



Grand Lodge Bulletin

Editor: SAM HARRIS, P.G.M.

SHOULD FAITHFUL AND EFFICIENT SERVICE IN A LODGE BE RECOGNIZED BY GRAND LODGE?

So far as the Jurisdiction of Saskatchewan is concerned our Constitution provides that:

"Grand Lodge may, in recognition of eminence, ability or service rendered, confer on a member of this or any Sister Jurisdiction such rank and distinction as it may deem appropriate. In the case of a member of this Jurisdiction notice of motion to confer such rank and distinction shall be sent, in writing, by the mover to the Grand Secretary not later than the first day of March preceding the Annual Communication at which such motion is to be proposed. In the case of a member of a Sister Jurisdiction, notice of motion shall not be necessary. In either case, a two-thirds majority of the members present and voting, shall be necessary."

This power is most jealously exercised and to the best of my knowledge, in so far as members of our own Jurisdiction are concerned, such honours have only been granted in two cases during the life time of our Grand Lodge. I am discussing this on the basis of the foregoing existing Constitutional provision and am assuming that the question in the title has reference to an individual member of a Lodge.

If Grand Lodge is to undertake to recognize service to a Constituent Lodge the question immediately arises as to the form of recognition. Should this recognition be in the form of a certificate, should it be in the form of a jewel or should it be by appointment to Grand Lodge rank? The decision with respect to this question would have a bearing on the whole matter.

If recognition were to be by certificate or jewel more general recognition could be made than if it were to be by appointment to Grand Lodge rank.

There is a practice more or less common in Grand Lodges to recognize by the presentation of Fifty-year buttons, jewels or certificates. This practice however is based on the purely arbitrary standard of years of membership in good standing. It is purely a matter

of courtesy and in no way involves the danger surrounding choosing between Brethren. There is also vested in constituent Lodges in most Jurisdictions the power of conferring Honourary Membership. The selection of the Brother to be so honoured is however purely a matter of internal decision.

If recognition were to be by appointment to Grand Lodge rank then the number of Brethren so recognized would be of necessity limited and undoubtedly many equally deserving would be overlooked. Further, if this were to be the method of recognition, it would seem to me an inexcusable interference with the Grand Master's prerogative to name his Appointed Officers. I think there is too great a tendency in our present day Freemasonry to treat traditional prerogative altogether too lightly. A Worshipful Master or a Grand Master is not just a presiding officer over a group of Freemasons. He occupies a position surrounded with age old traditions, customs and prerogatives. In my opinion there are too many thoughtless individuals attempting to modernize our Freemasonry. We must zealously guard our inheritance and this includes Grand Master's prerogatives. He must be left free to name his Appointed Officers and there must not be any machinery set up that will interfere with that freedom even for the purpose of recognizing service.

Then too, we must remember that faithful and efficient service in a Lodge does not mean that the Brother is qualified to render similar service in the administrative body. Grand Lodge is essentially an administrative body and a good Lodge ritualist might be a hopeless failure as an administrative officer of Grand Lodge.

If Grand Lodge is to undertake to recognize service to a constituent Lodge the question also arises as to the method that shall be adopted in selecting those to be so honoured. I know of no system that would be proof against the influences of local popularity, local prominence, favouritism and other factors that

might result in a recommendation being made of a member who was not the most deserving. Harmony is a recognized pillar of our Institution and any practice which may tend to generate jealousy should be carefully avoided. Preferment such as is suggested by the title and sponsored from without the Lodge could be a fruitful source of injured feelings, misunderstanding and even jealousy.

I also suggest that in the larger Lodges many highly qualified Brethren do not have the opportunities for service that exists in the smaller Lodges. This would mean highly capable Brethren being passed over as a result of lack of opportunity for service in their Lodges and the preferment of Brethren of mediocre ability with the result that the rank conferred would be in fact an empty honour and tend to be one in name only. With our numerous annual appointments of D.D.G.M.'s and Grand Lodge Appointed Officers we already have a multiplicity of ranking officers and such titles as Very Worshipful and Right Worshipful are all too common and we should carefully avoid any practice which would tend to further lower the prestige of Grand Lodge rank.

