



Grand Lodge Bulletin

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

CARRY ON!

MUCH useful and useless exhortation is indulged in regarding the necessity of "carrying-on" in the present crisis. "C'est la guerre", in the last world conflict, was the stock excuse for everything from the issue of hay cigarettes to the state of the weather. This time we need no "C'est la guerre" because the horror lives with us day and night, as a threat of mental, physical, and spiritual blackout, which no man can disregard. We know we *must* "carry on" if we are to live as free men.

Far be it from us then to indulge in the useless exhortation we deprecate. But our business, we take it, is to remind Masons, if not to exhort them, that there are certain responsibilities in being a Mason which are perhaps unique, and that these responsibilities are covered by the broad term "Obligation". The advent of a New Year seems an opportune occasion not only to exchange mutual good wishes for the twelve months unborn, but to remind ourselves of obligation, and the pressing need for each one of us to pay more attention, much more, to its implication.

There is a great hue and cry, increasing in intensity, at the present time, imploring, beseeching, and pleading for a return to the spiritual condition of our grandfathers. Return to the church, return to the dour and determined observance of this dogma and that, return to the faith of our fathers. Return anyway!

This is no place to question the sincerity of the protagonists of the Great Return, even were one so disposed. We could exhort with grave unction on the need for return to Freemasonry as our grandfathers practised it. But we won't, because we sincerely believe the thing impossible!

Often we have drawn attention in our modest preachments, oral and written, to the indubitable fact that the static state leads inevitably to retrogression, and any attempt at return is the road to the finish. We must move forward or perish. History seems to show the matter as simple as that! How then can the Mason "carry on" in these days grim and desperate? The answer seems equally simple. He can do, in fact, these things he is obligated to do

and to which, alas, too many give only the thinnest kind of lip service.

After all is said and done, the basic requirements of Freemasonry can be telescoped into "the peculiar cement" we call "common decency". "Not very much," you say. My brother, in that simple phrase, colloquial as it is, is contained the wisdom of the ages, and the Mason's "secret" as it applies to you is simply your capacity to understand it, your ability to apply it, and your willingness to make it your guiding principle in every act of your life!

Is this useless exhortation? Sobeit.

Consider the implications of your obligations in the colloquial language of the day. And consider how you may make sense of some of these implications reduced to everyday application. Let's look to what you have solemnly pledged yourself. Here are the principle points:

1. You are pledged to secrecy. It seems apparent to even the dullest that we must keep our means of recognition of ourselves to ourselves. Beyond that there is no secret *unless you find it for yourself*. Your interpretation, when you have found it, may differ from ours, but we have both learned to keep our mouths shut!

Apply *that* lesson to every day life. Do you go around peddling every piece of petty gossip which comes your way? Do you unconsciously embroider every tale you hear, especially if it is to someone's detriment. A wag once said that the wise man lets confidence come in at one ear, to be stopped by the other, while the fool lets them in at both ears and out through his mouth.

Which is your measure of the first point of obligation?

2. You are pledged to abide by all "the laws, rules and regulations". Which is simply to say that you must play the game according to the community rules. The man who writes his own rule book and changes it to suit his ideas of his rights or his pocket, will soon be marked

for unenviable attention, or the cold shoulder. He is the poor sport in more ways than one.

Do you play the game according to the second point of obligation?

3. You are pledged to help the distressed. Do you? It was once said by Mark Twain of an acquaintance, that he was so tight-fisted that even God couldn't open his hand to put a blessing in it! Money gift is not the only way of helping the distressed, but every dollar in a hurry helps soothe many an ache.

Do you match your Masonic pretence with your ablest dollar and cent performance when you hear the call of the third point in your obligation?

4. You are pledged to refrain from cheating, wronging, defrauding or slandering your brother. Do you really refrain from taking unfair advantage in the daily business deal? Do you especially refrain from trying to "get" your brother when something happens to your temporary disadvantage, but which you know was a perfectly fair transaction by all the standards of common honesty? Do you practise the sensible rule of speaking the best there is or saying nothing, save when you must speak?

