



Grand Lodge Bulletin

Editor: Sam Harris, P.G.M.

The Value of a Lodge Meeting

Tonight is the regular meeting of my Lodge, and I am going, Just as I have for so many nights over a period of 30 years, because I feel that the lodge meeting has a definite value to me.

Throughout our ritual and ceremonials, we are instructed to cultivate the human mind, and indicate the purest principles of morality and virtue. In other places we are told "The object of meeting in the lodge is of a two-fold nature—social intercourse and moral instruction". This is interpreted to mean that our regular meeting is interpreted to mean that by our regular meeting together, we improve our minds, by inducing the habit of virtue, and strengthening the fundamental principles of our order, brotherly love, relief and truth.

Every individual is born with an innate desire to improve his condition in every way possible. By naturing and cultivating this spark within us, we improve as individuals and we become more useful to the human race. By repetition of this cultivation the desire grows, and the habit of virtue i.e., always looking for the good side, is well developed also. This repetition strengthens the habit and thus by frequent meetings we prepare ourselves for the solution of problems that beset us day by day in our usual vocation. By placing foremost in our minds the contemplation of man's problems and the study of their solution, in the light of the Great Light, we are thus lead down the winding paths of virtue.

To one who has the habit of virtue well formed, will from the force of that habit choose the proper solution to his problems, even if there be great difficulty and doubt. Habit becomes second nature, and a good Freemason may depend upon for the selection of a course of action which will prove most beneficial to his fellow men. Thus we are prepared to be the leaders among men by shaping our words and actions to conform with the Golden Rule; and by promoting a benevolent brotherhood among our neighbors.

It is the lack of such brotherhood that cause the great troubles of the world today. Selfishness, greed and suspicion take the place of brotherly love, and prevent peace and harmony

within as well as without our country. In Freemasonry there is ever present a great power for good, and by good I mean advantages for the many, not special privileges for a few. Freemasonry is a world permeated with the untamed spirit of selfish rivalry, teaches its members a universal brotherhood. Freemasonry has the background, the history, and the philosophy which if studied and applied by each individual Freemason to his manner of living, would completely solve all differences among ourselves, and prepare the way for a solution of the world problems.

Our lodge exerts its beneficent on the individual member, and through him to the rest of the world. Our great teachings are directed to the formation and improvement of his character. better.

We are taught to take good men and make them

We therefore attend lodge regularly that we may partake of the inspiration which is engendered by the association of men of similar ideas of our place in the world.

An individual cannot stand still. He must grow and advance, or deteriorate. It is the regular lodge meeting that encourages each and every one of us in the pursuit of happiness, that we may be happy ourselves and communicate that happiness to others. Freemasonry, over a period of years, fortifies and crystallizes the desire to live a life of service, encourages the individual to be productive, rather than destructive. The advantages of meeting with agreeable and friendly brethren in the lodge room are known to all; especially is this true of the social and friendly values, for we are told it is good for brethren to meet together.

Social intercourse has been a prominent part of Freemasonry and is as old as Freemasonry itself. The Junior Warden is instructed to superintend the Brethren while at refreshments. The human race has great need of a happy social life. There is most pressing need for us to learn to live in a friendly and brotherly fashion with our fellow men, in order that there may be peace and harmony, man with man and nation with nation.

In our masonic meetings we are taught to obey and respect law and order, not so much

by word as by the regularity of our conduct and dignity of our meetings. We recognize the responsibilities of our conduct and dignity of our meetings. We recognize the responsibilities of those that govern as well as the duties of those who are governed. From the pleasant surroundings and happy associations of our meetings, can be and should be developed, the joy and appreciation of meeting with our fellow men and the realization of what it means to dwell in harmony and brotherly love.

