



Grand Lodge Bulletin

Editor: SAM HARRIS, P.G.M.

THE MISSION OF MASONRY

One year ago it was my privilege to write a few lines for the Grand Lodge Bulletin. In that article I tried to give a short resume of the Foundations of Masonry. I pointed out how beautiful it was that we should use the emblems of the builder — the oldest art of humanity — as the basis of our Order, that has no other aim than the upbuilding of humanity in Faith, Freedom and Friendship. I would like, in this article, to try to connect this beautiful idea to our present day Masonry.

We saw the old working mason, the operative mason building the Pyramids of Egypt, the cities of Babylon, the Temple of Solomon, the Columnades of Greece, the amphitheatres of Rome, and the wonderful Cathedrals of Europe. We saw him carrying stones, mixing mortar, fashioning the walls to erect a place to worship, but the real home of the soul cannot be built with brick and stone, and the day came when he laid aside his stones and became a builder of another kind, using truths for tools and ritualistic drama for designs to build that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. And so, on St. John the Baptist's day in that famous inn in the city of London — The Goose and Gridiron, in the year 1717, the organization of the Grand Lodge of England was consummated, and Freemasonry as we practise it today, came into being.

Much could be said, if space would permit, of this Mother Grand Lodge of the English speaking race, of its foundation, of the formation of its Constitution and Rituals, of its development in England and its ramifications to other parts of the world, of its difficulties and trials, and of the wonderful power for good it has been to the people who have come under its benign influence.

I have touched lightly on the foundations of Masonry, the history — both legendary and authentic — endeavoring to show the connection between the operative and the speculative, and now we must put our thoughts to the study of Speculative Masonry, to try to find out what it is and what is its mission in the world. We are all familiar with the definitions in both the York and Canadian Rituals. In Arnold's 'History and Philosophy of Masonry' it is defined

as Friendship, Love and Integrity. Another definition has it that Masonry is a science engaged in the search for Divine Truth. In a word then, we might say that Masonry is a worldwide fraternity of free and devout men whose mission it is to make men friends with one another, to refine and exalt their lives, to make the world a better place to live in.

Masonry is not in any sense a political party. To the man who labors under the delusion that mankind can be made better by passing restrictive laws and counting votes, it has nothing to offer. It permits no politics among its members when in Lodge. In every case in history where its members dabbled in politics within the institution, Masonry lost its effectiveness, and to a large extent, disintegrated. Neither can Masonry be looked upon as a Church unless we use the word 'Church' in the broad sense, to mean what Ruskin did when he wrote "There is a true Church wherever one hand meets another helpfully, the only Holy or Mother Church that ever was or ever will be". While Masonry is not in any sense a religion, it must be said that it is deeply religious. At our portals the man who would associate with us must first profess his faith in the Great Architect of the Universe. Upon our altars lies open the Holy Bible, the Rule and Guide of Faith, and we are told to study its inspired pages to learn how to live. The basic principle that underlies all Masonry is founded on the belief and the understanding of the Brotherhood of Man and the Fatherhood of God.

It will now be in order to refer to the Lodge itself, of which there is a common notion that it is the home of some mysterious secret order whose aims are also supposed to be some deep secret policy or teaching. In reality, the truth is that it has no secrets as its teachings are published in many books for any who care to read them. Its ceremonies of initiations are performed in secret or seclusion, but this is done, not to hide the truth, but to teach it more impressively. The signs, words and grips act as a kind of universal language, and still more as a gracious cover for sweet charity, making it easier to help a fellow man in sad circumstances without hurting his self respect.

Masonry and the practice of it is essentially internal. It works quietly in the individual; it tries to inculcate in its members the great truths of life so that they will be able to practise its noble precepts in their daily lives; and when all men live up to those ideals its mission will be fulfilled and its work will be done. Perhaps never before in the history of mankind has there been more need for men of good character, which is the most potent force in the world today, and the one that will win out in the long run.

God give us men. A time like this demands
 Strong minds, great hearts, true faith and
 ready hands;
 Men whom the lust of office does not kill;
 Men whom the spoils of office cannot buy;
 Men who possess opinions, and a will;
 Men who have honor; men who will not lie;
 Tall men, sun crowned, who live above the fog
 In public duty and private thinking;
 Men who can stand before a demagogue
 And damn his treacherous flatteries with-
 out winking.
 For while the rabble, with their thumb-worn
 creeds,
 Their large professions and their little
 deeds,
 Mingle in selfish strife, lo! Freedom weeps,
 Wrong rules the land and waiting Justice
 sleeps.

