



Grand Lodge Bulletin

Editor: Sam HARRIS, P.G.M.

A Message from the R.W. Senior Grand Warden

On the evening of June 24th I had the pleasure along with some other Edmonton Brethren of assisting R. W. Bro. R. G. Thomson in installing R. W. Bro. W. J. Craigen as Master of Star of the West Lodge at Leduc. This was just exactly forty years since Bro. Craigen was first installed into the same chair and this comeback was not due to the lack of younger material in the Lodge because Star of the West Lodge, like many other lodges, has been receiving a number of good additions to its membership. It just so happened that the Senior Warden's business took him away from Leduc and the Junior Warden did not feel capable of assuming the duties of Master. Bro. Craigen is one of several "oldtimers" in Star of the West Lodge whom one could name who have been regular attendants and faithful workers in the Lodge and when the emergency arose he stepped into the breach at the request of his brethren and no doubt they have a good year ahead of them.

I think the country lodges have an advantage over the city lodges in this regard. They meet once in the month and the meeting is an outstanding event and an opportunity for real Masonic good fellowship and the, so-called, oldtimers attend and the younger brethren have the advantage of their experience and help. In the city we meet so often and are so busy making Masons that there is too little time left for the fraternal side and one wonders that attendance is as good as it is. There are scores of good men who have rich experiences in Masonic work but who seldom or never attend lodge largely, no doubt, because they become irked with hearing the degrees conferred. When good men come to our portals seeking admission we cannot turn them away but perhaps we are too eager to receive applications and make more members. Every Master thinks he must get all his degree work finished before the end of his year, but is this so terribly important? I recall that it took me a whole year from my initiation until I received my master's apron. Even then my knowledge of masonry was extremely meagre. What must be the experience of those who we see going the whole way in three or four months? I hope they are smarter on the uptake than I was. Perhaps if we gave a little more attention to the fraternal aspect we might have a better

attendance of those older members from whom our younger men could and would, I am sure, receive a wealth of inspiration and Masonic lore.

R. W. Bro. W. F. EMPEY,
Senior Grand Warden, Alberta.

A. F. & A. M.—F. & A. M.—

WHAT'S DIFFERENCE?

Many Masons are puzzled why some Grand Lodges designate themselves A. F. & A. M. and others F. & A. M.

Before the United Grand Lodge of England was formed in 1813, there were two Grand Lodges existing in England. One was known as the "Ancients" and the other as the "Moderns." Both of these Grand Lodges issued charters to lodges in the U.S.A. Those chartered by the Moderns, which was the older Grand Lodge in England, used the title F. & A. M. Those chartered by the Ancients used A. F. & A. M.

As for the principle and ritual of Grand Lodges in the United States using either of these titles, there is practically no difference except such as the Grand Lodges legislate.

There are in the United States 49 grand Jurisdictions, of which 25 use A. F. & A. M., 23 using F. & A. M., one using A. F. M. (Ancient Free Masons), South Carolina.

Masonic Historiology.

It is just like an organ. There are white keys and black keys; and both are needed to produce the great harmonies and wonderful music. So it is with the races of mankind; all are needed, and God has a place for every man, no matter what colour his skin may be.

—James Aggrey

Ah; when shall all men's good
Be each man's rule and universal peace.
Lie like a shaft of light across the land,
And like a lane of beams athwart the sea
Thru all the circle of the golden year?

—Tennyson

Without a humble imitation of the Divine
Author of our religion, we can never hope to be
a happy nation.

—George Washington

ARE YOU A MASON OR JUST A MEMBER OF THE LODGE?

Masonry, as the world knows it, refers to Craft Masonry, generally known as The Blue Lodge. The work in the Blue Lodge is divided into two parts.

Part one deals with the constitution and by-laws of the lodge, the members' relation to the lodge and the members' relation to each other. That these relations may be maintained at a high level the lodge gives instruction to emphasize the importance of morality, truth and brotherhood. For convenience in giving the lectures the work in part one is divided into three degrees. When the candidate has shown sufficient understanding of the principles of masonry he is obligated to conform to certain rules and regulations, failure of which he may be suspended or expelled from the lodge.

