



# Grand Lodge Bulletin

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

## "Swansong for Volume Seven"

WITH this number, another volume of your Grand Lodge *Bulletin* is history. That it has been of some value is the sincere wish of your Editor.

In conning the numbers which have gone to make the volume, it may seem that undue stress has been put upon the need for the present practice of Masonic Benevolence. Whether that stress has been of little effect, or the mark set too high, the fact remains we have failed to reach our objective. We have rationed our benevolence, but it is no business of ours to measure the length of the cable tow.

Rationing is a word much upon the lips of the people, but withal, we must not forget that we are fighting that there shall be no rationing of the things of the spirit. We are coming to realize that perhaps the rainbow lure of material things we have been chasing these last few years, is more evanescent than we think even now as we begin to find pleasure and peace of mind in a growing, if enforced, simplicity of living.

The practice of Freemasonry as a social institution may be rationed with everything else. Men will be requisitioned for business of paramount importance, and Lodges will suffer as result. This we can bear with patience, in the hope that in the triumph of our cause, better days will come. Meantime, the practice of the tenets of Freemasonry need not be rationed. To some it seems these tents have been rationed unconsciously in a plague of sheer indifference toward anything in which no immediate material reward is offered, but never in the history of the world has there been greater need for individual emphasis on the sober and intelligent examination of the problems that confront us. The mechanics may change, but the perpetuation of an idea by its exemplification in his own conduct, is the obligation of every Mason who has any pretence to the name.

We have seen in the last two years the fate of Freemasonry under the totalitarian heel. We have had hints at least of what can happen to the Order, even in a benevolent Democracy, should it be dis-

covered to be aimless palaver in useless enterprise, drawing off the time and effort of men of goodwill badly needed elsewhere. It may be too, that in the shadow show we have lost the dynamic bone of our original purpose. No outworn machinery should be allowed to balk thoughtful reconsideration of the plan of Masonry. If we have lost sight of that plan, and with it the dynamic of our existence, time is when we must recover it. No prohibition set up by the exigencies of 1717 should be allowed to blind us to the needs of 1942. The world does change, and probably more in the two and a quarter centuries between these years than in any part of the world's history.

Prophets forecast change ahead beyond our wildest reckoning. No institution in the doldrums of its own indifference can hope to survive in the tidal wave which seems to be gathering. What will happen to Freemasonry? We do not know, but we can hazard a guess that in the social changes which *must* come, there will be little room for thought and action based upon the knowledge, ideas and conventions of two centuries ago. Nor is this to say that basic truths will alter, but to suggest that thought and action based upon these truths must and will.

The implications of Freemasonry are that we are builders of the ethic of sterling character. A moment's thought must disclose that building anything with the tools of the early eighteenth century is at best a laborious process. The social conscience has changed so much in the meantime, realism has reacted upon sentiment in so many ways, that men have come to accept a grave need for investigation of the roots of cause, as vastly more important than protracted tinkering with such leaves and branches of effect as appear in our economics, education, religion and world attitudes.

Quite apparently, without consideration of these things, the Order may survive for decades as an innocuous and pleasant retreat for those who refuse to face the promise of the immediate future and the labors of building which lie ahead, but such a course seems plain denial of the philosophy and

history of the institution.

Some tell us we should not bother unduly about these things now because there is but one job with us, and that must be done. This may be true, and it is agreed without reservation that the job of repelling the attack on our way of life is imperatively first. At the same time it is generally agreed that we are not in arms to return to the status quo of 1912 or even of 1939, far less that of 1717. Should we not then, spare an hour or a day to consider what we are fighting for, what we hope to do with victory when it comes, and what we hope to make of the world our children will inherit when we are gone? Freemasonry is of that world, and it seems that the Ancient Order is as vitally interested in these things as any other on the face of the earth if for no other reason than that it sets itself up as the champion of understanding, of freedom, of fraternal relationship among all men "wheresoever dispersed over the face of the globe".

