



# Grand Lodge Bulletin

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

## Grand Master's Message

My Brethren:

It is my privilege to speak a word to you as we begin a new Masonic year. It is a year of danger and difficulty. As you read this the United Nations are entering the fourth year of the most desperate struggle in all history—a struggle in which the life of our ancient and beloved Craft and that of all other institutions of free men are at stake. Devoted men and women in the services are facing danger on our behalf each day and each night in all four quarters of the globe. The enemy's lust for power is still unslaked and our resources are not yet mobilized effectively. These are truly times that try men's souls.

As Masons in a free country we enjoy great privileges and to continue to enjoy these privileges we must assume correspondingly great responsibilities. We must go much beyond the ordinary obligations of good citizenship unless we are prepared to be false to our principles. Freedom is the essence of our institution—the very lifeblood of our Order. Its preservation is the basic reason for our all-out fight against the forces of evil. If freedom is lost, all is lost. But, by God's grace, freedom will not be lost. Let us, each one of us, pledge himself to do his utmost by word, thought and deed to bring our great cause through to victory. Let us serve our country in season and out of season. Let us put her interests ahead of our own always. Let us as Masons set an example of living that will shine out like a beacon. We share a splendid tradition based on and nurtured by the strong principles of British liberty. We are citizens of a great nation richly blessed by Nature. And we are members of an ancient and honorable society of men.

There are certain things each one of us can do in the year ahead. We can support with every resource we possess our country's war effort. We can work in our communities, subscribe to the Red Cross, buy War Savings Certificates and War Bonds, and help in many other ways. And we can subscribe generously to our own Masonic War Distress Fund every penny of which goes to the relief of some war victim. This is our own Fund raised by Masons and expended by Masons. It should have our wholehearted support. It gives us an opportunity to practice that virtue we once professed to admire. Let us seize it.

Sincerely and fraternally yours,

F. P. GALBRAITH,  
*Grand Master.*

### A BULLETIN ON "THE BULLETIN"

IT is a fairly apparent fact that it is "eyond he power of any man" to please "all the people all the time", and it seems equally apparent that the man who actually succeeds in pleasing most of the people most of the time is doing a pretty good job.

With a view to finding out how near we came to this standard of attainment we made a special effort during the sessions of Grand Lodge to find out just how the *Bulletin* was being received. We understood very well that silence is not always golden and that there may be sour notes occasionally in the sweetest harmony, so, instead of asking for opinions on the *Bulletin*, we asked pointed questions. The answers, we regret to say, were neither illuminating nor particularly discouraging. Some were non-committal, some highly commending, some didn't agree with the subject matter of the editorials, but apparently did not wish to hurt the Editor's feelings by telling him why. One man opined that, perhaps, we used too many big words, another that some of the editorials were source material for fierce debates among his Brethren, still another suggested that in some of our criticisms we were treading on dangerous ground, and one gentle brother went so far as to suggest we seemed to have some hidden propensity for stirring up trouble. Most of the comment was highly flattering, but we know we're not "that good"!

On the whole, however, we are deeply gratified to find the *Bulletin* well received. We are frank to admit that on occasion we have been discouraged, not by any lack of appreciative comment, but by the entire absence of critical review. We had begun to wonder if we were becoming so much orthodox and taken for granted that none thought it worth his pains to write and tell us we were "all wet".

After all, there is a certain amount of time and effort, not to mention a modicum of background and ability necessary for the preparation of your monthly sheet, and no man likes to suspect that the stony silence which followed the reference of the *Bulletin* report on the floor of Grand Lodge is to be interpreted as sheer indifference.

This commentary is *not* to be interpreted as complaint. Never that. But shooting in the dark becomes at times a thankless pastime. We can, of course, accept silence as consent in the sense that, for the most part, what we publish is acceptable, but when it is considered that we are using "too big words", that we are treading on some one's corns, or that we are talking out of turn, we would very much like to hear about it. Moreover, we are certainly not asking for bouquets. Lots of them come unsolicited, and for them we are grateful.