The teachings in these three degrees is of such a high standard that many lodges outside of Masonry lay it down as a prerequisite to membership that a candidate must be a Mason in good standing in his lodge.

Part Two raises Masonry from the ethical to the spiritual plane. All the secrets and all that is mystical about Masonry is contained in this part. It is not divided into degrees and to it there are no higher degrees, part two is the "summum bonnum", the greatest thing in Masonry. It gives Masonry the stability and continuity that takes it through depressions and booms, swings to the right and swings to the left, still following its ancient land-marks.

In part two the candidate is given to understand that the work is strictly personal and the lodge does not undertake to make, neither does it reserve the right to expel a member from Masonry. This is the foundation for the expression "once a Mason, always a Mason." The candidate is then shown the broad highway of life with its many difficulties and dangers and is given information and direction how these may be overcome including death and the grave. The information being intangible and spiritual in nature cannot be put into words, it is communicated by the use of allegory, signs and symbols, these with the aid of THE GREAT LIGHT contain a fund of knowledge that supply study for a life time.

Are you a Mason? Take this up with your presiding Master and suggest that he bring it up for discussion in lodge. "In the council of many there is much safety."

R. W. Bro. D. H. GALBRAITH, P.D.D.G.M.,
Vulcan Lodge No. 74, Alberta.

The happiness of life is made up of minute fractions — the little soon-forgotten charities of a kiss or smile, a kind look, a heartfelt compliment, and the countless infinitesimals of pleasurable and genial feeling.

—Coleridge

Age makes us not childish, as some say; it finds us still only as true children.

—Goethe

LOOK FORWARD

The election of officers in many lodges will be held at the November meeting. The newly elected Worshipful Master will then make the appointments for the junior officers. This is a solemn responsibility.

We should understand that officers are elected and appointed to give leadership. That is why great care should be exercised in the selection of officers in a Masonic Lodge.

What your lodge will be in five years from now will very largely be decided by what is done as a result of your November election. The brother who is appointed to the first rung of the office ladder expects eventually to reach the Master's chair, and very likely he will. Surely then it is apparent that the best material in the lodge should be chosen. Don't make the mistake of thinking the letter perfect ritualist is the most desirable to undertake the task of successful leadership, especially in a Masonic Lodge.

Much as we respect the ritualist we can see greater opportunities ahead in a man who has other qualities of heart and mind and these are in very short supply everywhere at the present time.

There is much more to Masonic officership than the formality of electing or appointing the individual. Too often the young officer is left entirely to himself to grope and struggle as best he can along the path which finally brings him to the East.

A strong and vigorous lodge must plant and carry into practice a constant program of instruction over and above the ceremonials governing the conferring of degrees. Too often we find the principal activity of our lodges centred entirely upon degree work. Such a plan was never contemplated by the men who brought speculative Freemasonry into our lives.

Constant effort to improve oneself in Freemasonry will lead the interested brother along pathways which will find expression far removed from the tyled recesses of a lodge room.

Every community has its own particular field of action. One would be bold, and indeed it is impossible, to set out in codified form a program which could be generally accepted. Here is where leadership comes in because the real leader will create and develop a plan singularly adapted to his own lodge and district.

The Freemason of today is the custodian of tomorrow. What the Craft will be five years from now will depend upon our actions and judgments of today. Therefore, come to the November meeting of your lodge, consider carefully the men who will occupy office for the ensuing year.

Masonry in Manitoba.

Build your church within your heart and take it with you everywhere.

True glory consists in doing what deserves to be written, in writing what deserves to be read, and in so living as to make the world happier and better for our living.

—Pliny

THE ACACIA

What is the Acacia? What is its symbolic significance? In answer to the second question I would say that it gives life perspective, a vision of life that embodies the solution of so many of our present problems.