These are strenuous times for every individual, be his station what it may. Men and women are searching for a solution to many problems, problems not new by any means, but many of them dressed in new clothes. Problems that are annoying and bewildering to us, much as they were to our forefathers. Our young people seem to be out of step with the times, and have difficulty in selecting a way of life that is satisfactory to them and that will go hand in hand with their fellow men. Certainly our pattern of life has changed rapidly and is changing day by day. What tomorrow holds for us as individuals or as a nation, no one knows, but let us face the future with fortitude, prudence, temperance, and justice. We cannot despair, we cannot give up hope, nor can we just sit on the side and let the world go by. We must be alert, and we must be prepared, for our place in our way of life. If we do not, others probably with less desire for promoting the progress of our less talent and less training, and certainly with race, will, with much enthusiasm, take the leadership.

We desire to help each and every one to develop his talents, energy and ability that he may have more of what we call comforts and necessities for this life. In short, we desire every man to have a free and full life; to live as he wishes, and if he has learned well, the lessons of the lodge, that life will include service to his fellow men.

Freemasons cannot have any sympathy with those who would do away with the individual, and so regiment mankind that each one would be a cog, an impersonal cog, working in slavery to the few who hold the reins of power through brutal force. If we were to uphold such a manner of living, we would be going against all the tenets and teachings of our craft, and our attendance at the lodge meetings thus become a mockery. The most cherished freedoms that we possess have been the freedoms for the individual; those fought for and won by our forefathers. Once upon a time, many hundreds of years ago, groups of men were generally controlled by an individual. He often owed his position to his birth or even to the power of his paid soldiers. Often, and generally, he had no interest in his vassals, other than their ability to fight his battles and to furnish him with the comforts of life. Then came the period when man demanded from their leaders more freedom for the pursuit of their own lives, and less confiscation that they too might have some com-

forts for themselves. Once this principle was established the individual gained many freedoms; this is especially true of the Anglo Saxon world, where our forefathers have worked to improve our lot and handed down to us a grand and glorious heritage of so great and good freedom. Just think what some of those freedoms are. We free to associate with our fellow men in church, can read, see and hear what we choose. We are or school, or government, and we may work for what we believe is good government, free from corruption and graft. We have the freedom of communication and travel, we can work and play without fear. We have the security and the protection of the common law, which is so sadly lacking in so great an area on this globe. These things are our very life. They are the fundamentals of Freemasonry, and the struggle for the preservation and promotion of our freedom places a duty on every individual Freemason, on every lodge, and on every Grand Lodge.

In the beautiful light of Freemasonry and under the beneficent influence of the great principles that it teaches, we are imbued with a spirit of service which exceeds that of our forefathers, and which makes us happy and we communicate that happiness to others. That the progress of the human race may be ever forward and upward is the contribution of every regular lodge meeting.

"Let us then be up and doing,
With a heart for any fate,
Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labor and not to wait."

M. W. Bro. W. A. Henry, M.D.,
Past Grand Master, Alberta

It is with regret we announce the death on March 13th last of M. W. Bro. W. R. Simpson, Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of British Columbia. Bro. Simpson was Grand Master in 1940-41 and Grand Secretary since 1944.

He will be sadly missed by all who had the pleasure of knowing him and we extend to his family and to the M.W. Grand Lodge of British Columbia our sincerest sympathy.

**"At last the Reaper's unrelenting hand
Has cut the cord
And resting gently in a brighter land;
Our brother's soul has gained—
As God had planned—
Its just reward."**

S.H.

A good listener is not only popular everywhere, but after a while he knows something.

Selected.

GRASS

Lying in the sunshine among the buttercups and dandelions of May, scarcely higher in intelligence than the minute tenants of that mimic wilderness, our earliest recollections are of grass; and when the fitful fever is ended and the foolish wrangle of the market and forum is closed, grass heals over the scar which are descent in the bosom of the earth has made, and the carpet of the infant becomes the blanket of the dead. Grass is the forgiveness of Nature—her constant benediction. Fields trampled with battle, saturated with blood, torn with the ruts of cannon, grow green again with grass, and carnage is forgotten. Streets abandoned by traffic become grassgrown like rural lanes and are obliterated. Forests decay, harvest perish, flowers vanish, but grass is immortal. Be-leagured by the sullen hosts of Winter, it withdraws into the impregnable fortress of its subterranean vitality and emerges upon the first solicitation of Spring. Sown by the winds, by wandering birds, propagated by the subtle agriculture of the elements which are its ministers. It bears no blazonry of bloom to charm the sense and servants, it softens the outline of the world. with fragrance or splendor, but its homely hue is more enchanting than the lily or the rose. It yields no fruit in earth or air, and yet, should its harvest fail for a single year, famine would depopulate the world.

