



GRAND LODGE BULLETIN

Editor: A. M. Mitchell, P.G.M.

GRAND MASTER'S LETTER



My Dear Brethren:

During the past month the remainder of the District Meetings have been held at Calgary, Medicine Hat, Districts No. 3 and 12 at Edmonton, and District No. 11 at Blackie. Although the weather man continued in an unfriendly mood, attendance was well maintained, surprisingly so in some districts where the roads were well nigh impassable, and this was most gratifying. As usual we found the brethren very much interested in the welfare of their respective districts, mutual problems and points in Lodge conduct being much to the fore, with the Grand Secretary in demand to give of his valuable store of experience and advice on the many interesting points that came up for discussion.

Now that the District Meetings are all over, I feel that much good was done and that they are well worth while. The splendid attendance, keen debates, the evident interest in matters Masonic, as well as the opportunity they provide for a clearing house for items of general interest, and best of all the happy fraternal associations experienced, leaves one with the confirmed idea that they are of great value to the Craft. Before leaving the subject, may I say how much I enjoyed meeting the brethren in the various districts, learning something of the problems that beset them here and there and giving help and advice to the best of my ability. I am sure the Grand Secretary shares this pleasure with me. I also wish to express my thanks to R. W. Bro. Sam Harris, who devoted his entire time to me when in the Peace River District, and to the Grand Wardens, R. W. Bros. Geo. Ellis and F. P. Galbraith, who accompanied me whenever possible, as well as other Grand Officers.

Now to catch up on the large amount of mail, amendments to By-Laws, etc., that has of necessity

accumulated during our absence, all of which is going to make the Grand Lodge Office a very busy place. In going through some of the mail we observe that many questions asked could have been easily settled by referring to the Constitution (1936 edition), to which we would draw attention. May I also point out, that due to the war, regalia may be harder to get and at an increased price.

The matter of finance is one of major importance to every Lodge. In this connection I quote from the report on the "Condition of Masonry" as found in the 1939 Proceedings: "Where there is no worry over money, the affairs of the Lodge slip along smoothly. On the other hand, where the business of every regular meeting is a constant worry over dollars and cents, interest fades and non-attendance becomes a habit." If your Lodge is unfortunately in the latter category, may I point out that the price of a packet of cigarettes per month extra from each member will put the Lodge in good shape. A little personal sacrifice and you will be proud of your Lodge and it will then function as it should. Why not give it a trial.

As this will be the last *Bulletin* this year, may I wish you all a Happy Christmas, and, I trust, a Prosperous New Year, a wish in which the Grand Officers join. Also, let us not forget those brave men who have left their "Hearths and Homes" to defend ours, and those less fortunate brethren who are in need. This is a duty incumbent upon us all, and having done our best to help those who are not in a position to help themselves, we shall enjoy the good things vouchsafed to each one of us to a much greater extent. It is a blessing I wish for you all.

Fraternally and sincerely yours,

GEORGE MOORE,
Grand Master.





GOODWILL AMONG MEN



IF there is anytime in the year when the Mason might overhaul his Masonry and see if it really amounts to anything, that season is now upon us. All about us is a generous flow of honest goodwill and if to some less fortunate brethren the season is anything but merry, we can mark the passing Christmastide in the spirit of Brotherhood.

Brotherhood is more than a mere wordy ideal despite what certain European detractors may have to say about it. It may be, and alas, is, so highly idealistic that men despair of ever coming within measurable distance of it. But the prize is worthy of the struggle and even near attainment is the lone hope of civilization in the years ahead.

As a basis of Brotherhood, Freemasonry sets forth the dogma that the thing to be regarded is the internal and not the external qualifications of a man. Yet how often are we willing to take a man's face value as his only value and fail to dig for the internal qualification? So it is that humanity in the herd is willing to accept each latest savior who comes with sufficient self-assurance and large enough stock of wordy panaceas for human misery. Thus we accept slogan-mongers at their face value and, hypnotized by stage presence, scarce dream of looking behind the scenes for the straw and sawdust.

