



Grand Lodge Bulletin

Editor: Sam HARRIS, P.G.M.

To Which They Bear a Near Affinity

Before attempting any particular message I wish to express my appreciation of the honour done to me and my lodge, Ashlar No. 28, Calgary, in electing me to be the Junior Grand Warden. It is my intention to get to know as many of my brethren as possible and have already attended four District Meetings, at Lacombe, Loughheed, Castor and Vulcan. I hope to attend many more.

One of the injunctions impressed upon us when we enter Freemasonry is that we are called upon to make a "daily advancement in Masonic knowledge", and from time to time it has occurred to me that a starting place might be the explanation of the tracing board.

In the first place I was intrigued with the commencing paragraphs in one of the first lectures in which reference is made to our usages and customs corresponding with those of the Egyptian philosophers and to their concealment of their tenets and principles under certain hieroglyphical figures and these being communicated to their Priests or Magi alone; all of this savors of the ancient orient with all of its mysticism and it occurred to me that perhaps the "daily advancement" might properly be made in trying to reconcile this statement with one which follows in the same explanation that "the Pythagorean system appears to have been established upon a similar plan". In so doing one finds that it all fits in and explains some of the fundamental virtues inculcated in the ceremonies.

When one talks about the Egyptian philosophers and considers that their work extends to 8000 B.C. or earlier, it is remarkable that their usages and customs would be perpetuated in our more modern adaptation and that they would have similar ideas to our own. Yet we find that Pythagoras, who lived in the sixth century before Christ, and who was a great Greek philosopher (or lover of wisdom) made a study of the ancient mysteries of the Egyptian philosophers in a journey to Egypt when he had intercourse with priests and was initiated into their ancient mysteries. He travelled through Syria to become acquainted with the most im-

portant religious usages and doctrines, and was carried captive into Babylon where he conversed with Persian and Chaldean Magi. After going to India he returned to Samos where he opened a school and taught his doctrines in symbolic form emulating the Egyptians. After many other journeys and being initiated into the sacred mysteries of the Greeks, with this accumulated knowledge he formed a philosophical school and founded a select fraternity, the members of which were bound by vow to Pythagoras and each other for the purpose of cultivating religious rites and ascetic observances of their master and studying his system of philosophy. Unfortunately that fraternity eventually used its influence in politics and was broken up. Freemasonry has always avoided political as well as religious discussion and this is one of the reasons for its continuity and increase in stature and influence.

Pythagoras founded his school on the science of numbers which was founded without doubt on the ancient mysteries of the Egyptian philosophers, of which he made a profound study. Without going into this science very far we find that the number "one" represents "reason" because it is unchangeable; hence the geometric principle that "one" represents a "point" and also the Masonic reference to a centre being a point from which a Mason cannot err. "Two" is the first female number, representing "opinion" (many would say how appropriate); "three" is the number of "perfect harmony".

To tie-in "perfect harmony" which is the "strength and support of all well governed institutions" with the number "three" representing the Trinity and so many phases of our "three" degrees and the "three" who rule a lodge in particular, explains in an elementary way the "near affinity" referred to.

When one considers that "four" represents "justice" and that "three" represents "harmony" it is easy to see why "seven" make a lodge perfect, being composed of two such fundamental virtues. One could go on and on with this reconciliation but these simple similes should be enough for one day. Thus we see the similarity of the Pythagorean plan and our cus-

toms corresponding with those of the Egyptian philosophers.

In conclusion I would like to leave with you the following thought for the day:

"Let me today do something that shall take
A little sadness from the world's vast store;
And may I be so favored as to make
Of Joy's too scanty sum a little more.

Let me tonight look back across the span
"Twixt dawn and dark, and to my conscience
say,
Because of some good act to beast or man,
The world is better that I lived today."

—Anonymous.