John J. Ingalls.

RUBBISH OF THE TEMPLE

The symbolism of the Rubbish of the Temple is missed by many Master Masons for the very reason that they themselves are so buried in the rubbish of everyday affairs, activities, and carefully built up goings and comings that they have not the time to unearth from the ruin of the superfluous and scintillating gems with which Masonry abounds.

How many of us take time to dig and delve into the hidden mysteries? How many, again, try to improve ourselves by getting something more than the superficial and evident things of the Craft? It is, indeed, a rare man who can find and dig some of the mineral wealth of our life with mental, moral and spiritual manna to help wipe away the bitter taste of the will-o-the-wisp materialistic substance which just eludes him, and makes his life miserable in its elusion.

Exchange.

During the past few days the writer has seen no less than four Receipt cards for dues which did not bear the members signature. It is suggested that all members sign their Cards immediately they receive them.

S.H.

He that fancies himself very enlightened, because he sees the deficiencies of others, may be very ignorant, because he has not studied his own.

Charles W. Fossell, P.G.M., New York

What Can You Tell a Candidate for Masonry?

Just what can you tell a candidate, or a prospective candidate before initiation?

The question has exercised the minds of Freemasons for many, many years; it has lead to many discussions, in Lodge and out; many feel that if the proposer knows his candidate properly there is no need to tell him anything.

An answer to this question was printed in the "New Zealand Craftsman." It has much to recommend it, so it is reprinted here.

1. Freemasonry consists of a body of men banded together to preserve the secrets, customs and ceremonies handed down to them from time immemorial, and for the purpose of mutual, social and moral improvement; they also endeavor to cultivate and exhibit brotherly love, relief and truth, not only to one another, but to the world at large.

2. Freemasonry offers no pecuniary advantages whatever, nor does their exist any obligation nor implied understanding binding one Mason to deal with another nor to support him in any way in the ordinary business relations of life.

3. Freemasonry teaches us to remember our common origin; it also distinctly enjoins us to respect all social distinctions, so that while some must rule, others must obey and cheerfully accept their inferior positions.

4. Freemasonry has certain charities, but it is not in any sense a benefit society, nor is it based upon calculations which would render this possible. The charities are solely for those who, having been in good circumstances, have been overtaken by misfortune and adversity.

5. Freemasonry distinctly teaches that a man's first duty is to himself, his wife, his family and his connections, and no one should join the Order who cannot well afford to pay the initiation fees and subscription to his Lodge, as well as to the Masonic charities, and this without detriment in any way to his comfort or to that of those who have any claim upon his support.

6. Freemasonry recognizes no distinction of religion, but none should attempt to enter who have no religious belief, as faith in a Supreme Being must be expressed before any can be initiated, and prayers to Him form a frequent part of the ritual.

7. Freemasonry therefore demands that everyone before offering himself as a candidate should be well assured in his own mind:

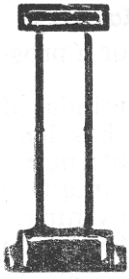
That he is willing to express a belief in a Supreme Being.

That he sincerely desires the intellectual and moral improvement of himself and his fellow creatures, and that he is willing to devote his time, his means, and his efforts in the promotion of brotherly love, relief and truth.

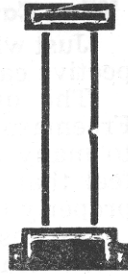
That he seeks no commercial or pecuniary advantages.