If Masons were to examine the back ground and qualification of each demagogue as he appears on the popular stage and do a little honest searching before accepting each new cure-all, they might contribute something toward goodwill among men.

It is not necessary in honest criticism to indulge in mud-slinging. That is but another disease of our modern generation, as impractical as the ultra conservative, willing to accept anything which does

not disturb his cobwebbed mental cells or disturb the routine of his petrified existence.

Freemasonry, while it teaches the search for the internal qualification, also teaches the virtue of tolerance. The new idea may be sound, and quiet analysis will add more to goodwill among men than indulgence in the common pasture of passing ignorant judgment on every issue of which a new angle has been presented.

Charity of thought is part of the search for internal qualification, and if eventually it may discover the straw man behind the swagger, it also may discover the pearl of genuine wisdom deep buried in the wordy dross. Thus are narrowness and bigotry defeated and goodwill among men promoted. Charity of thought is of the very bones of true democracy and by inculcating its practice in small things as well as great, Freemasonry teaches not only that a man cannot be a law unto himself, but that he is but one of the limitless caravans moving from birth to death slowly but surely, in fearful pain and travail, learning the lesson that the things of the spirit are the only things which may pass beyond the veil.

So then, as exercise for Christmastide, let us overhaul our Masonry and seek to find if it really amounts to anything in our individual lives as patient teacher of the internal qualifications, of the spirit of sane inquiry, and of the need for quiet tolerance in thought and word and deed, so grimly necessary in this weak world of ours, so much "a muddle of states and religions and theories and stupidities."

Thus may we contribute to goodwill among men.
A Happy Christmas to you all!

A.M.M.



THE ORIGINS OF FREEMASONRY

By A. E. OTTEWELL, P.G.R.

VERY early in human history organizations of various sorts appeared. This we know from studies which have been made of the primitive peoples who still may be found in out of the way parts of the world. Such organizations had as their objective the welfare of the group.

One illustration from a number which could be used will be sufficient. More primitive peoples were concerned with the business of war. Consequently all young men needed to qualify as warriors. Some kind of ceremony for initiation into the status of manhood was common. Not uncommonly the initiate was subjected to trials to test his ability and fortitude. It was important in the interests of the safety of the group that this be done. The welfare of the war party depended to a degree on the quality of each member of it. If a young man lacked the stamina necessary it was important that the fact be known before his deficiency resulted in disaster for

the tribe. Hence the qualifying trials of initiation were carried out with appropriate ceremonies.

As time went on and agriculture became an essential means of livelihood, weather forecasting became important as it remains today for many reasons. The world of primitive and savage men was in their view populated by great numbers of spirits which were supposed to interfere directly in human affairs, not always in a friendly way. So specialists in the ways of spirits and the proper means of dealing with them appeared. These were the medicine men and later priests. As a natural development from the priestly class emerged the philosophers who concerned themselves with such questions as the origin of the universe, the nature of the forces which govern it and of man's place in and relation to it.

So we find that by about 600 B.C. there had grown up definite ideas on many of the problems of life and living. About the fourth century B.C. the greatest of all philosophers, Plato, lived, taught and wrote. He was responsible for such a tremendous

advance step in human thinking that although he lived nearly twenty-five hundred years ago, it has been said that philosophers since have only produced foot-notes to his work.

The great object of Plato's teaching was to define the good, that is what is helpful or beneficial, and how best to promote or realize the good. He taught very definitely that there is a purpose behind the universe, or as Tennyson said, "A divine far off event toward which the whole creation moves."

For our purpose it is important to recall that Plato thought of God as a mathematician and the universe was to be described in terms of triangles, circles and other mathematical figures. Others took up and elaborated different parts of his teaching. Secret societies commonly referred to as mystery cults rose and flourished for many centuries. Indeed there may still be some such surviving.