If a Brother renders faithful and efficient service to his Lodge, the Lodge naturally recognizes such service by appointment to office and subsequently by election and installation as Worshipful Master. Thus the constituent body where that service was rendered has fully recognized it by granting the highest honours in its power. By virtue of his office the Brother in question has the opportunity first as a Warden and then as a Worshipful Master and Past Master to render service to Grand Lodge as a member of that body. In those Grand Lodges that have adopted the District Deputy system there is also the opportunity of service in the District.

I submit that recognition should only be given in the body where the outstanding service is rendered. Faithful and efficient service will always be recognized and there should not be any attempt by Grand Lodges to adjudicate on the value of individual service in a constituent body. For the true Mason a service well rendered carries its own reward and as a true Mason the work being accomplished he will retire into the multitude without pretension having rendered the service not for himself but for the advancement of Freemasonry.

R. W. Bro. Robt. A. Tate,
Grand Secretary, Saskatchewan.

AVOID HASTY JUDGMENT

Freemasons, of all men, should be deliberate in judgment, candid in consideration, charitable in construction, moderate in condemnation. If you feel moved to criticise a Brother, suppose you see him first. Talk over the matter in question and discover his viewpoint. Probably it is a different angle from that which presented itself to you. Perhaps he can tell you things you did not know. On the other hand, perhaps you can enlighten him and lead him to see the error of his way. How much better to convince and reform him than to convict and destroy. At any

rate, it is a satisfaction to be sure you are right before you go ahead.

I have found that most people are about as happy as they make up their minds to be.—Abraham Lincoln.

THE MENACE IMPENDING

A few there are among us (and prominent they are, too) who maintain that FREEMASONRY must not take any definite stand against the menace of Communism but must restrict itself to a dignified silence. THE UNITED GRAND LODGE OF ENGLAND has adopted the policy expressed as follows:—*"It would be impossible to condemn the atheistic aspect of Communism (which might be regarded as an intervention into religious matters) without bringing us into conflict with its economic and political aims as well and that is introducing Masonry into the political arena, which it is our avowed object to avoid."*

Those who tell us that we must not discuss Communism at our banquets or in our gatherings pin their faith to the following extract from the *"Aims and Relationships of the Craft"* a statement issued in 1938 by the three Grand Lodges of the British Isles: *"The Grand Lodge has always consistently refused to express any opinion on questions of foreign or domestic state policy either at home or abroad, and it will not allow its name to be associated with any action, however humanitarian it may appear to be, which infringes its unalterable policy of standing aloof from every question affecting the relations between one government and another, or between political parties, or questions as to rival theories of government."*

Of course, every Mason agrees with that statement. But is Communism a religion? Is it a system of government? Everyone knows that Communism is none of these but is an attempt at world domination by an evil brood of dictators and assassins. A business man, recently came to Canada from England to commence life anew, states that the Communists could take over the railways of Britain tomorrow if they so decided. And we are expected to stand still and watch our house burn down or watch our country blow up because we are expected to maintain a dignified silence and to refrain from discussing religious and political topics. We are to take our place on the sideline and to wait until the communists destroy our homes, our churches, our schools, and our lodges, as they have done in other countries where they have seized power by intrigue as well as by force.

The individual feels that he has very little influence and that there is little he can do. But he can vote—and many do not take the trouble to exercise their franchise. Approximately sixty per cent don't bother and pride themselves that they do not. The communists need to win, in any country, only one election. Then there are no more elections; at least, no more free elections. The dictator then takes over and with him come the firing squad, the torture chamber, the concentration camp, the horrors of the labour camp. Then the clergy are arrested; "confessions" are heard; "trials" are held. The system is quite simple.

In Canada our democratic system is being used by traitors to destroy our democracy. Freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of assembly, are being used to promote the communistic system which allows no such freedom—nor any freedom. The same traitors approach labour, work their way into labour unions, and promise all sorts of improvements while intelligent labour men know perfectly well that, under communism, labour has no right, no privileges, but that the working man, including all who are not “party members”, become ragged slaves toiling in abject poverty. How would the farmers of Canada enjoy working on “collective farms” and having their produce taken from them, without money and without price, by agents of the dictator.

The picture has not been overdrawn; it has not been exaggerated. What can we do to try and stop this slimy flood that threatens to overwhelm this country and all the world? The time is short. We must use our votes and influence others to vote at every election. We must support our churches—only a revival of true religion can save civilization. Do we all attend our church services? We can support our schools and can assist in abolishing juvenile delinquency. We should read as many as we can of the books of the day, such books as deal with this threatening pestilence. The time really is short. Masons cannot afford to be apathetic, indifferent, unthinking. Now is the time. We must look upward and onward.

