



Grand Lodge Bulletin

Editor: Sam Harris, P.G.M.

The Employment of the Lodge Member

Employment suggests active engagement in some particular line of endeavour and suggests advancement of one's own interests or those of the organization with which one is connected.

Operative Masonry originated in the dim ages of the past and came into being chiefly for the purpose of providing employment for its members who were engaged in the Building Trades. It also protected its members in adverse circumstances brought about by illness or unemployment and generally promoted the brotherhood of man. Tangible evidence of the influence of this Organization is seen all over Europe and other countries of the world in magnificent cathedrals and other edifices of great architectural beauty. They still bear witness to the efficient workmanship and highly technical skill of those engaged in the Building Trade. The Poet Longfellow, in the following lines, aptly conveys to us the prevailing ideal of that era:

"In the elder days of art
Builders wrought with greatest care
Each minute and unseen part
For the gods see everywhere."

In those days Masons were inspired by the firm belief that a job well done was sufficient compensation for their effort. That one great principle, along with many others, has come down to us through the ages, and must not be lost sight of in this materialistic age.

We have long since passed from the Operative to the Speculative phase in our Masonry. The tools used by our Operative Brethren are now applied to our morals to promote a higher standard of living, instilling these higher ethical teachings into our everyday life. The Worshipful Master is placed in the East "to employ and instruct the Brethren in Freemasonry". Full employment is essential and conducive to the promotion of our ideals. It is assumed that all Freemasons are to be employed according to their individual skill and ability. In order that they may be suitably so engaged, the Worshipful Master must give direction and guidance to his Brethren. It is most essential that the Worship-

ful Master of the Lodge will be well versed in the ancient landmarks and traditions of our Order and qualified to direct and instruct the Brethren under his charge. It is his duty to see to it that the Lodge Member is fully employed. A heavy responsibility, therefore, rests upon the Worshipful Master if his position be taken seriously. From the working tools Freemasons learn "that labour is the lot of man" and "that nothing short of indefatigable exertion can induce the habit of virtue, enlighten the mind and render the soul pure".

For more than two centuries Freemasonry, as we know it, has pursued its peaceful way alone. It has sought no public acclaim, it has asked no help from outside its circle and it has permitted the world to think what it may about its object and its works. Its best advertisement has been the fact that it does not advertise itself or its works. It has had, and today, has only one job to perform, only one reason for its existence. That job is to take the material that comes to hand and make good men out of that material. While we must take men as they are, it must be with the unflinching purpose of making them conform to our high ideals. Everything else, our charities, all our works and the conferring of degrees are incidental to that one purpose. If Freemasonry does that job, if it works at it honestly, even with only a measure of efficiency, it has lived up to its purpose and fulfilled its highest ideals. The law of a worthy life is fundamentally the law of strife. It is only through labor and painful effort, by grim energy and resolute courage, that we move on to better things.

I submit that Freemasonry has failed to project its lofty Principles into the lives of men and have them accepted by the world at large. We have, in North America, approximately 3,500,000 Freemasons. If Freemasons were true to their obligations and the teachings of our Order this old world would be transformed and a better day for civilization would soon dawn.

John Foster Dulles, a great American and one

of the architects of the United Nations, has this to say: "There is no doubt whatever in my mind that moral force is the only force that can accomplish great things in the world. If you look back into the history of Western civilization, you will find that our finest institutions were primarily moulded by the Christian belief in righteousness and justice. But as we have waxed greater in material power and material possessions, I fear we have lost, in the process, many of these qualities. There is not, I feel, among those in high office the same conscious sense of Christian duty which prevailed in earlier days; and there is not among our people the same sense of duty to God and our fellow man. For we must remember that freedom cannot exist unless the individuals who possess it have the qualities of self-control, self-restraint and self-sacrifice which alone make freedom tolerable. During the past 30 years, we have seen a new power rise to great eminence in the world—the Soviet Union. How does that come about? The power of the Soviet Union, and particularly the Soviet Communist Party, is due to the fact that, while in a sense the Soviet state has moved into a power vacuum in Europe and Asia, the Soviet Communist Party has moved into a moral vacuum in the world. What has given Soviet Communism its tremendous influence over men everywhere? It is the moral slogans which the Communists have adopted. They profess to stand for an end of colonial exploitation. They profess to stand for the dignity of the individual irrespective of color and race. Their slogans are nothing but an expression of the same beliefs for which we have stood as Christians. But recognizing that we had failed to stand militantly for those principles, leaders of Soviet Communism took them over and professed them to the world as the principles for which Communism stood."