What we do want and now solicit as we begin Volume VIII, is the occasional frank expression of opinion from Lodges or individuals as to what they like or would like in the *Bulletin* and, as definitely, what they do not like! Only so can the Editor gauge his readers, and while obviously he cannot enter into controversy with a Lodge or an individual the expression of opinion by a Lodge or an individual is valuable as guide to future material.

Letters from our readers will neither be discussed nor published in the *Bulletin* if the writer prefer they should not be, and their writers can rest assured that no offence will be taken at any reasonable statement of opinion regardless of how much it may be in disagreement with the Editor's personal views.

This is YOUR *Bulletin*, so it seems you should have something to say about it. The Editor has his likes and dislikes, could frequently say much stronger things than he does, but conscientiously endeavors to refrain from writing any comment which would in any way unduly disturb or hurt anyone.

So, then, Brethren, the thing amounts to a simple appeal to you not to take the monthly appearance of your *Bulletin* for granted. If something especially pleases you, let's hear about it. If something riles you and gets you all hot and bothered, let's hear about that. Especially that! Never mind the literary style, and don't say you are too busy. We're all busy or should be these days, but can, or should be able to scribble a few lines and drop them in the mail, if only for the ease of our own soul and the general good of the Order. We hope to hear from you, but most especially when you find yourself turned to critical comment.

A.M.M.

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### FREEMASONRY IN RUSSIA

"THE course of Freemasonry in the several countries which have come under the totalitarian proscription has been a subject of quite general interest since the present world war began. People generally, both Masons, and non-Masons, wish to know what has been the fate of Masonry and of individual Masons, in these countries. The Masonic press has quite widely and with reasonable accuracy, given the information which has been desired. The public press has generally been quite sympathetic toward Freemasonry of late, a few notable exceptions notwithstanding.

Perhaps there is no country about whose relationship toward Masonry has been the subject of more questions nor any country about whose Masonic history there is less known, than Russia. Russia is one of the largest governments of the world. What will become of it within a very brief time is open to question as these lines are written, but to this date Russia has been autonomous. It has been significant that Russia has not for more than a century had any Masonic history. It has also been significant that during all this long period of more than a century Russia has been under an autocratic form of government, followed after the revolution which occurred during the first World War, by a totalitarian proletarian form of government. This fact alone will explain the absence of Freemasonry.

Ten years ago the population of the Russias, or more properly of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics, was estimated to be 161,000,000. The area of the U.S.S.R. is estimated to be 8,238,341 square miles. Of this area six and a half million square miles are in Asia. Much of this area lies in the far

northern tundras of Siberia, and much is at present undeveloped and even unexplored.

It is perhaps true that Russia has today the greatest wealth of undeveloped natural resources to be found under one government in the world. Minerals and oil, waterpower and agriculture, make it a choice prize for him who can conquer it. Russia is depended upon for two-thirds of Europe's wheat, says a reliable estimate.

The two names which stand out when one studies the history of Russia are those of Peter the Great and Catherine, both of whom reigned in the eighteenth century. They might be classed as benevolent despots. After these came Alexander I, who finally proscribed Freemasonry in 1822; and Nicholas II, who became emperor in 1825. These were followed by the three Alexanders, and last and finally by Nicholas II, who reigned from 1894 until the revolution in 1917, when the Bolsheviks got in the saddle. All of these were despotic autocrats who ruled by force, as witness the famous massacre of Sunday, January 22, 1905, when thousands of unarmed, miserable, hungry peasants attempted to ask of the Tsar some relief and hundreds of them were killed outright by the Cossack guards while thousands more were wounded. The history of Russia in the first World War is well known; how Russia entered the war on the side of the Allies; how in March, 1917, a revolution broke out, and the new government of the All Russian Soviets was formed, going over to the Central Powers. Little by little the present form of totalitarian government developed.

The state religion under the Tsars was that of the Greek Orthodox Christians. The Soviets openly scoffed at religion. At present it appears that all religions are tolerated. The Jews were massacred in certain Russian areas about 1903, one result being that many Russian Jews afterward emigrated to America and elsewhere.

Russia has never seemed to achieve great success in external warfare. In 1904 and 1905, Russia was disastrously defeated in the war with Japan, the echoes of which defeat have not yet ceased to reverberate.