Architecture and geometry as well as other sciences are intimately related. It can thus be seen that the expression, Great Architect of the Universe, has a very respectable pedigree.

Building was one of the early activities of settled civilization. To carry it on special skills and knowledge not possessed by the common man were required. It is not surprising that societies of builders developed. These had two principal purposes. The first was to provide for the instruction of the craftsmen and architects or master builders. The second was to protect the interests of the craft. The Egyptians, Greeks and Romans, in the order named, were the great builders of the more recent periods of the ancient world. The Egyptians and Greeks to a considerable extent were the founders of mathematics. Incidentally, the Arabs made an important contribution by introducing the figures we commonly use to replace the clumsy Roman numerals. It is known that there were organizations of the builders of the Roman world. The Romans effectively occupied Britain south of what is now Scotland and with the exception of part of Wales for nearly four hundred years. This represents a period twice as long as the effective occupation of North America by the Anglo-Saxon race. The Romans built extensively. It is certain that the Collegium or association of the builders came to Britain and may well have been the forerunners of the lodges of masons which certainly flourished during the church, abbey and castle building period of British history.

A subsequent article will pick up the topic of the origins of Freemasonry at this point.

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SECRETARIES PLEASE NOTE

In response to numerous inquiries, Grand Lodge certificates will be issued in due course in December.

CONCERNING THE SOURCES OF MASONIC LAW

By Bro. C. W. NIELSEN

Research Lodge No. 194, Wellington, N.Z.

PART II

IT was not very long before the legislative faculty of the new body was incited to action, and Payne's General Regulations of 1723 appeared, intended to make provision for some of the needs that had so far manifested themselves. Up to that period, then, there was no such thing as Masonic legislative law, but nevertheless there was a common or uniform code or standard to which conformity was given; in other words, general uniformity expressed itself in respect for and obedience to tradition.

Just as in civil law, the common law is the basic element, so in the organization of the fraternity the oldest and most important element is found in tradition, and in the latter term I include and distinguish between the landmarks and the common law of the Craft. It would be erroneous to infer an exact analogy between civil law and Masonic. Vaux asserted that Masonic law is a thing peculiar to itself, and to attempt to determine all questions and problems arising by reference to civil law would lead to erroneous conclusions.

Adverting again to the components of Masonic tradition, landmarks are peculiar to our system in that no other organization is affected by a code or standard of rules containing anything possessing exactly their characteristics. First referred to by that well-known term in Payne's Regulations, where it was said "the Grand Lodge may make or alter regulations provided the old land-marks be carefully preserved," we note the constant repetition of exhortations to adhere to them. Without raising the vexed question of what is comprised in the term, as to which writers and Grand Lodges have consistently disagreed, it is safe to refer to them as fundamental rules or observances of immemorial antiquity, universal and beyond reach of change. All would probably agree that certain rules or requirements are landmarks; for instance, the inviolability of the means of recognition, the ineligibility of women, belief in the persistence of personality, but the demarcation of the dividing line is another matter.

An illustration of what is intended to be conveyed by the term may be afforded by analysing the well-known proposition that "it is not in the power of any man or body of men to make innovations in the body of Masonry." A man deprived of a limb may not cease to function substantially as before, and it would not be suggested that under the circumstances he ceased to be a man, but excise his heart, brain, or lungs, and such a radical and far-reaching change would have been effected in his constitution, such a condition of affairs would have been wrought in the body, that a continuance of function would no longer be possible. In the Masonic organization such deviations from the established order or plan could be conceived that the resultant, whatever it might be termed, certainly could not be identified with Masonry, and a departure from

the body of Masonry, or a deviation from a landmark—i.e., an innovation, would have been effected.

