



Grand Lodge Bulletin

Editor: SAM HARRIS, P.G.M.

APRIL IN ENGLAND

As I write we are in the Season of Lent. "Lente"—Spring, and one's thoughts automatically turn to the coming of the real Season of Spring; this year with yearning since Winter has out-stayed its welcome: for so many peoples a season of discontent.

And April comes to mind with all that, that cannots "Oh to be in England now that April's here" the sigh of the native for his dear loved land.

To the wanderer there comes a breath of soft winds waving meadow flowers; the swell of freshly turned soil, cherishing in its warm, furrowed bosom the seed that shall die but, to live again more abundantly; the bird on wing with housing problems soluble by lightsome toil; and gentle kine in pastures lush.

The winding lanes with tender leaves all green, brodered with violets and roses-prime, and sweet contentment in the perfumed air.

But "April in England" conjures up to-day, thoughts more akin to sadness, a land despoiled—a people distraught. For the first time in all her long, proud history England finds herself defeated: Not by War but by War's more devastating crimes. England, the champion of liberty; the refuge of lost causes, the haven, successively of refugees from wars and strifes for centuries again has sacrificed herself, at last, to the verge of immolation and now lies there a vastly pathetic form even to her foes.

To those who know England and what England gave, instinctively there comes a sense of wrong, injustice; the very evils she gave of her brightest and best to combat. She "poured out the rich red wine of youth" unrestrained; she gave the wealth her people toiled to earn.

Each tiny child, each age'd crone laboured to the limits of their powers, and none counted the cost, each striving to give more. They gave and gave and now they feel the hurt, and herein lies the sore—where is the justice? Is right but found in Might? "To Victors the spoils" is not their cry; but having

fought and bled divesting themselves of all that could be spent, that freedom should not die, Old England finds herself to-day "to hastening ills a prey".

There's little sound of plaint from those harrassed folk; their friends in distant lands exhibit more indignation than they, questioning, perhaps, the cognisance if not the very existence of an all-wise Providence.

Patiently does England endure her plight. The elements may strive to lay upon her back "the last straw". Humbled, she seeks but, through suffering, to rise again—and that is the spirit of this April-tide.

In these first days of April we commemorate the greatest sacrifice the world has ever witnessed, and most reverently we'll draw a parallel. One gave nis all that all should have life and have it more abundantly. The significance of that immortal tribute of Churchill pales before the all-embracing, earth-encircling, all-humanity-comprehending sacrifice of the Son of God, wherein the human owes all to the Divine.

That sacrifice was not in vain. The deepest sorrow was turned into joy, as we gratefully celebrate on the first Sunday of April, the glorious Resurrection of Christ.

And England shall rise again! She has not lost her will to work: She has not lost her power to think! Under God's Providence it may be she will rise a better England, purified in the fires of suffering.

England had her faults, hid perhaps from those who only England knows, and it may be, that through the burgeoning of the Springtime of adventure the old land shall rise again to a new concept of liberty, equality and fraternity, and for the nonce while smartingly she emerges "her faults lie gently on her".

I am writing this at a time of special Masonic activity, witnessing the Dramas that exemplify the virtues of our fraternity. He would be soulless indeed who was not moved by the presentation of the

moral teaching with which our Ritual abounds.

True, it is resented for the individual as a guide to his conduct in his contact with his fellow man, but the individual forms the community from which the Nation springs, and Nations compose the Universe.

And our Masonic teaching which has its foundation completely in that matchless manifesto of Christ's Kingdom, the Sermon on the Mount is what is needed for England, for the world, if we are to avoid an even greater tragedy, the possible destruction of our human race.

Precept upon precept rolls out from our Ceremonial presentations, and as an organization we can do no more—the responsibility is laid squarely upon the shoulders of the individual Brother, to practice those precepts in his daily life in all his dealings with that other individual whose undoubted keeper he is.

The sorrows and sufferings of England are probably less than those endured on the continent of Europe, where the horrors of starvation and displacement are less kind than death.