We have suggested these considerations before, convinced that their solution is our modern imperative. The response has not been encouraging. Nevertheless, the philosophy of the leaven in the lump is still sound, and with the knowledge that some thinkers are similarly exploring the same unknown country, we venture to pose the problems by implication again as our last word in saying adieu to Volume Seven.

When next we meet, the tide of great events will be at the flood. May it be granted that victory will ride the crest and that peace for all men breasts the currents of brave new waters.

A.M.M.



### "SAY NOW 'LOLLAPALOOZA'"

By MORRIS BAUMAN

In *The New York Masonic Outlook*

**T**HE Slaughter of the Ephraimites at the River Jordan some three thousand years ago gave the English language the Hebrew word "Shibboleth", meaning a test-word or watchword. The word has been variously translated in the Bible as "flood", "corn", "branch" or "channel", but the only place where the word appears untranslated, in order to convey the proper meaning, is in the Book of Judges.

The Ephraimites' modern counterpart, Japanese battling the American troops of Bro. General Douglas MacArthur on Bataan Peninsula, met their doom through a modern shibboleth. Japanese soldiers dressed in American or Filipino uniforms attempted to pass American sentries. Aware of the inability of the Japanese to pronounce the letter "L", which they pronounce as "R", the sentry challenged the approaching soldier to repeat the password "lollapalooza". If the word came back as given, the soldier was passed, but if it came back as "rorra-", before the word is finished the hapless Japanese had made his last mispronunciation and would see the rising sun no more.

There have been many other shibboleths (or lollapaloozas) between the time of the Ephraimites at Jordan and the Japanese on Bataan. It is notable that on at least two other occasions the historic River Jordan was the scene of sudden death resulting from a slip of tongue and lip.

The lowly onion came into its own during World War I, when the retreating Turks, attempting to cross the Jordan, were met by Syrian guards who commanded, "Say 'buzzel'," meaning "onion". If answered correctly, the challenged soldier was known to be Syrian. If pronounced "bussel", in Turkish fashion, the poor Turk had eaten his last "bussel", and was immediately slain for not knowing his onions.

In the middle of the last century the Syrians guarded the Jordan against the crossing of the Egyptians. Here, the password was "jamel", the word for "camel", pronounced by the Egyptians "gamel". He travelled his last mile on his camel who answered "gamel" instead of "jamel".

On Easter Tuesday, in the year 1282, occurred the wholesale slaughter now famous as "The Sicilian Vespers". This name derives from the ringing of the church bells for vespers which was the signal for the Sicilians to massacre the French. Pope Urban IV had given Sicily to Charles of Anjou, who treated the people harshly. This, added to the fact that the Sicilians were very much attached to their previous ruler, resulted in the Sicilian Vespers. The French were detected and slain in this manner: An unknown person was shown some dried peas, "ciceri" in Sicilian, and asked what they were called. If the Sicilian "checkaree" was returned, the man was permitted to go on, but if he answered "siseri", in the manner of the French, his life was not worth a dried pea.

It would be well and purposeful to record the position of the peoples who created these Shibboleths. The Gileadites were being constantly molested by the Ephraimites, who were a troublesome tribe. The Sicilians were deprived of their beloved ruler and compelled to submit to a foreign despot. In the last century the Syrians were forced to fight on the side of the Egyptians against the Turks and they rebelled. So, in the last World War, the Syrians were again forced to fight against their will, this time by the Turks, and they took their revenge at the first opportunity. In the present World War, the American troops in the Philippines are defending American soil against attack and invasion.

The dictionary further defines "shibboleth" as "pet phrase of a party". We, as Masons, well know the moral lesson taught by the "shibboleth" of the Ephraimites. Applying that lesson to the present situation, there is much indeed that could be done on the home front to bolster civilian morale. As it is our duty to support our Country, so is it our duty to see to it that no "shibboleths" cause confusion among Americans at home. The job our soldiers are doing is a "lollapalooza". Let us do ours, and do it well. Then shall we have a pet phrase to disperse the dark days and hasten the light, a prophetic shibboleth—"Victory and Peace".

