

The Wages of a Fellowcraft
Corn, Wine and Oil
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The wages of a Fellowcraft Mason, we are told, are corn, wine, oil and, in some jurisdictions, specie. The symbolism of three of these is comparatively obvious. Corn and oil represent, as they have from time immemorial, the necessities of life, food and shelter. Specie symbolizes not only the immediate rewards of our labor, but also the transition of Masonry from an Operative Craft Guild of which our ancient brethren were members, to a speculative and spiritual force, in the modern community where the guild system has been replaced by no other tie between master and man than that of the cash nexus.

> But of all the symbolic wages of the Fellowcraft Degree, it is wine
> that
intrigues the writer the most. For wine is rich in associations, from most of which we can gather instruction in the very fundamentals of our Craft. For wine represents something more than a sheer necessity. For the mere purpose of quenching thirst, water would have served not merely as well, but better. Wine, from the earliest times has represented something more-a symbol, if you wish, of enjoyment at the proper times and places. It is associated with fellowship, in the highest and worthiest use of the word. But there is another side to its use. Wine is a two-edged sword. Indiscriminately used, it brings discredit to the user and may even destroy him. It demands of the recipient, that he may properly enjoy it-taste, for its fullest appreciation-moderation, for his own protection and the avoidance of satiety. And it is worthy of note that the wage of wine is reserved for the Fellowcraft Degree, where the beneficiary is presumed to have received some instruction in subduing his passions and improving himself in Masonry, that it is dispensed by a warden whose duties are to see that none convert the purposes of refreshment into those of intemperance. The fact that wine represents something more than a mere necessity of life is not without Masonic significance, nor should the fact that it was in primitive times a wage to overlooked. As Masons we are supposed to do more than the sheer minimum necessities of our daily avocation. We are supposed to have a pride in our work, a joy in it, and a self-discipline which requires us to perform every task to the utmost of our ability and in keeping with Masonic ideals. and if we so do, we can expect to receive our wages in an amount which will enable us to get more out of life than the mere necessities of it. Particularly is this true in Masonry, for as a speculative art or science, Masonry rewards us in proportion to what we put into it.