Religion has attempted to point the way to the avoidance of hatreds that engender wars, but who shall say how far her efforts may not be frustrated, negatized by the unhappy divisions that lead the unbelievers to scorn.

Freemasonry is free of Shibboleths; it is universal and founded on the purest principles of piety and virtue. Alas! Its influence in the world is negligible compared with what it could achieve if every Brother lived true to his obligations.

Then let Brother link himself with Brother in the high endeavour to justify their existence as a Fraternity owing allegiance to God—seeking to inspire every member of their Lodge to a like endeavour, and soon will Lodge emulate Lodge and jurisdiction jurisdiction, and, spreading the Gospel of the Brotherhood of man patterned by our Elder Brother Jesus Christ, under the Fatherhood of God, wars may cease in all the world.

—M.W. Bro. Canon Crane-Williams, P.G.M.

FREEMASONRY NOT AN ORDER

Freemasonry is often spoken of as an order, and its ceremonies as a ritual. These terms are neither technically nor legally correct. Freemasonry is a craft and its ceremonies are "work". An order is an association of persons. A craft is something more, inasmuch as it inculcates or teaches a "mystery." The word "craft" is derived from "kraft", meaning power, while the Anglo-Saxon word "craft" means skill or the unexplained ability, by long practice, to produce a desired result. Hence, a craftsman is one skilled or powerful in the mysteries. The candidate is the rough ashlar in its rude and unfinished state. The Lodge, by its craftsmanship, "works" upon him until he becomes, through the practice of our virtues, a perfect ashlar.

—The Freemason

WHAT IS MASONRY?

Recently I read an article which concluded with a definition of Masonry which I think is well worth repeating. It was:—

"Thus, in a world of greed and force Freemasonry teaches self-restraint and reason. In a world permeated with the spirit of selfish rivalry it teaches universal brotherhood. In a world of intolerance and bigotry it teaches tolerance and kindness. In a world of cynical disbelief it teaches reverence for the Deity. In a world floundering in the depths of a great moral and spiritual depression it teaches industry and self-reliance and temperance and integrity. Its emphasis is always on the nobler point of view, the finer choice of conduct. In a changing and superficial world it points to the eternal and fundamental principles that have emerged unchanged from every transition era, even as the eternal mountains emerge from the drifting clouds that temporarily obscure them. It aids and comforts and reassures and inspires individuals. It leaps the barriers of race and space to draw together the finest aspirations of all men and unite them into a universal brotherhood."

THE REAL MASON

Masonry teaches that one can have strength of character only as he is capable of controlling his faculties; having a high objective, and pursuing it regardless of any difficulties which may be encountered. Albert Pike has given us a statement concerning symbolism which gives emphasis to this thought: "The symbolism of Masonry is the soul of Masonry. Every symbol of a Lodge is a religious teacher, the mute teacher also of morals and philosophy. It is in its ancient symbols and in the knowledge of their true meanings that the preeminence of Freemasonry over all other orders consists. In other respects, some of them may compete with it, rival it, perhaps even excel it; but by its symbols it will reign without a peer when it learns again what its symbols mean, and that each is the embodiment of some great, old rare truth." A good character is a Mason's best testimonial. The materials of the first temple were made ready in solitude. Those of the last temple also must be shaped in retirement, in the silence of the heart.

—Masonic Quarterly.

TEN GOOD THINGS

There are ten good things for which no one has ever been sorry—for doing good to all. For speaking evil of no one. For hearing before judging. For thinking before speaking. For holding an angry tongue. For being kind to the distressed. For asking pardon for all wrongs. For being patient toward everybody. For stopping the ear to the tale bearer. For disbelieving the most of the evil reports.

—Chicago Scottish Rite Magazine.

