



Grand Lodge Bulletin

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

IS THERE ANY HELP?

"IS there no help for the widow's son?" Yes, some. But not enough. Widow's sons by the thousand are in the front line defending us, and the widows themselves have been bombed out of house and home, to be left with little else but the clothes they stand in.

There is no obligation on our part to help these people, and there will be no levy on the pay cheque, the grain cheque or the cream cheque. It's all a matter of choice. The generous ones will give, have given and probably will give again, the rest, the majority by the way—well, they just don't seem to grasp the idea.

Surely no Mason can imagine that an appeal is made to bring Kudos to any individual. He cannot surely think that all the machinery of appeal and collection and despatch to beleaguered brethren and their families is merely a show piece to be bragged about. The grave question seems to be does he think of the thing at all as it concerns him? Does he pass by the appeal as merely another in the demands of the moment and conclude that because he is presently just a little short, he cannot possibly bring himself to consider giving five or six dollars over a year? We can hardly believe this is so—and yet?

To have to "sell" the lesson of the north east corner to a man who can afford to buy it by practical performance now—and we are not concerned with the man who cannot possibly afford it—is a charge of weakness either against the instruction given, or against the man in whose mind the seed had failed to germinate. Today is the day when the efficacy of the lesson is put to the test as never before. We descend from airy fancy conveyed in fine words and face the reality of dollars and cents. Results count, and pious sentiment will send no dollar across the Atlantic!

"Would you give it if you had it?" Of course you would. Well, if you have it, now is the supreme opportunity. Why delay? Four short months remain to meet the fine objective set. Every dollar

now is a hundred cents nearer the objective; not a pile of money, but the alleviation of suffering among people who are daily doing a dirty job so that we can go about our business unafraid of death from the sky, of loss of everything we own, and of everything we hold dear.

To those who have been prompt in their giving, we are privileged to send the thanks of those responsible for organizing the appeal, as well as the unspoken blessing of those whose burden has already been lightened in some small measure by their generosity.

To those who have not yet given, may we once more appeal. The need is great, urgent and pressing. To give is to renew the pledge to human brotherhood. To act NOW is evidence that our Masonry is no idle parade of impractical sentimentality.

Not all our Brethren read this sheet. Will you act as a missionary for this tenet of our Order?

A.M.M.

Note: A reprint of this editorial will be sent out to each Lodge in sufficient quantity to supply their members, when mailing Lodge notices for February or March.

MASONIC WAR DISTRESS FUND

Faith and Works

It is with much pleasure that we announce to the Brethren that sufficient money has been collected to enable us to cable a second sum of £1,000 to the United Grand Lodge of England, for the rehabilitation of distressed members and their families. The Grand Master desires to express his thanks for this splendid support and trusts that the full objective of \$50,000.00 will be raised for this worthy cause.

MORE LIGHT

(Condensed and republished by special permission from a Bulletin of the Masonic Service Association of the United States, Washington, D.C.)

GOETHE was one of the myriad-minded men of our race, and a devout member of our gentle Craft. When he lay dying, as the soft shadow began to fall over his mind, he said to a friend watching by his bed: "Open the window and let in more light!" The last request of a great poet-Mason is the first quest of every Mason.

If one were asked to sum up the meaning of Masonry in one word, the only word equal to the task is—Light! From its first lesson to its last lecture, in every degree and every symbol, the mission of Masonry is to bring the light of God into the life of man. It has no other aim, knowing that when the light shines the truth will be revealed.

A Lodge of Masons is a House of Light. Symbolically it has no roof but the sky, open to all the light of nature and of grace. As the sun rises in the East to open and rule the day, so the Master rises in the East to open and guide the Lodge in its labor.

At the center of the Lodge, upon the Altar of Obligation, the Great Lights shine upon us, uniting the light of nature and the whiter light of revelation. Without them no Lodge is open in due form, and no business is valid.

To the door of the Lodge comes the seeker after light, groping his way—asking to be led out of shadows into realities; out of darkness into light. All initiation is "bringing men to light," teaching them to see the moral order of the world in which they must learn their duty and find their true destiny. It is the most impressive drama on earth, a symbol of the divine education of man.

To this end Masonry opens upon its Altar the one great Book of Light, its pages aglow with "a light that never was on sea or land," shining through the tragedies of man and the tumults of time, showing us a path that shineth more and more unto the perfect day. From its first page to the last key-word is light, until, at the end, when the City of God is built, it has no need of the sun or the moon or the stars, for God is the light of it.

To find the real origin of Masonry we must go far back into the past, back behind history. All the world over, at a certain stage of culture, men bowed down in worship of the sun, the moon, and the stars. In prehistoric graves the body was buried in a sitting posture, and always with the face toward the East, that the sleeper might be ready to spring up early to face the new and brighter day.

Such was the wonder of light and its power over man, and it is not strange that he rejoiced in its beauty, lifting up hands of praise. The Dawn was the first Altar in the Old Light Religion of the race.