## WHAT MASONRY SHOULD BRING TO THE NEW MEMBER

By WILLIAM DAYMAN, Carmangay

IF we began to enumerate the many advantages and obligations, benefits and restrictions which Masonry does bring to its members, old and young, we could add much which we, as older members, could and should bring to the men who join our Order, these new members who come to us with so many ideas of what our Institution is and can bring to them.

Before the candidate comes to the important stage of being obligated in the first ceremony, he is asked to make certain solemn affirmations regarding his reasons for seeking membership, and what he proposes to do about it. He solemnly declares that he was prompted "by a desire for knowledge and sincere wish to render himself more extensively serviceable to his fellow creatures."

These are not words of his choosing. If he were given the opportunity or had the fortitude, his reply might be, "a desire for knowledge from proper leadership and example by those who are to be my teachers".

If the candidate is conscientious in his statement that he desires knowledge, he may seek that knowledge on his own account. If, on the other hand, his statement is a mere matter of form, in response to a ceremony in which he is, more or less, a creature of circumstance, what are we going to do about it?

The matter of Masonic education has been a contentious subject for a long time. Much time and effort has been put forth to encourage this important feature of our work, and often with discouraging results. Wherein lies the difficulty? We have the material, we have the teachers and we certainly have the students.

Our first task should be to stimulate a desire for education in those who, though affirming such a desire, probably did so with a certain indifference. Is this indifference being met by a proper enthusiasm on the part of senior brethren? If it is, our students' interest will be immediately encouraged.

The educational value of our ceremonies is a sound basis for the beginning of our students' course of studies and might well be used as the elementary portion of the program. We cannot expect kindergarten pupils to understand higher mathematics or advanced literature, neither should we expect our new members to be interested in the ancient history of Masonry or in the deeper significance of our ritual as is contained in much of our Masonic literature, until they learn something of our every-day symbolism. The neophyte should know "why the centre is that point from which a M.M. cannot err" and "why we should keep within due bounds with—*particularly* our brethren", even though this does not appear to be consistent with the teachings contained in the V.O.T.S.L.

Education, like charity, should begin at home. A good student, above all things, should have knowledge of himself. It may be true that we know our own thoughts, our own actions and desires, but do we know how to control those thoughts and actions

so that our desires may be directed into the proper channels?

His education should include a study of his fellows, that he may benefit from their example by imitating their good qualities and refraining from being influenced by their defects. As he is admonished to benefit by their examples, he must learn that he too, has an influence on the welfare of others who may be using his conduct as a pattern for their own. No one can live unto himself. No matter in what sphere we move, we are exerting an influence for good or ill on those with whom we come in contact.

Another important characteristic that our Masonic education should develop is constancy. Our idealistic precepts may be very commendable, but can we say as much for the way in which we put these precepts into practice? We lay great stress on the importance of the V.O.T.S.L. as a guide to our faith and conduct, yet how often do we find ourselves belittling its importance even to the point of criticizing and sometimes persecuting those individuals or organizations who would give those sacred writings their proper place?

We could point out many examples which prove a serious lack of co-ordination between the precepts and examples we bring to our new members.

"I'd rather see a sermon, than to hear one any day;  
I'd rather one should walk with me, that merely  
show the way;

The eye's a better pupil, and more willing than the  
ear;

Fine counsel is confusing, but example's always clear.  
And, best of all the preachers, are the men who live  
their creeds;

For to see good put in action, is what everybody  
needs.

I soon can learn to do it, if you'll let me see it done;  
I can see your hands in action, but your tongue too  
fast may run.

And the lectures you deliver, may be very fine and  
true,

But I'd rather get my lesson by observing what you  
do;

For I may misunderstand you, and the high advice  
you give;

But there's no misunderstanding how you act, and  
and how you live."

If we can interest our new members in a sense of their responsibility to themselves, to their community and country, and to the G.A. of the Universe by a system of education they can understand and appreciate, and if we bring them evidence that our years of Masonic membership have resulted in something more than lip-service to our fellow creatures, especially at this time when countless thousands are suffering atrocities almost beyond human imagination; if we can show that our promises are something more than words, that our charity shows no bounds save those of prudence, then we will find that we are making Masons who do not become disillusioned and forget that once they desired knowledge and expressed a wish to render themselves more extensively serviceable to their fellow creatures.