That he is able to afford the necessary expenditure without injury to himself and connections.

The Masonic Club Journal.



Between the Pillars



A LITTLE LEAVEN

Masonry is not theology. Masonic membership requires belief and trust in God but does not indicate what form that belief shall take. The word theology results from combining the Greek forms, "theo," meaning God, and "logy," meaning a doctrine or theory. Therefore, theology means a doctrine or theory of God. There are thousands of theologies in existence. Masonry does not attempt to judge or rate them. Beyond recognizing that God as the Supreme Architect of the Universe, Masonry does not go. It does not speculate on, theorize about or seek to prove who He is, what His appearance is, nor what His ultimate purpose may be.

In the marvelous works of creation all about us, terrestrial and celestial, Masonry sees evidence of His mind and being. In man himself gifted with superior powers of thought, reason and moral sense, we behold a special creation made for some high purpose. Indications of that purpose we find not only in the Bible, which we accept as the Great Light, but also in manifestations of it in the daily living of men.

From these sources we learn and are convinced man is intended to be a moral, mental and spiritual image of his Creator. The work of Masonry is designed to assist members in their efforts to attain and maintain this ideal regardless of whether they believe man was created perfect and fell from the estate or is slowly evolving to it from an imperfect form.

We know from an examination of history and from observation of current affairs mankind as a whole is still far from reflecting the image of Deity. Wars, poverty, hatreds, conflict, hunger, suffering and want are all man-made. We do these things to each other and condone or excuse them for one reason or another. But whatever the reason given, our moral sense, a faint image of our Creator, tells us they violate the divine principles of justice, honor, truth and charity. Our group acts demonstrate a lack of faith, justified or not; a purpose of personal gain, at the expense of others if necessary; a set determination for power at whatever cost; the security and advancement of group interests no matter what the sacrifice.

All of this grows out of world-wide refusal to recognize the essential brotherhood of man from the Creator's view and permits us to slay and destroy our fellow creatures when ever this

seems desirable or necessary. And because we have so far lost, or failed to attain the image of the Creator, there seems to be no remedy for it; nor will there be one until that real purpose of creation has been achieved.

The evil lies, to some degree, in each individual human heart. National policy, habit or custom, national standards and final action is nothing but expression of massed individual thinking or opinion. No governments on earth are strong enough to send nations into war to destroy each other if the people refused to do it. But when inflamed by anger or misled by wicked propaganda all people can be forced to do this ungodly thing because the image of the Creator has been obscured and they are driven to the level of fighting beasts.

Obviously, then there is little hope for reformation in the motives or actions of nations until these have been improved in individuals. This has been a Masonic truth preserved from ages lost in the mists of time. Instead of attempting to dominate nations, their leadership or to influence their laws, Masonry throughout its long history has endeavored only to help men find and know the truth of their own creation and the reason for their being. Given a proper understanding of his place and purpose in creation, normal man develops an increasing desire to fit himself for it.

This may help to explain why Masonry, although much older than any nation or organization in existence, has never moved upon the world stage as a powerful force in political or secular affairs. Freemasonry being in itself a revelation of truth, must function in harmony with divine law. Every man is a separate entity, a free moral agent with the right of choice. Therefore improvement of the race can only come through betterment of individuals composing it. Thus, Masonry down the ages has sought to benefit the masses of men by revealing the truth of brotherhood through influencing and helping individuals.

This is the basic principle expressed by St. Paul when he said to the Corinthians, "Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?" And by Christ when he said: "The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, hid in three measures of a meal, till the whole was leavened."

Freemasonry is leaven—not dynamite.

Bro. M. A. Stillwaugh in the Masonic Chronicler.

MAKE YOUR INFLUENCE FELT

Let your Masonic Lodge be a beehive of worthwhile activity in your community, so that its wholesome and vigorous influence may be felt beyond its temple walls. Let us practice a form of Masonry that is warm and vibrant, tolerant and human.

Charles W. Fossel, P.G.M., New York