We have already said that the past century and more have seen a total absence of Masonic influence in Russia. In no country of the whole world which has professed to have contact with the outside world, has there been so nearly an absolute absence of Masonry for so long a time. The chapter on Masonry in Russia in the Gould history ends abruptly with 1822, and nothing thereafter in that country is mentioned by Gould. But in the eighteenth century there was Masonry in Russia, of which a very condensed synoptic history was printed in the *Texas Masonic Magazine*, credited to the Chronicler, as follows:

#### Masonry in Old Russia

"According to Findel, Freemasonry found its way into Russia as early as 1731. Captain John Phillips is mentioned in 1738, as Provincial Grand Master, under the Grand Lodge of England, and

General Bro. J. Keith succeeded him, in 1741, though it is said that as early as 1732-4 the latter presided over a Lodge in St. Petersburg. At first the meetings were, in all probability, held very secretly, for the earliest visiting Lodge is fixed as 1750, when the Lodge of Silence was worked in St. Petersburg, and that of the North Star was erected. During the reign of the Empress Elizabeth the Craft became more in vogue, though the greatest secrecy was still observed. The Emperor Peter III is said to have presented a house to the Lodge of Constancy, and even to have conducted the Masonic work at Oranienbaum. In 1765, the Melesino Rite, consisting of seven degrees, and so named after Melesina, a Greek by birth, and Lieutenant-General in the Imperial army, flourished. The degrees were, besides the three of the English system, (4) the Dark Vault; (5) the Scotch Master and Knight's Degree; (6) the Philosopher's Degree; and (7) the Grand Priest or the Spiritual Knighthood. But according to the Freemason's Calendar of 1777 and 1778, the first regular Lodge was that of Perfect Unity, constituted in St. Petersburg in 1771, most of the members being English merchants residing there. In the following year a warrant was issued by the Grand Lodge of England, appointing His Excellency John Yelaguin (Senator) to be the Provincial Grand Master for the Russian Empire, the result being eminently satisfactory to the Craft. In 1783, twelve working Lodges formed themselves into a Grand National Lodge, Bro. Yelaguin being the Grand Master. Under Bro. Von Reichel's guidance the Lodges adopted the Swedish system. In 1790 matters changed for the worse. Divisions arose in the Lodges, things outside assumed a very threatening aspect, the Empress Catherine giving it to be understood by those around her that she did not approve of Masonic meetings. The majority of the Lodges were accordingly closed, though the Apollo, in St. Petersburg, worked on silently till 1797, and afterwards assembled its members twice a year on the feast of St. John and on the anniversary of its erection. The Lodge afterwards known as the 'Crowned Pelican' also held meetings of its members, but without working regularly. Paul I, before he ascended the throne, had shown a favorable inclination towards Masonry, but the Lodges remained closed notwithstanding, until more favorable circumstances seemed to justify their being opened; but contrary to expectation, a prohibition was, some time after, issued against the Craft. This prohibition, as against all secret societies, was renewed when Alexander I became Emperor in 1801. In 1807, application having been first made in the proper quarter, the Lodge of the Pelican was opened, and so rapidly did the members increase in numbers that they separated into three Lodges, namely, 'The Crowned Pelican', the 'Elizabeth, the Patroness of Virtue', and the 'Peter, the Patron of Truth', the operations being carried on in Russian, French, and German.

"In the Autumn of 1808, the Directory Lodge 'Wladimir, the Maintainer of Order,' in St. Petersburg (Swedish Rite) began to work and soon after, two new Lodges working under French warrants were

ordered at the instigation of the Government to join this Directory Lodge, Bro. Bober, a Privy Councillor, being the Grand Master from 1811 to 1814, and after him, Prince Muskin Puschkin. In consequence of dissensions arising, owing, it is believed, to the dissimilarity of the two Rites, two Grand Lodges, with the approval of the Government, were constituted, namely, the Astraa in St. Petersburg, and a Provincial Lodge, which remained faithful to the Swedish Rite. According to Polick, there were 23 Lodges under the Grand Lodge of Astraa, while only eleven worked under the Provincial Lodge, which remained faithful to the Swedish Rite. In spite of further troubles, Freemasonry continued to advance rapidly in prosperity, when in the month of August, 1822, a decree was issued that all Freemason Lodges should be closed, and no others be constituted. Great as was the grief on the issue of this mandate, it was faithfully observed by our Russian brethren!"