Sunrise was an hour of prayer, and sunset, with its soft farewell fires, was the hour of sacrifice.

Such a faith is in accord with all the poetries and pieties of the race. Light is the loveliest gift of God to man; it is the mother of beauty and the joy of the world. Light is to mind what food is to the body; it brings the morning, when the shadows flee away, and the loveliness of the world is unveiled.

There is a mystery in light. It is not matter, but a form of motion; it is not spirit, though it seems closely akin to it. Midway between the material and the spiritual, it is the gateway where matter and spirit pass and repass. Of all the glories of nature it most resembles God in its gentleness, its benignity, its pity, falling with impartial benediction alike upon the just and the unjust, upon the splendor of wealth and the squalor of poverty.

Yes, God is light, and the mission of Masonry is to open the windows of the mind of man, letting the dim spark within us meet and blend with the light of God, in whom there is no darkness. There is "a light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world," as we learn in the Book of Holy Law; but too often it is made by evil, error, and ignorance, until it seems well nigh to have gone out.

But, humanity is more blind than bad. In his play, "St. Joan", Shaw makes one of his characters say: "If you only saw what you think about, you would think quite differently about it. It would give you a great shock. I am not cruel by nature, but I did a very cruel thing once because I did not know what cruelty was like. I have been a different man ever since." Alas, he did not see what he had done until the hoodwink had been taken off.

More and more some of us divide men into two classes—those who see and those who do not see. The whole quality and meaning of life lies in what men see or fail to see. And what we see depends on what we are.

Thus our gentle Masonry, by seeking to "bring men to light," not simply symbolically but morally and spiritually, is trying to lift the shadow of evil, ignorance and injustice off the life of man. It is a benign labor, to which we may well give the best that we are or hope to be, toiling to spread the skirts of light that we and all men may see what is true and do what is right.

What the sad world needs—what each of us needs—is more light, more love, more clarity of mind and more charity of heart; and this is what Masonry is trying to give us. Once we take it to heart, it will help us to see God in the face of our fellows, to see the power of a lie and its inherent weakness because it is false, to see the glory of truth and its final victory—to see these things is to be a Mason.



When you begin to believe your Lodge can't get along without you, pull your finger out of a bowl of water and look for the hole.

NEWS FROM ABROAD

A BOOK FOUND IN LONDON PLACES MASONRY BEYOND 1526

Literally thousands upon thousands of articles, pamphlets and books have been written on Freemasonry since the first Grand Lodge was founded in England in 1717. This could not be otherwise with a fraternity whose teachings are so rich and fundamental in the ideals that should govern the behavior of man as an individual and as a social being. Elements of its philosophy, taught in allegory and by symbols, reach back of recorded time to the tribal period of the human race. The conception of veiling and preserving the philosophy in the terms of the builder in stone is believed to have been discovered and put into practice within modern times and within the past several centuries. It is the uncertainty of the exact time that makes the search for the first uses of certain of its terms intriguing to the Masonic scholar. The word "Freemason" is one of these terms. When was it first used? This query correctly answered will tell when the history of the Craft took definite form. Every now and then some student finds a tome where the word "Freemason" is used. If the use of the word antedates the previous find, he has something that arrests immediate interest among Masonic students.

Until recently the earliest known use of the word "Freemason" appeared in a book entitled *A Most Spiritual and Precious Pearl*, which came out in 1550. Now comes another, published twenty-four years earlier, the author of which is William Boude, a "bachelor of divinity". This tome was discovered in the British museum and will stand as containing the "first known use of the word 'Freemason'" until another is found. Many believe that other sources will be discovered; if not in books, certainly in ancient manuscripts.

BRITISH MASONS MEET AT NOON

Most London Masonic Lodge meetings are held at midday to avoid the difficulties of the blackout. Due to the fact that most younger Masons are either in the service or too busy to attend day meetings, the bulk of the work of carrying on the Craft has fallen on the shoulders of older members.

Past Masters and other former Lodge officers find themselves constantly called to fill in for regular officers who are forced to remain away by duty. Their work in carrying on regular Masonic activity, even in many of the districts heaviest hit by bombing raids, has been the means of keeping the Craft fully alive in the British Islands.

Restrictions affecting the manufacture of Masonic jewels and other regalia has caused some difficulty. This is being solved by the older Masons who have

held office and have kept their Masonic jewels and regalia for sentimental reasons. The old equipment is being brought out and once more used in the Lodges.

British Masons have found the Craft a constant source of inspiration during the dark days of war, and have made every effort to keep the Fraternity functioning. The methods they have adopted to keep going even under desperate war conditions may well be copied by the Masons of the United States and Canada.

NEW ENGLISH LODGES

The Grand Secretary of the United Grand Lodge of England recently reported an increase of fifty-five Lodges for the year 1940. The gain came in the Provincial Grand Lodges where the number of Lodges rose from 3,109 to 3,164. There are 1,281 Lodges in London and 739 Lodges in the District and Overseas Units of the United Grand Lodge.