Can you declare your thoughts, words and actions true, under the square of the fourth point in your obligation?

5. You are pledged to respect womankind. Here is another community law proved by long term application. The moral law in respect of sex relationship may change over a long period of time, but the man who attempts to bend it to suit his own immediate circumstance is merely displaying a lack of common sense. And this is not losing sight of the physiological fact that we are not all built alike, but suggesting rather, that Masons should remember the pledge, but look in sorrow rather than anger upon those who fail.

Without doubt, you accept the sound sense of the fifth point in your obligation.

Here, then, are five points of fellowship which are time tested and time honored but too often glossed over in our craze for so-called modernity. They are not easily cast aside for they are the concentrated product of human experience. Were all Masons to abide by their teachings every day in every year, the Order might come again to be, as was the original dream of the Fathers, a leader in the greatest of all researches, the social quest for truth.

We wish you a thoughtful New Year, in which to consider the five points in the light of the days to come.

A.M.M.



GRAND MASTER'S MESSAGE

My Dear Brethren:

Another Christmas, with its message of Hope, has gone. Circumstances have been such that the happiness of this season in past years is now tinged with the sorrow of world events. Yet still we must and shall look forward as Freemasons with steadfast fortitude to better things.

Time passes at a rapid rate. It only seems a few weeks since you elected me Grand Master of Masons in this Jurisdiction, yet more than half my term has expired and one wonders whether or not we have accomplished all the things we could have done.

To all Lodges and individuals who sent me greetings and in many instances a message of encouragement, I wish to express my deep gratitude. Throughout the holiday season I experienced anew your comradeship and sensed the burning desire of our membership in all parts of the Jurisdiction to Rededicate themselves to the service of Masonry.

Yes, Brethren, we have been given another NEW YEAR—a clean page in our lives. It is customary to make resolutions and ours must be: **A Masonry ready and willing to serve humanity at all costs.**

Our Christmas objective for the Masonic War Distress Fund was unfortunately not realized. However, now that the holidays are over I am confident we shall experience an accelerated effort and our Central Committee will be heartened by your response. One Thousand Pounds was cabled to the Grand Secretary of the United Grand Lodge of England just before Christmas and the following acknowledgement was received by our Grand Secretary:

London, December 18th, 1941.

"Cheque for thousand pounds received for war relief. Sincere and grateful thanks. Writing."

"WHITE"

The need is still great, Masonic Duty still challenges us. With Resolute Determination let us accept this Challenge. The most you can give is the **least** we can do.

Fraternally yours,

GEORGE F. ELLIS,
Grand Master.



OVER THE TOP!

Congratulations to Hussar Lodge No. 130

H. B. Stitt, Esq.,
Secretary,
Hussar Lodge No. 130.

Dear Sir and Brother:

Our General Secretary, M.W. Bro. George Moore, has advised me that Hussar Lodge has paid in their full quota to the Masonic War Distress Fund.

On behalf of the Grand Master and the members of the Fund Committee, I wish to convey to your Worshipful Master, Officers and Members our thanks

and appreciation for your splendid co-operation and tangible expression with the object of the Fund.

Hussar Lodge is the first Lodge to complete their quota and we are deeply appreciative for this help to our overseas brethren who so sorely need all the help that can be sent to them.

Thanking you and with best wishes for the welfare of your Lodge in the coming year.

Sincerely and fraternally,

A. D. CUMMING,
Chairman of the Southern Division.

NOTE: This small country Lodge is to be congratulated on their splendid efforts in view of the fact that they have had one of the poorest crops in Alberta in 1941.

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SOMETHING IN IT

By Bro. L. J. HUMPHREY
Secretary, Nanaimo Lodge, No. 110, British Columbia

WHEN he joined the Craft some years ago a friend told me that he was impressed by the fact that he met in lodge many types of men, men of quite opposite makeup, men he should not have imagined would have belonged. "But," he went on, "there seems to be something in it which appeals to them all. It is really remarkable."