In this world of ours, there is instant need that something should be done with crude men and imperfect conditions. Somebody must take men as they are, appeal to them with arguments that they can understand, organize them for purposes that they can grasp, and appreciate. Selfish and coarse, envious and dull, they must be inspired into well-doing. There are no ideal organizations because there are no ideal people to organize. He who would be a doer of real things with real men must be practical. What better employment can Freemasons have?

After we have instructed our Membership in the moral principles for which Freemasonry stands, our duty as Freemasons is to endeavour to have these Principles established and accepted by individuals, states, and finally by the nations of the world. We must build moral character to withstand the attack of foreign ideologies which may eventually overthrow freedom and all that we have cherished as a sacred heritage down through the years. I believe we have

failed to supply the leadership which our teachings and Principles so well qualify us to do and have failed to project our teachings into the thought of today.

Only through labour and effective employment can conditions be improved for the benefit of humanity and the lofty principles for which we stand be instilled into the hearts of men. The Service Clubs appeal to the man of today because they have definite work programmes; members are kept informed about the activities; their interest is aroused and maintained. Freemasonry, on the contrary, does its work quietly through committees of Grand Lodge or subordinate Lodges. Private members have little knowledge of the vast amount of good being done by the Order. Many Freemasons seldom attend Grand Lodge or read the Proceedings. Many Freemasons do not even attend their own Lodge. They, therefore, have no means of becoming acquainted with the extent of the benevolent work which Freemasonry is doing. Our percentage of attendance of Members would make a very poor showing compared with that of Service Club members at their weekly meetings.

It appears beyond dispute that the work of Freemasonry is to improve its members and society as a whole. "Freemasonry has gone forth from age to age, the constant messenger of peace and love . . . scattering with unsparing hand blessings and benefits to all around . . . it speaks peace and consolation to the troubled spirit, it carries relief and gladness to the habitations of want and destitution, it dries the tears of the widow and the orphan, it opens the sources of knowledge, it widens the sphere of human happiness."

Freemasonry teaches that spiritual values are more important than material things and, while we may have difficulty in expressing these beliefs, our actions as Freemasons should speak for themselves. We believe in the Four Freedoms. We believe that the Christian concept of the worth and dignity of the individual is the foundation upon which our civilization rests.

Freemasons are taught that by the application of great moral teachings our way of life can gradually bring about reformation and improvement to the benefit of all mankind.

In the First Degree we are taught that Labour is the lot of man.

In the Second Degree we are permitted to extend our researches into the hidden mysteries of nature and of science.

In the Third Degree we are prepared for the great adventure into the unknown realm of eternity.

It is not possible to elaborate on all the teachings in the Degrees bearing on the question of employment for members. I simply call your attention to the great truths expressed in each Degree showing that employment of the Lodge members is the work of Freemasonry and must, first of all, be directed by the Worshipful Master who, in turn, must receive the necessary inspiration and guidance from the Grand Lodge and it

appears to me that, to a very large extent, we are failing in this respect. There is a tendency for the Grand Lodge Officers to rest on the achievements of the past instead of striving to give direction and guidance to the subordinate Lodges. We have a grave responsibility in this age to combat the influence of foreign ideologies. If we are to preserve for our day and generation and hand on to succeeding generations the great principles on which our Order is founded, we must bestir ourselves and see to it that leadership is provided and guidance given to the officers of all Lodges so that, in turn, they may stimulate interest and provide employment for all Members, and particularly those who are flocking to join our Banner at the present time. We must impress on new members that they are not merely joining another organization but that they are adopting a higher ethical way of life.