**A NOTE ON HISTORICAL REGISTERS**

Recently I discovered among the documents in our Secretary's file, two dimits which appear of considerable interest. The one is from St. John Kilwinning, Kilmarnock, Scotland, and the other from Calcutta 3054, Calcutta. Former members of these lodges had no difficulty in securing membership in Connaught Lodge, Viking, through the fact that Masonry is world-wide. The universality of the Craft is evident in these documents. Though many thousand miles lie between Scotland, Calcutta and Alberta, membership in Masonry finds recognition everywhere. Of course these documents have been duly entered in our Historical Register with suitable comment.

I would suggest that Secretaries search their files for similar unusual features which might be included in their Historical Register. Many of these papers have probably never been seen by most of the members of their lodges. They will surely create interest and at the same time add to the value of the Register.

HERBERT B. COLLIER,  
Viking.

**TO A WARTIME MASTER**

Called to occupy highest  
Honor which is ours to give,  
Coming in a day the brightest  
Our grand principles to live.

May this time of stress and striving,  
Valor and the urge to act,  
Find you to the Square uniting  
All of strength and will compact.

Giving of the true word softly,  
Rich in sympathetic zeal,  
Waking us to ideals lofty,  
Jealous of the commonweal.

May the Architect's kind finger  
Guard and guide your labors through,  
And His blessing closely linger  
By your side, my Master true.

L. J. HUMPHREY,  
Secretary, Nanaimo Lodge,  
No. 110, G.R.B.C.

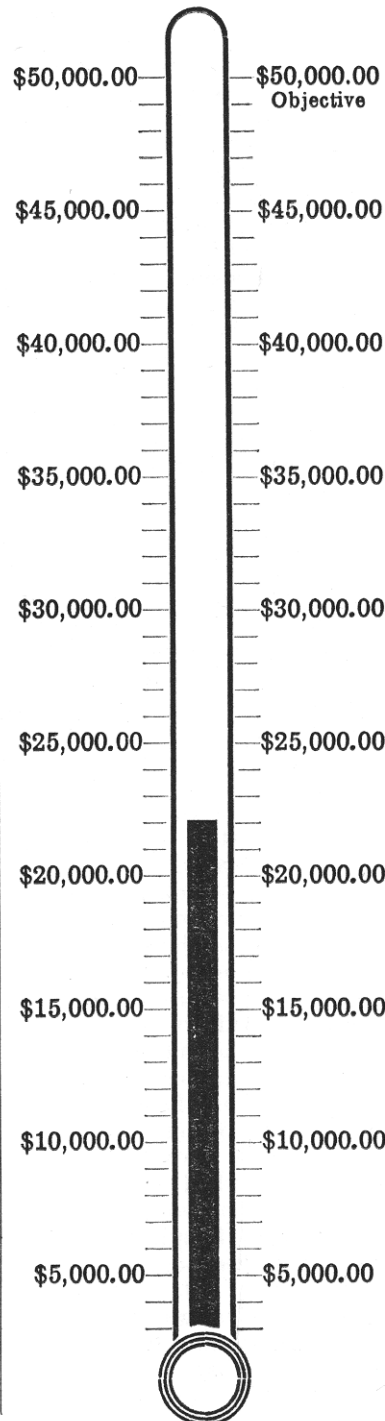
"Freemasonry is a life to be lived, not a formality to be perfunctorily observed. It is a life to be lived, not a set of empty creeds to which lip service is given. It is a life grounded in religion, organized in morality, mellowed by good fellowship, humanized in charity, and dedicated to service."

(From the Grand Master's Address to Grand Lodge, 1927, by the late M. W. Harold J. Richardson, New York.)

Solitude will tell you not how famous you are, nor how rich you are, nor how virtuous you are, but will ask you what good you are in this day and hour.

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