Now while this reaction was understandable in one lately raised, the actual fact is not remarkable at all. Masonry offers so much, its arms are flung so wide, its treasury is so varied and generous, that the brother who cannot see "something in it" is rare. Of course, as with every organization, one meets the occasional cynic, the man who describes all moral statements as platitudes, the spiritually thin chap who is more handicapped by his own shallowness than is the Order. But life is long, its lessons final; sooner or later he may be driven upon a rocky shore and the force of circumstance will open his eyes.

How happy, then, is the Mason who finds joy in his association and a quickening interest in its practice.

There is the mainly social man, the man who is not interested in the deeper side of the teachings but who by his own amiability and ready cheer radiates and personifies the grand humanitarian principles upon which we build our house. He delights in the company of his fellows, listens attentively and with contentment to the ritual; lodge proceedings are to him intriguing because they represent the workings of a human organization. But his chief delight is the refreshment period. Here he is at his best. His ready tongue is quick to communicate joke, incident or hearsay to his neighbor; he stands to propose a toast and his face is round and alight with kindness. Equally eager to listen to the general buzz of conversation that surrounds the table, he is known as a "good mixer". He goes away with a step that is lively and a brisk "so-long". Masonry has done him good because it has offered him an opportunity to be at his best—and this is the sincerest and most appreciated form of compliment.

Consider now his near opposite, the intellectual brother, whose guiding beacons are perhaps deeper, though not necessarily more sound. This man loves to study, to delve into the esoteric, to dwell on the antiquity of Masonry, to examine with the pride of continual discovery and corroboration the foundations of our lectures, the sources of our symbols. This man is generous with his knowledge, always ready to impart to the Lodge some gleam of his learnings. He is the student, the man who gets behind all movements tending toward a wider education of the brethren. We owe much to him. The ten minute talk he gives on "Masonic Symbolism" has taken many hours of preparation. But he would be the last to deny that he owes much to the Craft. For it, too, has offered him a field of endeavor and exploration, has given him the opportunity to lose, and thus to find himself.

The sensitive brother whose mind has been schooled in the exacting apprenticeship afforded by a study of the arts, finds peculiar joy in the relating of his talents to the requirements of the lodge. If he be a musician he is able to adorn the ritual, to supply the rare exaltation that only music can give, to render a very special service and at the same time give wings to his own soul. Such a brother is truly blessed.

The lover of words and of good speech is able to delight in fitting recitation of the grand passages which enoble our ceremonies, to thrill to the magic of rhetoric, or the more reasoned charm of sober statement.

There is another brother to whom the Craft is indebted. He is the memorizer, who can recite every lecture, every obligation, who is jealous of the spoken ritual and anxious that it shall be rendered word perfect. Word perfect would seem to be his creed, and woe betide the poor brother who, caught in the baffling haze of lapse of memory, dares to substitute. This brother offers a very special service to us all, because by his zeal and assiduity he is doing his share to pass on the work unimpaired from generation to generation. If he be somewhat strict his fault is a worthy one and we should respect him. And he, whose association with the Order has given the delight of practice of his own especial skill, would be the last to forget his debt.

For the brother who is diffident and conscious of it, when he is appointed to an office, Masonry opens a field of unique value. With the annual advancement from chair to chair, his selfmastery grows, he becomes more confident, so that when at last he is granted the supreme honour of governing his lodge, he has developed to such an extent that if one thing stands out in his mind it will be warm appreciation of the Craft and thankfulness for the personal growth afforded by its pursuits.

The religious man, with his heart attuned to the spiritual, with refined mind much more refined by a life of devotion, finds in his Masonic association a wonderful field of expression. Every meeting provides him with opportunity to say the kind word, and the broadening influence of varied contacts gives him

a just balance of values. Since thankfulness for gifts bestowed is his motto, he, of all members, will acknowledge with gratitude his debt to the Craft.

Thus by a consideration of even a few types which go toward the intricate pattern of our membership, we see that Masonry affords solace and pleasure, inspiration and encouragement, each according to his individual need. Let us then bring to it our best service and our ready hand, for an institution so lavish in its compensation deserves nothing short of the best we can offer.