*R.W. Bro. W. H. Jackson,
 Senior Grand Warden, Alberta.*

AN EDICT FROM THE M.W. GRAND MASTER

It has come to my notice that a chain letter is being circulated amongst the brethren of this jurisdiction at which I am greatly surprised and disturbed. This sort of thing is entirely unmasonic and a breach of the Grand Lodge Constitution. I cannot speak too strongly against this practice and order that it be discontinued immediately.

W. F. Empey, M. W. Grand Master, Alberta.

NEW LODGE

Evergreen Lodge U.D. was instituted in Edmonton on Monday, evening, September 17th last by the Grand Master, M.W. Bro. W. F. Empey who is one of the Charter Members, assisted by R.W. Bro. J. S. Parker, D.D.G.M. of Masonic District No. 3 and other Grand Lodge officers. This lodge will serve the Jasper Place district in West Edmonton. Under the guidance and leadership of the W.M., V.W. Bro. A. J. C. Lauder of Acacia Lodge No. 11, our new lodge is assured of being a very successful, their fellow members of the Grand Lodge of Alberta wish the members of Evergreen Lodge every success and extend to them their sincerest good wishes and fraternal greetings. Their progress will be watched with interest.

S. H.

FREEWILL AND ACCORD

There is one peculiar feature in the Masonic institution that should commend it to the discerning mind — Masonic membership should be sought by the aspirant, and never should be solicited or offered by any member, under any circumstances. In some organizations, honored institutions in themselves proselytising is the proper thing. But not so with us; quite the contrary. Whoever seeks admission to our ranks must first be prepared within himself. Not only must he become endowed with the necessary moral qualifications, but he must come also entirely uninfluenced by friends and unbiased by unworthy motives. For this is a landmark of our Order. And nothing is more irritating to a good Mason than to see this landmark violated by a well-meaning but misguided Brother. For — make no mistake about it — it has been, and still is, often violated. Without a doubt, some Brothers thoroughly enjoying their own membership, and in a misguided zeal to increase membership of the Institution, persuade a friend to come and partake and share the pleasures they themselves enjoy. Any Mason who so misunderstands the true policy of our Institution should be instructed by older and more experienced Brethren that it is absolutely against all of our laws and principles to ask any man to become a Mason, or to exercise any kind of influence over the minds of others — except by Masonic example and precept — by the observance of which they may be induced to ask admission into our ranks. We must not seek members; we are to be sought. And even though this were not Masonic law, policy alone would dictate adherence to the voluntary usage. We need have no worries about suffering from lack of membership. Our danger lies in the too ready acceptance of undesirable material for membership. When too little attention is paid to the proper selection of candidates, the Institution will suffer as a result, for the tree is known by its fruit. There can therefore be no excuse for the practice of persuading candidates, and every hope of safety in avoiding such a practice.

We must not seek aspirants! Rather, we must be sought by them.

The Masonic World.

The sacred rights of mankind are not to be rummaged for among old parchments or musty records. They are written, as with a sunbeam, in the whole volume of human nature, by the hand of Divinity itself, and can never be erased or obscured by mortal power.

Do not lay things too much to heart. No one is really beaten unless he is discouraged.

—Lord Avebury.

He who influences the thoughts of his times, influences all the times that follow. He has made his impress on eternity.

—Elbert Hubbard.

HERE AND THERE WITH THE OLD SECRETARY

I went back East some time ago to attend the twenty-fifth anniversary of my old lodge of which I was a charter member. It was well worthwhile for I had the pleasure of greeting old comrades some of whom I had not seen in over twenty years.

While there I spent an evening with one of their past masters, a man whose petition came into the lodge while I was junior deacon. Naturally, we talked about my old lodge in particular, and of Masonry in general.

He told me that, in his opinion, Masonry had become a bit lax in investigating candidates, and he recalled that when he petitioned, that the committee assigned to him went over him with a fine tooth comb and when they left him he wondered whether he would ever get to be a Mason. "Now-a-day," he said, "it seems we have more of an attitude of 'Open the Door, Richard' and, as a consequence, men are coming into our fraternity that I don't think register up to our standards."

When I came back home, what he said came back into my mind and I began to wonder if he was right or wrong. It is true that our fraternity is growing and it is true that there are times when so many petitions come into a lodge that a master has a difficult time selecting committees. But be that as it may, every investigating committee has a job to do and a job that should be well done.

I have always felt that a Committee of Investigation should be just what the name implies, i.e., a committee that investigates. How thorough it does the job is a matter of conscience. In practically every case the committee in giving a report is honest and sincere in that report, whether the report is favorable or not. At least that is the way I have found them, but now and then something crops up that makes me wonder if the committee, in addition to being honest and sincere, has been thorough enough.

