



GRAND LODGE BULLETIN

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

THE passing of His Excellency Baron Tweedsmuir of Elsfield, our Governor-General, on February 11th, is keenly regretted by all peoples of Canada, not merely because of his high station but for his very human qualities which gave him an exceptional understanding of the problems which face the ordinary citizen.

To us as Masons his life should be an example of service with devotion and ability—to his fellow man and to the British Empire. From boyhood he had to work diligently to acquire an education, and then in putting that education to use still more labour was undertaken. So well was it applied that he became a Master Craftsman with a world wide reputation in literature. The **Wisdom** which guided his Statesmanship, the **Strength** of a stable character and the **Beauty** of his Ideals, set a standard that any Mason might endeavor to emulate with profit to himself and his brethren.

It is the desire of the Grand Master that each Lodge should inscribe on their minutes some mark of respect to the memory of Lord Tweedsmuir, as the direct representative of His Majesty the King in this Dominion.

PROGRESSION

Freemasonry is not founded on the things which are constantly changing, but as the years pass away we change, and our conception and value of the principles should enlarge and expand. We should be able to get new values out of the old truth and turn the beam of the old light into new places. It is characteristic of the highest genius to get the best results out of existing materials. Beethoven invented no new instrument; Handel added no new stop to the organ; Shakespeare added no new letter to the alphabet, no new word to the language; nor did the great painters invent any new colors. The most illustrious Freemason and the most successful lodge is that which lays the deepest foundation and erects the most permanent habitation on the old rock, and which best diffuses the beams of the old light.

—*The Freemason.*

MASONS HONOR DUKE OF KENT

The Grand Lodge of Scotland recently made H.R.H. The Duke of Kent, brother of King George VI, an honorary member at the annual communication of the Grand Lodge in Edinburgh. The Duke of Kent is Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of England.

Following the ceremonies, the Duke told the assembled Masons that this was another testimonial of the bond existing for more than two centuries between the Masons of England and Scotland. He stressed that in times of war, Masonry plays an even more important part in the welfare of the nation, for it provides both a means of fraternal association and an inducement for persons engaged in patriotic work to carry out their duties.

POLITICS AND FREEMASONRY

IN the opening pages of our Book of Constitution appear The Charges of a Freemason, and an order of Grand Lodge that they be read at the making of new brethren or when the Master shall order it. It is rarely that they are read "at the making of new brethren" or at any other time, but that, perhaps, is beside the point of the present gentle reminder.

Among the many grave pronouncements of the Ancient Charges we find in that treating of "Behavior", this: "We — are resolved against all politics, as what never yet conduced to the welfare of the Lodge nor ever will."

The "we" seems self-explanatory, and is generally interpreted to mean that Freemasonry as a body shall not at any time engage in political argument or promotion. And that, it must be agreed, is a wise provision, for any man who has been exposed to the acrimony of party politics must be exceedingly aware of its evil genius for creating strife.

But there is nothing in the prohibition which prevents the Freemason as a citizen from taking as active a part as he may see fit in the political affairs of his community or his country. Indeed, another of the Ancient Charges exhorts him "to uphold on every occasion the interest of the community, and zealously promote the prosperity of his own country."

So while the Freemason must leave his political convictions with his hat in the Tyler's room when he enters Lodge, he may and should, as a good citizen, take active and intelligent interest "after the Lodge is over."

An intelligent and unprejudiced approach to politics is by no means easy. As has been pointed out in these columns before, we are victims of merciless propaganda and can never be really sure if we are being exploited for reasons carefully concealed from us in slogans, half-truths and downright mendacity. The true Mason, therefore, must approach the business of party politics charily and above all he should approach with an open and inquiring mind and clean hands. Which is to say that if he offers his services as accredited representative for his community or his country, or deems himself driven to assist in the public choice of that representative, he must do so without guile, hoping for no secret reward at the expense of his fellows and certainly with no inner thought of using his position as a stepping stone for unworthy personal or party ambitions.

If his Freemasonry means anything more than mere words to the candidate for office, he will weigh its profound implications now for it must be apparent even unto the most gullible that in the nation's need we must seek for men of principle and character, unbending integrity, high purpose, sure ability and competent knowledge. On the rock of such men the attack against freedom must surely fail.

In the heat of debate the Mason must remain calm, waiting as patiently as he can until all the facts are in ere taking his place or casting his ballot. He is

forbidden by tradition and usage to bring his politics into his Lodge and his own intelligence should teach him not to allow the acrimonies of the hustings to destroy fraternal relations valuable every hour of the day and priceless rich in social implication to himself and his country long after the exhortations of parties have vanished on the wind.

In this month of Eastertide with its recurring evidence of resurrection "there still abide, Faith, Hope and Charity." Then let the true Freemason approach the newest trials of strength in civil government with Faith that we may come nearer perfection, with Hope that out of the conflict will come peace and with Charity toward all men who may seek the truth in a variant robe.