(From the *Masonic Review*, 1941, prepared for Grand Lodge of North Carolina, A.F. & A.M., by J. Edward Allen.)

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### THE DUKE OF KENT PRESIDES OVER UNITED GRAND LODGE

H.R.H. The Duke of Kent, Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of England, presided at the Annual Grand Festival of that Body which took place in Freemasons' Hall, London, Eng. The Grand Master invested the newly appointed Grand Officers, assisted by the Earl of Harewood, Pro Grand Master, and the Deputy and Assistant Grand Masters, Gen. Sir Francis Davies and Brig. Gen. W. H. V. Durell.

Replying to the Pro Grand Master's words of welcome, The Duke of Kent stated: "I am very pleased I have been able to attend Grand Lodge today to invest the brethren with the ranks which I have conferred upon them. . . . The brethren I have now invested will therefore realize that they have assumed additional responsibilities, one of which is to keep Masonry virile in these days."

Referring to the small attendance and lack of ceremony at the Grand Lodge meeting, the Grand Master said: "The working of a lodge will not be impaired because the summons is only half the size or less ornate than usual. We can maintain all our customs with just as good effect by being simple in our ways. Any kind of extravagance in these times is, of course, inexcusable, and I hope that no lodge will be guilty of any action which could be condemned or even criticized."

The Duke of Kent reminded the Grand Lodge that, since his last appearance before that body, the war area had greatly increased and that Freemasonry was threatened in many other countries. He expressed sympathy for Masons and their families in the oppressed lands, and at the same time urged that the craft traditions be maintained in England. The Grand Master was particularly interested that nothing political be allowed to enter the lodges, and that the ancient landmarks be observed.

### AUSTRALIAN WAR AID FUND

Realizing that the need for war relief will increase as the fighting continues, a number of Masonic Lodges of New South Wales have acted upon the suggestion of their Grand Lodge and have contributed money to the Grand Masters' War Benevolent Fund. Most of the Lodges are contributing threepence per month per member, and some have voted substantial amounts in addition.

The gallant exploits of Australian troops in Africa and the Mediterranean district have won the admiration of the British Empire and the world, but Grand Master Lord Gowrie of the Grand Lodge of New South Wales reminded the Masons at the last Quarterly Communication of that Body that such exploits mean casualties, and that the time was coming when there would be a substantial drain upon the Grand Masters' Fund to aid the men injured in the fighting. He urged the Lodges to subscribe as liberally as possible so that Masonry would be in a position to give maximum aid.

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### SOMETHING WORTH REPEATING

The Doctrine of human equality reposes on this . . . That there is no man really clever who has not found that he is stupid. There is no big man who has not felt small. Some men never feel small; but these are the few men who are. . . .

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### FOR SALE

**P.D.D.G.M. REGALIA**—District No. 17—new condition—estate of late R. W. Bro. J. W. Chapman, Tofield. Price \$75.00. Write Mrs. J. W. Chapman, Tofield.

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### THE COWBOY'S TOAST

From out earth's dusty old Corral when failures press  
May every broncho that you rope be named "Success",  
May all the blizzards spare thy range and pass thee  
o'er,  
May troubled "northers" ne'er pile drifts around thy  
door.  
And as you follow life's long trail round cliff and bend  
May strangers make the Indian sign, which means  
a friend.  
And when you make your evening camp, may't come  
to pass  
You find yourself on "Peaceful Creek" and near good  
grass.  
Then when the final round-up comes some autumn  
day,  
May your brand upon the Book of Books be this  
—O.K.

—Author Unknown.

(Contributed by W. Bro. W. A. Fraser, P.M., Spitzie No. 6.)

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Probably the world mess of the moment is due to a worship of salesmanship rather than deep thinking.