R. W. Bro. HARRY E. HOWARD,
Junior Grand Warden, Alberta.

APPLIED RELIGION

Freemasonry is not in itself a religion, but it is grounded in religion. It reveres the V.S.L. as a source book of thought patterns and finds in the Old Testament the groundwork of its degrees. Moreover it takes to itself something of the sacramental idea of outward and visible signs of inward and spiritual truth. It has, therefore, a particular interest in Christmas, for in the birth of the Holy Child is set forth the outward and visible Sign of the inward and spiritual reality of God Himself. "No man hath seen God at any time" says St. John the Apostle of Light, "the only begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." Freemasonry is a beautiful symbol of morals veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols, and the honest Master is ever at work seeking and finding the inner truth of his craft and applying that truth to life. It is a brotherhood of benevolence and goodwill helping and encouraging all sick or distressed Brethren wheresoever they be scattered over the face of the whole earth . . . it is, in fact, applied religion, applied Christianity.

So, at this season of the Unveiling of God in a perfect human life, let every member of the Craft set himself anew upon that true Centre, the light that lighteth every man coming into the world, and from that Centre reach out the Compasses to inscribe a circumference of all-embracing love and goodwill to all men under the sun and in true Masonic Brotherhood create a world of peace.

Bro. REV. CECIL SWANSON,
Vancouver, B.C.

Joe, the Pastry Cook

Joe and Bill grabbed their lunch pails and sought a shady tree. Joe pulled out a long package and started to unroll it.

"What have you got there?" asked Bill.

"While my wife was away," returned Joe modestly, "I made myself a pie."

"A pie? It's kind of long for a pie, isn't it?"

"Of course it's long," answered Joe. "It's rhubarb!"

WORSHIPFUL MASTERS

A Brother, to be thoroughly competent to discharge the duties of the office of Worshipful Master, must have behind him long years of hard study, close application, much sacrifice of time and unlimited patience. I have found that many of our Worshipful Masters did not possess these qualifications when installed into office. Some of them even go through their year of office without being qualified to confer any, or only parts, of the degrees, depending on others to perform the duties that they promised to perform. Lodges are largely to blame when they deliberately elect to office such unqualified and incompetent officers. Such an officer not only brings embarrassment to himself but oftentimes brings confusion and dishonor to his Lodge. If he is not qualified to do his part in the ceremonial work, he certainly does not stand in a position to require his minor officers to perform their duties. He must be a leader if he expects followers.

A Brother may be thoroughly competent to confer the degrees, and yet totally incompetent to discharge the duties pertaining to the office of Worshipful Master. To be fitted thoroughly for that high office, a Brother must be conversant with the Ancient Landmarks of Freemasonry, the Constitution and General Regulations of the Grand Lodge and the By-laws of his Lodge. He must be well informed on Masonic jurisprudence and Masonic parliamentary law; also he must be versed in the etiquette of the Fraternity. In other words, he must be equipped to discharge any duty that may fall to his lot while standing before his brethren as the head of his Lodge. When a question of law is raised in the Lodge, the Worshipful Master should be able to make a prompt ruling thereon, and when he has made his decision, he should have the firmness to prohibit a further discussion.

The Worshipful Master must know the proper form of keeping the records of the Lodge, and he must see that they are correctly kept; he must know that all financial matters are properly rendered and that everything pertaining to the business and well-being of his Lodge receives prompt attention. The Grand Lodge holds him responsible for the conduct of his Lodge in all particulars.

—Masonic News, Illinois.

Have you read the Rulings of Grand Masters as approved by Grand Lodge? See pages 179 to 185 of the 1949 Grand Lodge Proceedings.

Pages 1 to 89 inclusive, Report of Fraternal Correspondence. Matters of Masonic interest from practically all corners of the World are contained in these pages. Read them and you will find your time has been well spent.

See page 186 for the Rules of Recognition of another Grand Body by the Grand Lodge of Alberta.