There is a legend in connection with the building of King Solomon's Temple, which illustrates this. Immediately following the death of the Master Hiram confusion reigned among those engaged in the building. The work on the Temple was at a standstill. The workmen were idle and dissatisfied. Day after day the skilled workmen met and were confronted with the situation that no new designs appeared on the trestle board. After many consultations among the leading Masons a new Master Builder was selected as leader. He, following in the footsteps of his illustrious predecessor, gave the necessary guidance and direction so that eventually, with the combined work and effort of entered apprentices, fellow Crafts and Master Masons, the magnificent structure was brought to completion.

It is fundamental, not only in Freemasonry but in any other activities of life, that we must have definite leadership from those in authority, otherwise there will be lack of interest, stagnation and finally decay. Indeed, many of our Lodges would indicate today that we are already approaching a state of lethargy. We must, therefore, arouse ourselves and not rest on past achievements.

In every age of the world's history there is a looking-forward to a new era or emancipation from the ills which beset mankind. Freemasonry's purpose is to improve the lot of its members and the world in which we live. In the General Charge newly-initiated Freemasons are exhorted to "dedicate yourselves to such pursuits as may enable you to retain respect in your rank in life, be useful to mankind, and an ornament to the society in which you have been this day admitted a member; to devote your leisure hours more especially to the study of such of the liberal arts and sciences as may lie within the compass of your attainment, and without neglecting the ordinary duties of your station, to consider yourself called upon to make a daily advancement in Masonic knowledge."

I submit, therefore, that Freemasons take a

more commanding place in the life of man through the activity of its members, who have first of all become inspired with the great ideals for which Freemasonry stands. As Freemasons we must see to it that first of all we practise in our own lives the Principles of our Order. If we do this I feel confident that the greatest days of Freemasonry lie in the future, that our greatest temples are yet to be built, that our greatest Degrees are yet to be conferred. We have a great country; we have great resources at our command and consequently great responsibility to see that these resources are used for the benefit of mankind and the world at large.

I submit, further, that the employment of Lodge Members is the definite responsibility of the Worshipful Master of each Lodge but I do feel that it is the duty of Grand Lodge to give guidance and direction so that the Worshipful Master may be inspired to perform his duties, not in a perfunctory ritualistic manner, but in conformity with the high Principles and moral teachings of our Order.

"Not gold, but only men can make
A people great and strong—
Men, who, for truth and honor's sake,
Stand fast and suffer long,
Brave men, who work while others sleep,
Who dare while others fly—
They build a nation's pillars deep
And lift them to the sky."

Freemasonry can make no greater contribution to Mankind than to demonstrate that these great Principles of our Order will survive and thus assist the upward march of man. Let us be diligently employed in helping to bring about the realization of this goal.

R.W. Bro. H.B. MACDONALD,
Deputy Grand Master.

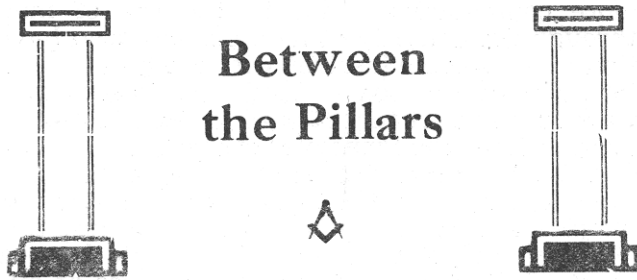
WELCOME

We welcome to our ranks as a duly Chartered Lodge, Ancient Landmark Lodge No. 163 at Mirror. Ancient Landmark Lodge No. 163 was duly Constituted and Consecrated with the customary rites and ceremonies at an Especial Communication of Grand Lodge held at Mirror on Friday, October 1st last. It is our sincere hope this new Lodge will make progress in Freemasonry, be a joy and inspiration to its members and a source of strength in their community for all that Freemasonry stands for.