A.M.M.



THE COVERING OF A LODGE

AN occasional column dealing with interesting events in astronomy will be conducted if it is found to have sufficient appeal to the Craft.

"The sun being the centre of our system," there are ranging round the sun the nine known planets, much like race horses exercising and each running in successively wider circles. Each travels at its own pace so that seldom do many of them find themselves in the same general direction from the centre. One of those rare occasions will occur during the last week in February and the first week of March. Perhaps ere this appears in print many may have observed the gathering galaxy of glittering gems in the western sky immediately following sunset.

During the weeks mentioned six of the nine planets will be ranged in line trailing the sun in the south western sky in the order of Mercury, Jupiter, Venus, Saturn, Mars and Uranus. They appear in line because in spite of varying distances they are in the same line of sight from the earth, and the plane of their travel about the sun is about the same for each (Hence the word planet). All are visible to the naked eye except Uranus. The best time for observation will be within an hour after sunset as Mercury sets one hour and forty minutes after the sun.

Only once or twice a year can Mercury be observed as it is quite close to the sun. Jupiter is our largest neighbor but does not appear as brilliant as Venus as the latter is much nearer the earth. The horns on Venus and the rings of Saturn will be visible to those looking through field glasses or a telescope. Mars is the red star that was so close to the earth last summer that it had the appearance of a toy balloon aloft in the southern sky. It was the nearest to us that it will be for another fifteen years. The mystics and superstitious like to correlate this planet with wars and rumors of wars—but those things are merely relics of the days of belief in abracadabras, the elixir of life, the philosopher's stone and the Delphian oracle. Uranus is not visible to the naked eye. It is far out

in space, nineteen times farther from the sun than we are.

You have all seen quasi-Masonic emblems and Masonic charts in which a star was nestling in the bosom of a new born moon. That is an astronomic atrocity! During this period of close relationship of the planets the new moon will be playing hide and seek among them. The rare phenomenon of the moon crossing in front of a planet (eclipsing) will not occur but when it does the planet or star is blotted out. The moon, our nearest neighbor, simply blocks the view. The illusion of a quarter or half moon merely means that that is the only portion we can see illuminated at the time by the sun. The dark portion would still obliterate any star or planet it was covering.

—“Mercury”.



THE ORIGINS OF FREEMASONRY

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

(Article Five)

The Development and Spread of Freemasonry

From material prescribed in previous articles the following tentative conclusions may be accepted:

1. Freemasonry either in its present form or in forms clearly antecedent to that now followed has been in existence for at least six hundred years.

2. We do not as yet know with any certainty what its origins were.

3. Before 1717 local Lodges were organized on the “time immemorial” principle. That is, any group of Masons in a given locality could set up a Lodge, carry on Masonic instruction, make Masons and disband the Lodge when its purpose had been served.

4. We do not know with certainty what if any degrees were conferred nor what the ritual was. The “Old Charges” so called do not make these points clear. In the nature of the case the esoteric teachings were not committed to writing but were communicated orally. This fact accounts for the lack of precise information previously mentioned.

5. Before 1717 government of the Craft by Grand Lodges having exclusive jurisdiction within specified areas was unknown. Each local Lodge was self contained and a law unto itself.

6. Following the organization of the Grand Lodge of England in 1717 there were several rival Grand Lodges set up, the most notable being that of the “Ancients” or “Athol” Masons.

7. In the year 1813 the remaining rival to the Grand Lodge of England, that is the Grand Lodge of the Ancients united with the Grand Lodge of England under the title of the “United Grand Lodge of Ancient Freemasons of England.”

8. Meanwhile Grand Lodges had been established in Ireland (1731) and in Scotland (1736).

9. The present arrangement of the Work in the three degrees, Entered Apprentice, Fellowcraft and Master Mason, everywhere followed by “regular” Freemasons, was set up after the revival of 1717 and the establishment of the United Grand Lodge of England.

Following the establishment of the United Grand Lodge of England Lodges were soon established on the continent of Europe and elsewhere. Before the year 1800 the following countries had properly warranted Masonic Bodies at work: France, Portugal, Holland, Switzerland, Denmark, Italy, Belgium, Russia and Sweden. It is common knowledge that Grand Lodges after the English pattern were organized in most of these countries. In some of them Masonry has been suppressed and now is only permitted in France, the Scandinavian countries and a few other places not under the control of the totalitarian or dictatorship form of government. It is worthy of note that Freemasonry and democracy appear to prosper together.

Lodges were organized at Gibraltar (1728-29), in India (1730) and in Jamaica (1742). On the Continent the British tradition of strict non-interference in affairs of Church and State was not always followed. Consequently by Papal bulls and legal enactments the Order was banned in different places and at various times. It would appear that a strict Roman Catholic cannot be a Freemason, not because Masonic law would debar him, but because of the edicts of his Church. Further, the Grand Orient, a Grand Lodge in France, as a result of its own action with respect to the sacred writings was removed from fraternization with the “regular” Grand Jurisdictions.