M. W. Bro. W. J. Dunlop,
Past Grand Master, Ontario and
Hon. Past Grand Master, Alberta.

A REMINDER

The Forty-fourth Annual Communication of Grand Lodge will be held in the Hotel Palliser, in the City of Calgary, Wednesday, June 8th next at 9:00 a.m. sharp. Registration will commence at 8:30 a.m. It is expected that every Lodge will be duly represented and your Grand Master and his Officers will greatly appreciate the attendance of every brother who can attend.

S. H.

LENGTH OF A CABLETOW

“The length of a cabletow” is not a common expression, but how many know just how long in feet and in inches that is? A cable’s length from shore is exactly 600 feet. A fathom is six feet, and a cable length is one hundred fathoms—600 feet. Symbolically, and more truly, a “cable’s length” is the distance a Brother will go to relieve another’s necessity.

Wisconsin Freemason.

If you see a brother bending under the cross of adversity and a disappointment, look not idly on, neither pass by on the other side, but fly to his relief. If he be deceived, tell him the truth; if he be calumniated, vindicate his cause; for although in some instances he may have erred, still, recollect that indiscretion in him should never destroy humanity in you.

M. W. Bro. W. H. Nichols,
Grand Master, Texas, 1884.

THE COVERING OF A LODGE (Continued from Page 44)

There are Masons whose progress is meteoric and who are admired and appreciated for their qualities as thinkers, leaders and organizers. Meteor-like their disappearance is in the nature of a catastrophe, whether it be caused by the rude hand of death or the fell clutch of circumstance. We are told that the stars, so remote, that man has not as yet contrived an instrument to reveal their exact location. There are Masons equally unattainable; either they never appear in the lodge at all or, if they do attend, they are unapproachable and as unresponsive as those denizens of the vast beyond.

“One star differeth from another star in glory” but, despite our limitations, our mortal eyes can still appreciate the wonders of that celestial canopy of divers colours, with its fixed points of radiance, its scintillating facets of eternal light and its calm, awe-inspiring majesty.

One Mason differs from another in his contribution to the erection of our mythical and spiritual temple, but which of us can usurp the glory or withhold the accolade from another? Who can number the stars and who can dare to assume the function of Him whose hand holds the compasses and adjusts the balance.

Wenatchee Masonic News.
R. W. Bro. John Ness, Ontario.

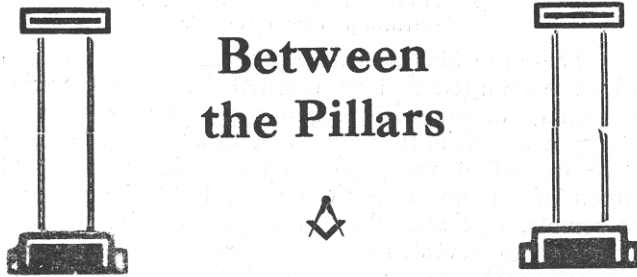
FUNCTIONS OF A MASONIC LODGE

It is not the primary function of Masonry to initiate candidates, or to enlarge its membership. Were it so, there would be no basis for our laws against proselytising. The ordinary function of a Masonic Lodge—indeed, the primary function of our Craft, is to train its members to an understanding of the truths which its rituals and its ceremonies are calculated to inculcate, to develop its members as benevolent men, to cultivate the social virtues among men, and to propagate the knowledge of the art.

The chief concern of the Lodge is with its welfare, the happiness, the Masonic development of those who seek entrance to its doors. Its success as a Masonic Lodge cannot be gauged by the length of its membership roll or by the size of its accumulated funds.

The beauty of our ritual, and the good fellowship among the members of our Lodges cannot be conserved when the chief aim is to make Masons and money—“for a man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of things which he possesseth”—and a Lodge’s life does not consist in its acquisitions, but in the contribution which it makes to civilisation and society through the influence to those whom it has helped to train to what we call Masonic character. Therefore, it should be the duty of every Masonic Lodge to put in action a plan for the education of its members in Masonic history, symbolism and philosophy, devoting more of its meetings to this much-neglected function.

It is more important to watch how a man lives than to listen to what he says.—Selected.