Next in importance to the rules just referred to is the common law, or tradition and doctrine, a set of rules or course of practice which, although not possessing the antiquity and relative importance of the landmarks, are yet of such common observance and long standing that only some strong or exceptional reason would permit of their abrogation or abandonment. Let me endeavour to show the distinction between the two, which, owing to varying opinion, are by no means contained in watertight compartments, by referring to instances of each.

Restriction of membership to men is a landmark, as testified by universality and antiquity, a departure from which would involve such a radical alteration in the body of the craft as to constitute an innovation in the technical and proper sense. Government of a Lodge by three principal officers, termed Master and Wardens, is enjoined by the common law established by usage and custom, and would not and should not be lightly interfered with. It is conceivable, however, that a Grand body might by legislation permit an alteration to be made in that respect, without incurring the opprobrium of innovating, for at one time in the history of the Craft in Scotland the government of a Lodge was entrusted to a President and Deacons, who were not the counterparts of our present-day principal officers.

Nevertheless, a common law rule may be so well established and of such significance that a departure from it would place the particular Lodge or combination of Lodges outside the pale and comity of neighbours, as witness the consequences of the exclusion of, or non-insistence on, the Book of Law by the Grand Orient of France in 1877. It has been much debated whether the step taken on that occasion involved the breach of a landmark or not, but the G. L. of England took the view, which was concurred in by all English-speaking jurisdictions, that it meant at least such a fundamental departure from long established usage and custom that the cessation of relations must follow.

DO YOUNG MEN STILL SEEK TO ENTER MASONRY?

The all too frequent assertion that young men have not become members of the Masonic Fraternity in recent years has been challenged by Earl B. Delzell in an article in the October issue of the *Bulletin* for the Grand Lodge of Iowa.

Mr. Delzell's statistics, assembled from the Annual Returns to the Grand Lodge from the Secretaries of the subordinate lodges of Iowa for 1938, are both reassuring and heartening to say the least. They reveal, for instance, that there were more candidates for Masonry in that state under 32 years of age than there were over that age; and there were more candidates 23 years of age who petitioned for the Blue

Degrees in Iowa than of any other age. Of the 2,075 who thus petitioned in 1938, only 411 were over 40 years of age.

Mr. Delzell's disclosures are interesting in several other respects. They show that rural folk petition for the Masonic Degrees at a younger age than do city folk; that the four largest cities in Iowa initiate more candidates 56 years of age than all the rest of the state; that the age of entrance varies with the size of the city, and that the most popular age of entrance is 23 in Northeast Iowa, while age 30 is more popular in Southeastern and Central Iowa.

(*Editor's Note:* We have been a party to the "all too frequent assertion" mentioned in this article. We are glad to publish the other side of the story and congratulate Iowa on the facts reported.)

MASONIC LODGE MEETINGS IN ENGLAND RESUMED

According to a recent announcement issued by the Grand Lodge of England, restrictions on Masonic meetings in that country made on September 4th on account of the war have been modified.

The announcement states among other things that meetings may not be held on Sundays; that they should take place as early in the day as possible; and the after-proceedings, where held, should be as brief as possible.

The Master of a Lodge is empowered to cancel any regular meeting even if it has already been summoned if circumstances appear to him to warrant it, but in such cases he must inform the Grand Secretary.

In his address at the quarterly meeting of the United Grand Lodge of England, held in London on September 6th, Brig. Gen. W. H. V. Darell, the assistant Grand Master, stated that due to the national emergency incident to the outbreak of war it was deemed wise to temporarily suspend all Masonic meetings, and that circulars had been issued to that effect.

Expressing the hope then that some means would be found to permit meetings to be resumed, the assistant Grand Master said in part: "We know that Masonry plays a great part in the lives of so many of the people of this country and it would be hard if Brethren were deprived of this means of association and mutual support which is of special value in times of national stress."

It appears that temporary suspension was effected while consideration could be given to the manner in which Lodges could best meet in these abnormal times.

"BULLETIN SUBSCRIPTIONS"

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