of Masonry is to experience the ineffable, which we call Light, 2) Light is attained via the cognitive shift we call Initiation, 3) Initiation lies in intentional and well performed preparation and ritual, and 4) our ancient Ritual has been validated by contemporary psychology.

The actions that we call preparation and Ritual, in actuality, are the same steps recognized by modern behavioral scientists as those which create internal change, thus providing the catalyst for the reception of Light. Freemasonry continues to struggle

with remaining relevant. The Craft of enlightenment and education has devolved into a social group concerned with spaghetti dinners and paying the utility bills. But within the Fraternity there is a resurgence in education driven by men who have looked at the roots of the Fraternity and have begun to discuss the elements of the esoteric tradition of which Freemasonry is a part. This book offers a practical guide for those in the Craft who are not satisfied to just speculate on the meanings and teachings of Masonic symbolism and allegory. He provides a guide on the practical ways in which these teachings can be applied.

The book is a good resource for new and experienced Brothers alike and is a great reference for those who serve as mentors to new members in the Craft. In "*Operative Freemasonry*," Kirk White draws attention to Masonry's tenants (Brotherly Love, Relief, and Truth) and recognizes that Masonry today has slipped into little more



than a social and civic club. He encourages a return to the roots of the Fraternity by which Masonry really does "make good men better."

The true power of this book is its clarity and practicality. Any individual Mason desiring a more fulfilling practice, will find excellent ideas for study, topics for meditation and encouragement on their path. Likewise for a Lodge of committed members who wish to "dig deeply into the shadow of oblivion for the substance upon which Freemasonry was formed" we find here a guide: a plan for mentorship to provide the new member the encouragement and guidance they need to excel, advice for getting the most out of Lodge meetings and initiations, and for working as a group to perform (and experience) the more powerful and inspiring ritual.

"Operative Freemasonry" lives up to its lofty goals and is a must for anyone dedicated to the Craft. It is a shining addition to Masonic literature, and it is the brightest treatise on Freemasonry to come along in the last several years. Kirk White's professional training and insights into the psychology of what happens when someone joins an organization, and more importantly what SHOULD happen, provides lodge officers with the understanding they need to make Freemasonry the truly memorable and rewarding experience it can be. I highly recommend this book to anyone serving in the officer line or involved in ritual.

"Operative Freemasonry" is available through Amazon and other Masonic booksellers.

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