What is the Acacia? It is an evergreen shrub or tree found in Africa (140 species), Arabia, East Indies and Australia (280 species). The shape of the leaves is modified by the climate, which is especially true of Australia. Some varieties are cultivated for their fruit and others for their beautiful flowers. The wood of the Arabian variety is called shittim; from it were made the Ark of the Covenant for the Tabernacle and Temple, and the furniture of the Holy of Holies. The wood is dark yellow in color, crossgrained, very hard and contains a great deal of tannic acid. It is considered a sacred wood, and belongs to the balsam family. From its gum was made myrrh, used as a drug to deaden pain. Myrrh was one of the gifts the Wise Men brought to Jesus.

The Hebrews often planted an acacia on a newly-made grave, to grow from the body buried in it. Many are found in the neighborhood of the Calvary. The acacia is a symbol of immortality. The Third Degree teaches us that Life is immortal and that Death but interrupts our work without ending it. Our greatest need is a vision of life in the perspective of eternity.

The acacia is also a symbol of innocence, of pure heart and pure hands. Myrrh made from its gum was one of the ingredients of the purifying oil with which the priests anointed themselves before the act of sacrifice.

At the Passover an innocent, unblemished lamb was sacrificed for the nation's sins. It was the symbol of a greater sacrifice. Masonically Jesus was the Lion of the Tribe of Judah; but he was also the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world, and purifies minds, hearts and purposes. There is a tradition that the cross of Jesus was made of the wood of the acacia tree, which was readily available as it grows plentifully around Golgatha.

The acacia is also the symbol of initiation. In all the mystery religions and rites some plant was the symbol of initiation, and the acacia was used in many of them.

The Acacia — symbol of Immortality, Innocence, Initiation.

Bro. Rev. S. E. HARRIS, M.P.S.,
Oregon.

CONCENTRATION

All who would study with advantage, in any art whatever, ought to betake themselves to the reading of some sure and certain books oft times over; for to read many books produceth confusion rather than learning, like those who dwell everywhere are not anywhere at home.

—Martin Luther.

After all there is but one race—humanity.

—George Moore

THE SAINTS JOHN

Why do we have St. John the Baptist and St. John the Evangelist? We are not Catholics.

Until about 300 years ago the rank and file of ordinary men had no clocks, watches, or calendars, did not think of the year as divided into twelve months but into periods of another kind which varied in length and didn't have numbers for the days; instead they thought of the year as a succession of periods, most of them of a religious character, such as Lent, and each day of the whole year had a name of its own—this was one of the reasons why the Middle Ages needed so many saints; they had to have enough to give each of the 365 days a name.

Each guild or fraternity in the Middle Ages was required by law to have a Patron Saint, which meant that on that Saint's day the guild would take a holiday (holy day) and go in a body and in public procession to some chapel or altar dedicated to that saint. The Freemasons of those early times had a number of different Patron Saints, depending on the place and the period of time, but apparently they had St. Thomas a Becket oftener than any other. Nobody knows when or why they settled down finally on the days belonging to the two Sts. John, but when they did it was for calendar reasons, not for theological reasons. The Baptist's day is the longest in the year in the sense of the number of hours of daylight; the Evangelist's day was not only the shortest in that sense but was the turning point of the year when the days began to become longer, and for that reason everybody was happy to see it come.

—Iowa Grand Lodge Bulletin

MASONRY

Brethren do not pass between the Altar and the East in a Masonic Lodge at labor because the Master is supposed to have the Great Lights constantly in view. In theory, at least, he draws inspiration for presiding over the Lodge from the Altar and must not, therefore, be prevented from seeing at any time.

The custom is but a pretty courtesy, but it is rooted in a fundamental conception of the Craft—that the Altar is the centre of Masonry, and that from it and the Great Light it bears flow all there is of Masonic inspiration and truth and light.

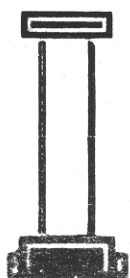
In English Lodges there is not this problem, since the Altar there is a pedestal near the Master on which lies the Holy Book.

—Exchange

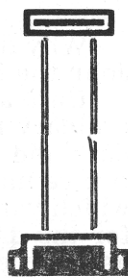
The friends of your prosperity will not know you in your depression. The man without a country and the man without a friend have arrived at the same condition, for both are destitute.