THE MEANING OF MASONRY

One of the earliest lessons taught the Masonic Initiate is that every Masonic Temple, itself a symbol of the Universe (and of the soul of every upright and worthy man), is supported by three great columns, Wisdom, Strength and Beauty or Harmony. When the Mason is advanced to a certain point, he learns that these three pillars of the old Temple are replaced with three others—Faith, Hope and Charity—virtues which every Mason and every man and woman ought to possess: Faith — in God; that He is good and wise and merciful, a Father and not a Tyrant; whom we are as children to love, and not as slaves to fear; — in Human Nature; confidence in our kind, in the honesty of men's purposes and intentions; in man's capability for improvement and advancement; the same Faith in others that we would have them put in us; — and Faith in ourselves; — in our power to do some good, and exert some influence upon our fellows; Faith, that if we are but earnest, honest and sincere, we can help destroy ignorance, error and wrong, and become immortal in our good influences living after we are dead; that noble and modest confidence in ourselves, which is the secret of all success, and the parent of all great and noble actions . . . Hope, in the ultimate annihilation of Evil in the Universe; in the final triumph of Masonry, that shall make of all men one family and household; in the cessation of war and bloodshed, and the advent of Peace and Liberty; in the final enfranchisement of the human soul and intellect in every country on the globe; and in a Hereafter, where man, immortal, shall be happy . . . And Charity, taught us by Faith and Hope, for those who differ with us in opinion, for them and for their faith, and even for their errors; that Charity which relieves the necessities and distresses of men, and with open hand gives the suffering and destitute solace and comfort; and which forgives and utters merciful judgment upon the faults and shortcomings of others; believes them better than they seem, and teaches us to judge and do unto others as we should wish them, and think it right for them to judge and do unto us. To be Trustful, to be Hopeful, to be Indulgent:—these, when all around us are selfishness, despondency, ill-opinion of Human Nature, and harsh and bitter judgment, are the true supports of every Masonic Temple, and the bases of every manly and heroic nature. And they are also the old pillars of the Temple under different names: for he only is **Wise** who judges others **Charitably** and deals with their errors **Mercifully**; he only is **Strong** who is **Hopeful**; and there is no **Beauty** of proportion or harmony like a firm Faith in God, our fellows and ourselves.

—From Volume 5, The Little Masonic Library.

M.W. Bro. J. Rice Williams, P.G.M., in his report as Grand Lecturer of the Grand Lodge of Mississippi rightly reminds the brethren that: "Freemasonry is distinctly and definitely NOT a club. Freemasonry is an Institution in that it has from time immemorial stood for the high-

est principles of morality and virtue. It is founded on enduring principles which must go down through the ages, if Masonry is to survive. Its landmarks are unchangeable. If Freemasonry should ever be modernized, streamlined, it would cease to be Masonry and would soon go the way of many organizations that follow the current trend. In the beginning, its business, when in Lodge assembled, was transacted with dignity and decorum.

The tendency of youth, until seasoned, is to be iconoclastic, to look for something new. Let us set ourselves solidly against the idea of elevating to The East the bright young man who "learns the work" before he is grounded in The True Principles of Freemasonry. It is as important, if not more important, that we shall transmit unimpaired the true Principles of Freemasonry to posterity as that we shall keep Ritual in its purity.

MASONIC LEAVEN

Freemasonry is a little leaven working in the world's meal, and though the results may be almost imperceptible, they are observable by the discerning mind. Its reactions are on life in every phase. In putting Brotherly Love in the forefront of its principles, it means that each man who comes into this great fellowship should become so imbued with it that he will be overflowing with love towards others. It is not, therefore, he alone who gains, for others share in his benediction, for Brotherly Love takes on a thousand forms. When genuinely cherished, it makes the individual life, the home and every relationship of life beautiful.

—Masonic Record.

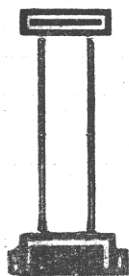
FRIENDSHIP ONE OF FINEST FRUITS

It is generally agreed that one of the finest fruits of Masonry is friendship. If we review our days and years in the field of Masonry, we instantly mark our experiences by various friendships formed over the years.

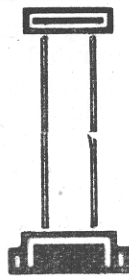
Acquaintances are easily made, and many, aside from our Masonic association, grow into abiding friendships. However, there is a definite reason for the solid foundation upon which Masonic bonds are made and increased. Men who have in common the gifts of Masonic teachings, who share alike in such a glorious adventure, who take sacred obligations at the same Altar, lay the groundwork for enduring friendships, and of such fibre that they have a spiritual strength beyond the power of description.

Men who keep before them the ideals of a Universal Religion, men not bound by the chains of edicts and dogma, but governed only by the dictates of conscience, men who are true to their government and just to their country; men who are ever conscious of their threefold duty to God, to neighbour and to self; men who do not practice deception — such men are the rightful claimants to rich and wonderful friendships.