FREEMASONRY

Earlier I have related how my father was made a Freemason in one of the Military Lodges in the southern army, and how, as a prisoner of war, taken seriously ill, his life was saved by making himself known as a Mason to a Union officer who nursed him back to life. Thus to Masonry I owe the life of my father, and my feeling towards the Fraternity is much like that of Dr. Oliver Holmes, when he wrote a poem to a painting of his grandmother; wondering who and what he would be if that gracious lady had said "No" to an interesting proposal. In the same way, if Masonry had failed in its benign labor, I would be part myself and part someone else, if I existed at all. No wonder then, knowing this bit of family history, I joined the Fraternity as soon as I was old enough to be received into Friendship Lodge, No. 7, Dixon, Illinois. There, to my amazement, I saw men of all churches—except one, and there was no reason in Masonry why that one church should not be represented—gathered about an open Bible. In their churches they could not agree about the teachings of the Bible; in the Lodge they could not disagree, because each one was allowed to interpret it in the way his heart loved best, and asked to allow others the same right, a secret most simple to be found out.

Masonry is not a secret order, else the names of its members and the place and times of its meetings would not be known. It is a private fraternity, seeking to select and train men, making them brothers and builders in the service of the best of life. Its only secrets are certain signs, grips and passwords whereby its members make themselves known to their fellows in time of need or danger, and so are able to help one another, unknown to the world. Its work of charity, especially to the aged, is munificent and never tiring. Its principles are as public as the sunlight. What struck me was that Masons, including myself, needed to know more about Masonry, in order to do more with it and for it. To me it was—and is—one of the great poetries of the world, religious but not religion, based upon the Bible, rich in its labors of doing good. To my surprise the Grand Master, Louis Block—a man big of body, big of mind, with a heart as big as all-out-of-doors—made me his Grand Chaplain, and asked me to write a book telling Masons the story and meaning of Masonry. Cedar Rapids was the one city in which to write such a book; one of its treasured institutions was the greatest Masonic Library in America, if not in the world. After prodigious labor, studying not only Masonry, but the symbolism of the race, the result was a book entitled, "The Builders, a Story and Study of Masonry", which proved to be—and still is—far and away the most widely read book on Masonry in our generation.

Extract from the "River of Years" Joseph Fort Newton.



To give happiness to others, one has to be happy themselves.

In Memoriam

Within the short space of two months we are again called upon to mourn the loss of one of our Senior Past Grand Masters, this time in the person of our late M.W. Bro. Edward Thomas Bishop, B.A., L.L.B., K.C., who passed away in the University Hospital, Edmonton, on Monday, 24th, February last, age 71 years.

Bro. Bishop was born at Stayner, Ontario and was a real old timer in Alberta, coming to Edmonton in 1913 where he commenced the practice of law and was later honoured in being made a King's Counsel. He was recognized as one of the best known company lawyers and authority of Company Law in Western Canada. He was admitted to the Ontario Bar in 1902.

Bro. Bishop was always interested in public affairs and at one time was a member of the Edmonton Public School Board.

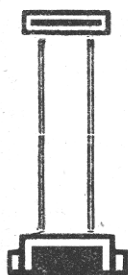
In Masonry, Bro. Bishop had a distinguished record. He was a member of Jasper Lodge No. 14 and served as Worshipful Master in 1912. He was elected as Junior Grand Warden in 1913, Senior Grand Warden in 1914, Deputy Grand Master in 1915 and Most Worshipful Grand Master in 1916. He was appointed as the Grand Representative of the Grand Lodge of Utah in 1914 which appointment he continued to hold until he passed away.

Bro. Bishop had a very active and busy year as Grand Master, Constituting 5 Lodges, two of them being located in the Peace River Country. He also granted Dispensations for 5 new Lodges. His address to Grand Lodge as Grand Master was one of the briefest, if not the briefest on record, indicating that the late Bro. Bishop was a man of deeds and not words.

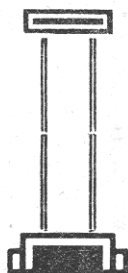
Bro. Bishop was also an active member of the A. & A.S. Rite and was honoured by that Body on October 24th, 1923 in being coronetted as an Honourary Inspector General, 33rd degree, of the Supreme Council of Canada.

Thus we mourn another of our stalwarts in Masonry, although he is no longer with us in person, he will ever be remembered by us in our hearts and affections. To his wife and son, the members of the Craft in Alberta extend their sincerest sympathies.