Between the Pillars

THE COVERING OF A LODGE

"There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars, for one star differeth from another star in glory."

The talented authors of our ceremonies might, if they had wished, have done a marvellous work of moralizing on this passage from the Sacred Writings; it has a Masonic cadence and lends itself admirably to a discourse on Masonic symbolism. We may be pardoned if we rush in where those erudite students and writers did not choose to tread and endeavour, for our own satisfaction, to build a flimsy superstructure of Masonic philosophy on such a thought-compelling foundation.

The sun, the moon and the stars are familiar symbols to the Mason, the ruler of the day and the guardian of the night belong to our Lesser Lights; there are the stars which typify a perfect lodge; the star which is a reminder of Divine Providence, and the star, rising in the east, which inculcates the hope of immortality.

The sun rules the day and its glory is in its achievement. We perform our allotted tasks while it is yet day. We plan and build our material edifices; we exert our talents to satisfy the bodily needs of ourselves and our families; we strive to create a better world in which to live by acquiring and applying knowledge, we engage in altruistic schemes of social welfare to ensure for each and all an equal opportunity. Whether our contribution be of the heart, of the mind or of the hand, the knowledge of something attempted, something done adds to the glory of each passing day.

The glory of the moon is a borrowed glory, suggesting reflection and introspection. If we can look back on a day well spent; if we can honestly assure ourselves that our labours have not been in vain and that, thanks to our efforts we have left the world a little better and a little brighter, then the rest and refreshments of the night will have been earned. Only an active day merits a restful night; a day of idleness will not bring healthy reaction in the quiet hours and a day of revelling is, more than often, a prelude to a night of debauchery.

The glory of the moon is passive but it is also resurgent, for it suggests the restoration and renewal of our jaded faculties to send us forth at the dawn of a new day like warriors refreshed.

If we are mindful of the proper division of our time, as demonstrated by the Twenty Four Inch Gauge, and if we govern ourselves accordingly, the full glory of both sun and moon will, as it is so aptly put, shed

their benign influence upon us for our enlightenment, morally and spiritually.

The glory of the stars might, first of all, portray for us the glory of a perfect lodge in which the Master and his Wardens, the Fellowcraft and the Entered Apprentice, work together in love and harmony.

A lodge in which genuine Freemasonry is not only preached but practiced; where the brotherhood of man is secondary only in importance to the Divine Fatherhood; where only just and upright men are welcomed on account of their internal qualifications and not for their worldly possessions or social background; and, on the material side, a lodge where the brethren attend regularly and pay their just dues promptly.

Such a lodge, perfect in its parts and honourable to the builders, will stand out amongst the ruck like the fixed star by which a navigator charts his course.

Even as the Masonic Pavement reminds us of life's vicissitudes, so the star in its center assures us of the Divine Providence that shapes our ends. It is a star of hope, the glory of which lies in the promises of Divine protection made to Abraham and his seed for ever. It is a star with a dual glory for its lustre is enhanced by faith, so that, whether we tread the flowery mead or stray into byways of disappointment and difficulty, its gleam will eventually lead us to the Center from which neither man nor Mason can err.

Transcending all other stars in glory is the star which, bursting out of gloom and darkness, heralds the morning of eternal day. Philosophy and the teachings of morality may have guided us to the heights from which this star is visible, but these qualities of the mind can take us no further, our future lies in the realm of the spirit.

This Bright Morning Star is the justification of the Mason, for it indicates clearly that he is neither a pagan sun-worshipper nor a philosophic stargazer, but one who, through difficulties and dangers, mental and spiritual, has been led by the glory of this particular star to the gateway of heaven, the very house of God.

Perhaps our study of the stars would not be complete unless we endeavoured to apply their symbolism to the individual Mason. Even if our acquaintance with astronomy is superficial and largely accumulated in our school-days, we know that the stars differ in more than their glory. They are fixed constellations, there are comets and meteors; there are stars which follow a prescribed course and stars which, apparently, run wild.

So, too, with the individual Mason; in every lodge there are the steady, constant Masons who, like the Plow or the Dipper, are fixed and immovable sources of light and guidance from which their brethren acquire direction in their Masonic pursuits. There are brilliant Masons who flash like comets across our celestial canopy trailing glory behind them, only to disappear with startling suddenness; of such it can be said, "the place thereof shall know them no more."

(Continued on Page 43)