—Chas. J. Dennis

It is better to light a candle than to curse the darkness.



Between the Pillars



SOLICITATION OF CANDIDATES

We are not so much concerned about what Freemasonry was yesterday, or what it was at the building of King Solomon's Temple, but what it is today and what it shall be tomorrow, and likewise what each one of us is today and what we shall be tomorrow. These are the all-important questions to the good Freemason and true men everywhere.

Eventually we shall be forced to the conclusion that we should elect to our Fraternity only those men who are good and true.

And it is just here that the fact should be stressed that every applicant for membership in the Masonic Fraternity is a petitioner. Keep in mind that he is asking to be admitted into our Order. For this reason alone, if for no other, we have a right to know everything that there is to be known about him before our privileges are extended to him.

This is a recognized Landmark of our Order. There can be no possible excuse for the solicitation of candidates, but every hope of safety in avoiding such a practice. We must not seek—we are to be sought. Our portals are open to all the good and true, but we ask no man to enter.

If one would be a Master Mason in very truth and not in name only or in the wearing of a miscellaneous assortment of badges and jewels, it takes all that he has to divide his twenty-four hours in such a manner as to find "eight hours for the service of God and distressed worthy Brethren, eight for his usual vocations and eight for refreshment and sleep."

After all, there is really nothing the matter with the Lodge nor with Masonry. The trouble is all with ourselves. Masonry does not teach by intuition or force. It teaches us individually the law of personal responsibility; that as a man soweth, so shall he reap. No one of us can evade this personal responsibility; each one of us must pay to the uttermost farthing according to the law.

For too long a time we have been devoting too much time to making members and not enough to teaching Masonic principles. This has meant doing our work only half way.

The day is fast approaching when we shall have to face the question as to what concrete influence Masonry is exerting in world affairs; in patriotism and peace; whether our Fraternity, with its rapidly growing membership and its increasing wealth, really justifies its existence; whether, like many other organizations, social and fraternal, that have gone before it, it is

becoming too self-centred and too self-serving to accomplish the purpose originally planned.

Analyze the conditions in your own Lodge. The tendency today is to popularize Masonry and make it so attractive that applications for membership will come in by the hundreds. Masonry, as such, has no playground. Our members must be workers, among whom there should be no drones, none obsessed with the amusement idea. Each one of us should strive to earn Master's wages.

If I read the signs aright, Masonry is destined to meet, in the near future, problems that will be more or less new and complex. Conditions of serious and disquieting aspect menace us. Controversies are raging in Church and State. Everywhere respect for law is being flouted, and this is undermining the manhood and womanhood of the age. True Masonry speaks in vital opposition to this disrespect. Masonry means morality and obedience to all laws.

—Sandusky Masonic Bulletin

MEMBERSHIP

The latest statistics at hand show there are 15,265 lodges in the 49 Grand Jurisdictions in the United States of America with a total membership of 3,427,972 members, an increase of 143,904, which is the smallest increase since 1945.

New York, with 1,046 lodges and 289,231 members, is the largest Grand Jurisdiction, but their increase of 6,621 in membership is less than the increase in membership of 7,184 in Illinois, 7,212 in Pennsylvania, 9,281 in California, 9,391 in Ohio and 12,803 in Texas. Nevada is the smallest Grand Jurisdiction with 25 lodges, 4,291 members and an increase in membership of 196.

In the Dominion of Canada there are 1,416 lodges in 9 Grand Jurisdictions with a total membership of 210,835, an increase in membership of 7,667. Eight Grand Jurisdictions have an increase in membership whilst New Brunswick has a decrease in membership of 91.

Iowa Masonic Library

Complete records are not at hand for our new Province of Newfoundland. There are 13 lodges under the English Constitution with a membership of 1,739, and 8 lodges under the Scottish Constitution, the membership of which is not at hand.

—S.H.

You can preach a better sermon with your life than with your lips. Unremitting prosperity, like unremitting summer, enervates men, and weakens character.

Look not upon the vessel but rather upon what it holds.

Do what thou canst unknown, and be not vain of what ought rather to be than felt.

—Penn