—Masonic Messenger.



Between the Pillars



MASONRY STRIVES TO IMPROVE INDIVIDUALS

Of what benefit has Masonry been to the world in the last two hundred years, or practically, since the formation of the Grand Lodge of England in 1717?

We are reminded "No institution was ever raised on a better principle or more solid foundation, nor were ever more excellent rules or useful maxims laid down, than were inculcated in the several Masonic lectures." The greatest and best of men have been encouragers of the art, and have never deemed it derogatory to their dignity to level themselves with the Craft, to extend its spirit and privileges and patronize its assemblies; not only in this, but in all great nations.

From the several Lodges a Grand Lodge was formed in England in 1717; Ireland, 1725; Scotland, 1736; Germany, 1740; Holland, 1757; Sweden, 1759; about this time or a little later, the Grand Lodge of France. But the nature of the institution in France was such that later, intercourse with it was forbidden. A Grand Lodge was formed in Italy, in 1803; Denmark, 1855; Greece, 1867; Egypt, 1872; and Hungary, 1886.

It is recorded that the first Grand Lodge in the United States, independent of the Grand Lodge of England, was formed in Pennsylvania in September of 1786.

The great object of Masonry is to teach the restraint of improper desires and passions, the cultivation of an active benevolence, the promotion of a correct knowledge of the duties we owe to God, our neighbor and ourselves.

The great tenets of a Mason's profession are Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth; and in order that men may practice these to the glory of God and the good of humanity, he must exercise continually, the cardinal virtues of Temperance, Fortitude, Prudence and Justice.

These are the fundamental stones in the structure of Masonry, and they unite men of every country, sect and opinion, and conciliate true friendships among those who might otherwise have remained at a perpetual distance.

Speculative or Symbolic Masonry with all its moral teachings, is not a religion, not a church, not a hierarchy, not an obligarchy, but a progressive science. This being true, has enabled it to reach men regardless of financial standing or religious belief. Its teachings have enabled men to put aside petty differences and stand together for the common good of all. Its influence

has steadily increased during the past 200 years and with time, this influence is gaining momentum. Masonry stands for morality, education and liberty; in fact, for everything that helps man to be wiser and better and consequently happier.

No institution built upon such principles can help being of great benefit wherever dispersed throughout the globe. It might be of immeasurably greater benefit if Masons generally would study more carefully its lessons and live more and more consistently by its precepts.

Masonry has been persecuted, but has risen above its persecutions. It has had its trials but these have, in the past, had a refining influence. As an Order, we seem to have an enviable history. When we look backward only, we might feel proud of our attainment; when we look forward, we are humbled. The mountain-side is not half scaled. When we look down we grow giddy with the height we have reached; but when we look up and see the summit as far removed in appearance as if we had not begun to climb, our dizzy pride leaves us. The philosophy, the science, the civilization of the future will excel ours as ours has the past.

When we meditate on the benefit of Masonry to the world, we realize that, not in the name of the Fraternity have these benefits and influences radiated, but through the Masonic understanding of the individual members. We are at times led to wonder why the Masonic Fraternity does not go on record for this or that issue. It does, but in a more subtle way. Each Mason having taken his obligations, having studied well its lectures, and then living up, so far as he can, to the standard of a just and upright Mason; is in a far better position to advance the tenets of our great Fraternity for the good of humanity than could possibly be done in the name of the Order.

It is not vain glory that Masonry seeks; it is better men, more general education, and just government.

Does the Fraternity of Free and Accepted Masons intend to live? To stand the test of advancing civilization? To be as great or a greater benefit to the world in the next 200 years than it has been in the past? Then each and every Mason must adhere more closely to the teachings of Masonry in his daily life. They must so imbibe the lessons taught in the Lodge, in the Study Club and all other branches of Masonic education, that when out in the world, when vital issues arise, they will act as a unit for general betterment of mankind.

Many Brother Masons are inclined to take the position that there is nothing that they as individuals can do. Remember that the strength of structure depends not alone upon the cornerstones, but upon every stone in the building.

—Bro. W. E. Gaily in Masonic Historiology.

See pages 146-149 for the complete list of your Grand Lodge Officers.