S. H.

LIVE AND LET LIVE

It goes without saying that you should not desire to supplant any brother who, like you, is trying to serve. Curiously enough, some brethren actually like the jobs that no one else wants. If he has some work to do and does it well because he likes it, don't take it from him, even if you can do it better. Live and let live goes as much for labors in a lodge as in every day life.—Exchange.



Between the Pillars

A LIGHT SET UPON A HILL

When revolutionary ideas concerning Masonry reach the point where they begin to appear as food for thought in various Masonic journals, it must be assumed that there has been considerable private or verbal discussion of them. One of these is the suggestion that since the war and subsequent peace have brought about vast readjustments in our social relations, Masonry also must readjust or face eventual elimination.

It is held that possibly Masonry is too closely bound to the forms and traditions of the past. Because innovations are not permitted some apparently feel the fraternity is out of touch with the world around it and therefore has little influence upon it. Those of this mind are putting forth the idea that Masonry should become immediately interested in social and economic affairs and pattern its activities after those sponsored by what they term competing fraternities. The thought is advanced that unless we do so we shall be weighed in the balance and found wanting and therefore discarded.

Immediately it is apparent that those brethren who feel this way have themselves become disturbed by the undoubted social changes taking place around us. The motivating element in those changes seems to be a desire and an intention to bring about alterations which will level inequalities and broaden justice. Some feel that any organized fraternal society which does not vigorously prosecute programs allied with this trend will be declared useless to humanity and cut off from all support.

If such ideas are widely held or are likely to be, then the subject should be carefully considered. But how well taken are the premises? First of all since when and for what has Masonry been competing with any other fraternity? This is the first concern we have ever seen over the establishment or growth of any other secret or social order. We find nothing of it in Masonic literature. But if it should now be decided that we are in competition with them, for what are we competing? A competition is entered for the purpose of winning. In what, then, would we seek to outdo other friendly societies? Could it be a competition for members? That would be strange Masonic philosophy. Or could it be a competition in good works to gain the applause

and favor of men? That, too, would be a strange Masonic policy.

However it may be argued that the world at large beholds the great need for social betterment and will have little use for any group that fails to become vigorously active in these desirable programs. The weak spot in that contention seems to be that there is nothing in Masonry to prohibit any member from joining any or all of these clubs or fraternities and participating with them whole-heartedly in all of their good works.

As we see it, Masonry came into being for a rather different purpose. Its mission goes far beyond the conferring of degrees which some feel is its chief aim. Those possessed of the true spirit of Masonry know its objective is to enrich the hearts of its votaries with an ever growing love of honor, justice, mercy, morality and charity. When this is done those who have been so benefited may be depended upon to act effectively through the agencies for social welfare that may be set up in the civil and religious world around them.

Masonry takes the long view. It looks backward across the centuries and forward to the centuries to come. The problems of immediate social change are transient and require specialized treatment from bodies organized for specific purposes of that kind. They are useful in cutting off the branches of evil, but seldom are they able to lay the axe to the roots of it. Masonry recognizes that the root of evil is buried in the hearts and minds of men. It knows that this root, like all roots, grows in darkness and so darkens the eyes of its victims. But Masonry knows that cutting the branches brings only temporary relief. They will grow again in another form. Therefore the only genuine and lasting remedy lies in destroying the roots from which the evil grows and grafting in their places new ones that feed upon righteousness and truth. Thus Masonry through its pure teaching of brotherhood becomes a light set upon a hill as a guide to those who may have lost their way in darkness.

It will be readily agreed that Masonry doubtless could do much more than it does to make its work along traditional lines more effective. But to depart radically from that work to engage in ever changing social experiments would in all probability sooner or later bring about its end as an institution dedicated to preserving and teaching the eternal principles of true brotherhood among men. The light upon a hill would go out.

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REMEMBER THE GOOD

Forget yesterday and live in today. Happiness is the art of never holding in your mind the memory of any unpleasant thing that is once passed.