The earliest reliable evidence of Masonic activity in North America is given by the minutes of a Lodge at Philadelphia in 1730. It was probably a “time immemorial” Lodge. The immortal Benjamin Franklin was one of its members. The first warranted Lodge in America was the First Lodge of Boston warranted in 1733 by Viscount Montague then Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of England. Henry Price was designated as Provincial Grand Master of New England and Dominions and Territories thereunto belonging.

During the two hundred and twenty years since the revival the spread of Freemasonry throughout the world has been remarkable. According to the writer on Freemasonry in the Encyclopaedia Britannica it was estimated that in the year 1928 there were 4,400,000 “regular” Masons and 1,000,000 unrecognized, the large part of whom are “negro” Masons of the United States. All but 300,000 of this number are found in the British Empire and the United States. This fact gives point to the previous remark that Freemasonry is essentially an Anglo-Saxon institution.

The next article will deal with the military Lodges and their part in the development of the Institution of Freemasonry.

GREETINGS FROM THE FAR NORTH

The following message, which so charmingly expresses the spirit of Masonry, was received from a member of the R.C. M.P. now stationed 1,150 miles from his Mother Lodge in Alberta. This brother was one of those especially selected as escort to Their Majesties on their journey across Canada last year.

“Fort Providence, N.W.T.,
“December 28th, 1939.

“Although I find that I have drifted miles away to this lonely little spot on the MacKenzie River and am unable to obey the summons that reach me here, I assure you that in spirit I am still very much in attendance on each third Tuesday.

“It is now quite some time since I left Irricana and during that time I have travelled many miles, east, west and north, but one thing that stands out in my memory is the number of friends that have been made, and the friendship that has developed is that friendship that only we know of. I assure those of Irricana Lodge who gave so willingly of their time that I might receive the benefits in the most wholesome manner, that their efforts have not been in vain.

“Let me wish each and everyone of the brethren of the Lodge the greatest of happiness for the coming year. And may each and everyone of us find more and greater opportunities of fulfilling our obligations.

“I am enclosing a cheque covering my dues for the coming year.”



SUGGESTIONS FOR AFTER-DINNER SPEAKERS

After-dinner speeches, long a major problem in the United States, apparently trouble Englishmen just as much. An article published in *The Freemason*, London, Eng., discusses the evil at some length, and offers a few suggestions to speakers that, if heeded, might take some of the boredom out of banquets Masonic and otherwise:

1. Look at the clock, and do not talk for more than four minutes.
2. Be prepared.
3. Do not tell a humorous story. As *The Freemason* comments, jokes that may amuse the family seldom are as funny when told to an audience, and the speaker may set a precedent for the evening, with the result that the audience must listen to an endless series of poor jokes.
4. Speak up, do not whisper or let your voice trail way at the end of each sentence.

Masons, when calling upon an Initiate for a toast following an initiation ceremony, are warned:

1. Do not say you are sure he has been deeply impressed by the ceremony. It is much better that his reply should be spontaneous and not dictated to him.
2. Do not ask him to give his first impressions; this is not fair, either to him or the Lodge.

3. Do not be content with vague platitudes such as “the high principles of Freemasonry,” “the more you put into it the more you will get out of it,” etc. Tell him something definite about the history, symbolism, or teaching of the Order.



There is a growing conviction that Masonry is better administered and its principles applied in the small Lodge than in the large Lodge. While the large Lodge has some advantages so far as finances are concerned yet in the practical demonstration of Masonic principles and brotherhood, a small Lodge has a superior advantage.

Every time a Lodge wants to get up an entertainment it generally provides for the conferring of a degree. Masons, as a rule, are willing to come up and see a degree conferred once in a while, but they don't want ritual as a steady diet. A Lodge getting up an entertainment for the membership should vary its program, and not do just one thing, and it must also be learned that banquets with long speeches running past the hour of eleven o'clock will kill any organization.

Nothing is more aggravating than criticisms upon the fraternity from suspended and demitted Masons. Not having sufficient interest to maintain their membership they certainly ought not to be interested to the extent of finding fault with those who do love the institution.

The man who is always complaining that his Lodge is all wrong should remember that a Masonic Lodge is just exactly what we make it. If a brother thinks that things are wrong in his Lodge and are not going as they should, it is his business to jump in and help correct whatever is wrong. Nine-tenths of the criticism of the Lodge comes from men who never attend the meetings and contribute nothing to the growth and development of the society.

—D. D. Darrah, (Ill. “Masonic News”)



Men still call for special revolutions, for revolutions in politics, in externals. But all that sort of thing is trumpery. It is the soul of man that must revolt.

—Hendrik Ibsen.



“BULLETIN” SUBSCRIPTIONS

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