FROM A SECRETARY'S SCRATCHPAD

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

Masonic Silence is Golden

FREEMASONRY being made up of human beings, it is quite natural that occasionally we hear judgments of our fellow-members which are, to put the matter euphemistically, somewhat "snap" and ill-considered. Take for instance the brother who sits on the "sidelines" and says nothing month by month. We have heard him referred to with perhaps a slight condescension. "Oh, he's all right—but he never *says* anything."

Now, with deference, I suggest to you that, practical considerations notwithstanding, this is a petty, shortsighted and worthless estimate. Masons especially should remember that the unheard values play a tremendous part in our lodge lives, and that the power of thought—silent and kept silent though it be—is a truly potent force indeed. The silent member who thinks kind thoughts toward his brethren, who reveres the Craft and has an up-looking reverence for the letter suspended in the East, is a Masonic jewel of precious price.

May the Great Architect vouchsafe to all Masters the quiet support of quiet men.

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To a New W.M.

Lessons oft repeated and forms and ceremonies uttered over and again tend to become monotonous,

to lose their appeal. But because this is so does not alter the fact that the golden lessons and truths contained in them are as immutable as ever. It is the high privilege of a new W.M. to re-state these truths in words of potency and light, to turn upon them the glow of a personality and imagination alive to their value, to enshrine them in the beauty which is truth's fitting dress.

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Up and Up

As the spiritual is higher than the material, so will Freemasonry contribute toward a really worthwhile result in its membership—and in the world—in proportion as it stresses the unseen realities of life, and makes a definite effort to lift men to a higher plane. In this work we can all share.

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Bright Flower

Passing a garden one evening a short time ago, my eye was irresistably drawn to a tiny splash of colour. A small red flower was caught in a dying sunray and it stood out clear, bold and bright with a brilliance at once noble and sweet. There was nothing vaunting or brassy in it—it had a certain winsomeness and humility, and was quite touching in its tender charm. I stopped and looked—was held by it, moved by its utter simplicity, its sheer beauty. But even as I watched the sun dropped, the golden halo that had enshrined it was withdrawn and—it was gone.

Gone? Well, no. A thing of beauty, the poet says, is a joy forever. I realised then how very true that is. For when I pass that garden during the dull months I shall still see the little red flower, still catch its tender message and though the winter storm rage the memory of it will be for me a beacon-light, steady, serene, confident.

So it is with our Masonic life. The kind word a brother spoke to me when I felt depressed, the tribute of silent sympathy he vouchsafed to my confidence when I needed a friend to tell my trouble to, the everyday courtesies and kindnesses I have, perhaps, taken for granted—all these things will be as that little bright flower in the after moments of life, refreshing, restoring my soul.

How great a privilege, then, it will be for me to grow a bright flower to refresh some other brother in the time of his need.

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There is but one way for the Initiate to convince the Profane of the truth of the Mason's philosophy—by example.

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He who purports to be a museum of all the virtues is he who is not to be trusted.

A CENTENARIAN VISITS A LODGE

At the regular meeting of Wetaskiwin Lodge No. 15 held December 18, 1941, an event of unusual interest to the members and visitors occurred, in the presence of a visiting Mason—a very old Mason, both in years of service but more particularly in years of life. This visitor's name is James H. Winter, of Falun, Alberta, who in November 1903 was initiated a member of Bow River Lodge No. 1, Calgary, and granted life membership in 1930.

James Winter was born in Atlanta, Georgia, on May 5th, 1841, making him on the occasion of his visit almost a hundred and one years old—and he climbed the two long hard flights of stairs to the Lodge room under his own power—a terrible challenge to many grumblers of fifty years younger. He enjoyed the full length of the meeting which was the occasion of the official visit of the D.D.G.M. Rt. Worshipful Bro. Eric Hawkins, and at the subsequent supper, to the extreme surprise of every member present, gave an exceptionally fine reading with a strength and interpretation one could not wish improved.

As a youth Bro. Winter was a member of Morgan's Horse, a cavalry unit of the Confederacy under the command of Brig. General Morgan which was very active in the American Civil War—and recalls that many a time he danced while his Commanding Officer helped provide some entertainment for his men (when little entertainment existed otherwise) with a fiddle.

Shortly after his initiation into Masonry in Calgary, at the age of sixty-two years, he homesteaded a quarter section of land southwest of Falun, Alberta, and has farmed that same land to the present date, "batching" and always caring for himself and retaining his independence. His first contact with a hospital was made this December when an attack of influenza rendered him helpless; now, one week after his discharge from hospital, his first expressed desire, while still in town, was to visit lodge—and at the conclusion of a meeting which lasted until 12:30 o'clock, pronounced that night as the most enjoyable time he could recall of his entire life.

A. A. Reeves, *Lodge Historian.*

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Who refuses to believe everything he hears is already something of a philosopher. He declines to be taken in.

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When all is said and done the happiest man is the "square shooter". He can sleep o' nights.

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Men think they work for money or some other momentary need; but they deceive themselves, it being curious to witness how unanimously human beings substitute the shadow for the truth.