Truly there is "something in it".



NEWS FROM ABROAD

Excerpt from Letter received from the Grand Almoner of the Grand Lodge of Scotland, and Grand Representative of the Grand Lodge of Alberta

17th November, 1941.

"The grant which your Grand Lodge was able to make to us, along with those received from our kindred Grand Lodges in Canada and the States, has been most gratefully received and I need hardly assure you is being most carefully and suitably applied, particularly in those districts where enemy action has caused so much distress and hardship. Our War Distress Fund, which now runs to some thousands of pounds, and which has been created by Grand Lodges such as your good selves and our Daughter Lodges and districts overseas, has dealt with some hundreds of applications, and it may interest you to know these are not handled under the ordinary procedure, but are dealt with by return of post on my own responsibility. A simple form of application with a statement of the relevant facts is all that is required from those who have suffered, and I can assure you that very few indeed have been turned down. Most of the applications have come from the West of Scotland where whole districts were wiped out completely and a few from the East, and some from England where our own members have suffered from enemy visitations."

(Signed) JAMES SIME WATERSTON, J.P.



NAZIS CLOSE CHANNEL LODGES

The Nazi occupation of the islands in the English Channel—Jersey, Guernsey and Alderney—caused the closing of two Provincial Grand Lodges under the English Constitution, each with nine constituent Lodges. The islands Guernsey, Jersey, Alderney, Sarke and Herme were divided into two Provinces in 1849. Four of the eighteen Lodges in those islands are over 100 years old. One of the Lodges worked in the French language. Material found by the Nazi troops in Guernsey and Jersey were the main pieces of an exhibition set up in Berlin. Pictures showing the kings of England in Masonic dress through the ages were among the features of the exhibit.

MASONRY IN IRELAND

Direct information from Ireland reveals that the Craft still flourishes on the Island and that the Grand Lodge and Supreme Council, 33°, are acting together in complete harmony to further Freemasonry under the trying conditions existing today.

Though Ireland is divided, politically, into the Republic of Eire, in the South, and Ulster, the six northern counties that have remained loyal to the British Government, the entire Island remains one Masonic Jurisdiction. The Headquarters of both Grand Bodies are in Dublin, though the Craft is strongest in Ulster.

The Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Ireland is Lord Donoughmore, who is also Grand Commander of the Supreme Council, 33°, of England and Wales. Justice Gerald FitzGibbon is Grand Commander of the Supreme Council of Ireland. All the members of the families of these two Grand Commanders who have been able to qualify are in some branch of war service. This includes the women, nephews and nieces, and all other relatives.

The death of Lieutenant Grand Commander William J. Smyly, 33°, of the Irish Supreme Council, dealt a severe blow to Irish Masonry. His nephew, J. Gilbert Smyly, 33°, Secretary General, succeeded him to that office, and Raymond F. Brooke, 33°, was appointed the new Secretary General. Secretary General Brooke is also Deputy Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Ireland.

Another Grand Lodge official, Senior Grand Warden Sir George Franks, is a member of the Supreme Council of Ireland. Active Member Pim Thompson, who left such a fine impression when he visited United States Masons a few years ago, recently retired from that Body.



VICHY EASES CRAFT RESTRICTIONS

Under a law just published by the Vichy Government, reinstatement of Masonic dignitaries dismissed from government positions may be expected.

Those who have held elective offices in Lodges or those who hold rank above the Third Degree in the Craft are defined by the government as Masonic dignitaries. Those who long ago cut off their connections with secret societies, under threats from the government, and those who are said to have rendered special services to Vichy, are eligible for exemptions.

A government committee will investigate the cases coming under the law and render the decisions.

Knowing that Vichy still remains a vassal state of Germany, many Masons in this country are awaiting further proof before they accept this apparent change in policy at face value. Hitler's antipathy for the Craft is too well known to expect any change of heart in the countries he has conquered. His use of barefaced lies to lull the suspicions of his opposition is also well known.