"One after another we see them pass
Down the dim lighted stair,
We hear the sound of their steady tread
In steps of centuries long since dead,
And beautiful and as fair."



Between the Pillars



THE DESTINY OF MASONRY

There are three definitions of the word destiny. They are: premeditated lot; fate; inevitable necessity.

In connection with Masonry we dismiss the last two. What our destiny as a Fraternity shall be has not been ordained by fate nor is it an inevitable necessity. Therefore it must be, a premeditated lot. That means our destiny will be exactly what we as Masons make it.

We may consider Masonry as a great Temple. It has been under construction for many centuries. Each generation carries the work on as far as it can and then passes the designs and tools on to the next. Therefore no one generation can be held responsible for the whole future. All it can do is hold fast to the noble principles, be industrious in its building, and advance the work as much as possible that coming generations may be guided rightly by our example.

Each Lodge is a section of the great Temple. Each Lodge is a kind of worship where living stones are shaped and fitted for their places in the Master's Design. And it is in these lesser workshops that our influence upon the destiny of the Craft is being worked out. Make no mistake about this: what we do will have its effects in far reaching ways upon ourselves, the coming generation and the distant future.

Some part of the next generation of Masons is coming to us now. The young men now being initiated into the Fraternity and those who follow them will, in a few years, be doing our work of today. We are responsible for the concept they form of the Craft. If that concept fails to reach and maintain the full dignity, honor and prestige of the Lodge, then we who brought them into it are at fault—not they. If unworthy persons gain entrance among us, that too is our fault because we were expressly warned to take great care in recommending applicants. And it may be said that this is the point at which concern for our destiny begins. Ambition for large membership gains and increased revenue should never influence our judgment as to the qualifications of a petitioner.

Of prime importance, however, is the manner in which we receive, instruct and then send the new brother upon his Masonic career. The immediate destiny of the Lodge will be in his hands shortly. And in this we are failing. Too many new brothers

soon after the interest and excitement of initiation are over, arrive at the conclusion that the Lodge was more interested in adding their names to the roll and getting their fees than in anything else. They find themselves listed as Masons and that's all. Interest in them dies quickly. There is nothing for them to do. They are but poorly informed. Their light is feeble and nobody puts himself out to inspire in them a greater thirst for more Masonic knowledge.

Disillusionment begins with hardly enough members present to put on the work. Frequently vital parts of it are omitted. Often the degree work is ineptly and badly handled. How can we expect the candidate to get a very lofty opinion of the sublime principles and precepts taught if those whose duty it is to explain them must at best stumble through the ceremony? If the officers who introduce the candidate to these noble teachings do not know them and if only a handful feel deeply enough to attend and welcome him, how can he believe Masonry is the exalted way of life he had supposed it to be?

Every Lodge will do well from time to time by making a real analysis of the membership and attendance situation. Find out exactly how many have petitioned for the degrees but never appeared to receive them. Find out why. Also, learn how many have taken the first and stopped there. Again learn why. You will also find who have had the second, yet were never raised. The answers to that will be illuminating too. To finish the job find out why, when you have perhaps 200 members—paid up—that less than 20 per cent of them are in regular attendance.

Whatever reasons may be given, such an appalling loss of interest will be due to weakness in the Lodge itself. Ineffective officers may be one cause. If so, don't blame the officers so much as yourselves. Brothers hold office only when you elect them. It is your responsibility to elect only those who revere the Craft and are highly proficient in the work. Remember, too, they can't do everything alone. Having elected them—support them!

Most likely, however, you will find that dullness and carelessness are the twin evils that cut down interest among the brethren. And if the social room holds more attractions than does the work, teaching and business of the Lodge you are likely to find the brethren, especially the young and new ones, seeking such diversion in other places.

Every Lodge can put this down as fact: empty places in your Lodge room are silent enemies of your destiny.

Editor, Masonic Chronicle.



If you contrive each day to outclass the fellow you were yesterday, reaching the top is just a matter of time.—*New South Wales Freemason.*