Men have brought in petitions and committees have discovered that the petitioner is ineligible. On the other hand committees have brought in favorable reports on men, that luckily we found out in time were ineligible.

Then again I have felt certain that a committee that has brought in a favorable report did so because they lacked gumption to write unfavorably on it. I couldn't prove this, but I have felt in my heart that they themselves have cast an unfavorable ballot.

There are two things that I think a Mason should be particularly careful of. One is never to sign a petition for any man unless he actually feels that that man will be a credit to the Craft. The other is that if he is on an investigating committee and receives the slightest inkling that everything is not just all right to run the thing down to the end of the road. You owe this to both the candidate and to your lodge.

AT REST

Our Grand Lodge has recently suffered a great loss, two Past Grand Masters having passed to that bourne from whence no traveller returns. M.W. Bro. Judge John Ainslie Jackson passed away in Lethbridge, Alta. on October 1st age 76 years and M.W. Bro. Victor A. Bowes passed away in Winnipeg, Manitoba on September 29th age 64 years, both had been in failing health for some time.

M.W. Bro. Jackson was born in Seaford, Ontario on March 25th, 1875 and served us as M.W. Grand Master in 1914-15 and was a member of North Star Lodge No. 4, Lethbridge. He was widely known as a District Court Judge retiring in 1945 after serving 32 years on the District Court Bench, he was also an ardent sports enthusiast. As Grand Master he was privileged to constitute no less than 7 lodges and one other lodge was constituted by his personal representative, he also granted dispensations for 4 new lodges, truly a remarkable record.

M.W. Bro. Bowes was born in Toronto, Ontario on June 29th, 1887 and came West to Calgary with his parents in 1891 receiving his education in the Public and High Schools of Calgary. At the outbreak of the war in 1914, Bro. Bowes joined the 103rd Regiment and proceeded overseas in 1917 with a draft from the 191st Regiment later transferring to the 50th Canadian Battalion. He was severely wounded on September 2nd 1918 which resulted in a long and painful period of hospitalization. He was in the service of the Canadian Pacific Railway from the age of 16 years until the time of his death excepting for the time he served his country. He was one of the founders of Zetland Lodge No. 83 in Calgary being the lodge's first Junior Warden. He was W.M. in 1916. Bro. Bowes served us as Grand Master in 1934-35. As Grand Master he made one exceptionally striking recommendation: — That the Grand Lodge of Alberta formally declare its claim to Jurisdiction over all that part of the North West Territories lying West of the Fourth Meridian of Longitude. This recommendation was accepted by Grand Lodge and the results have been exceedingly encouraging, Alberta now has one Chartered Lodge in this Territory.

*"They do not die who leave their thoughts
Imprinted on some recording page;
They pass, but the work they wrought
Lives on from age to age."*

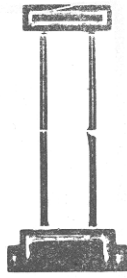
S. H.

And always remember that Masonry is more interested in receiving good men than it is in receiving a quantity of men.

Masonic Home Journal, Kentucky.



Between the Pillars



THE RISING TIDE

Someone has said, "While the non-Masonic world is ignorant of the secrets of Masonry, it is well aware of what is expected of a Mason in the way of behavior."

For two centuries and a half, Masonry has proved a forceful power in the lives of millions of men. Time and records show that they are better men and better citizens and more adaptable to cope with any condition or situation because of their Masonic teachings and understanding of their fellow man.

In our present-day world of turmoil and strife there are many who may wonder how all of this confusion and unrest affects the teachings and principles of Masonry. The controversial and disturbing circumstances which now confront all of us are not regarded as impassive conditions. On the contrary, they present a challenge far from being apathetic — but rather one of grave concern for our country and our fellow man.

Whatever the conditions of the world, Masons have long learned to adjust their means of coping with them. They have always joined forces to further the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man and although this united spirit has not been too successful in eradicating or correcting the present state we are in, there is no doubt however, that they will continue to pursue and track down the cause and then help to raise the standards for the cure — which eventually will bring about peace and good fellowship among all people.

We must all rise with the tide, however, this can only be accomplished through a united spirit and fellowship with others. If this spirit is lacking, only misery to human beings and to nations will result.

Through our acts and teachings of Masonic principles we have proved that the success of our republic is that peoples of different origins and various customs and beliefs can work and live together in harmony and peace. In a non-Masonic publication, recently we read that Masonry and its teachings are denounced because of its insincerity of purpose. It also stated that Masonry promotes religious indifference which is the greatest enemy of every Christian church. Further it states if it makes no difference what a man believes, why believe anything? If it makes no difference to what church a man belongs, why belong to any?

There is no need to elaborate on this rash statement because we alone know that we can

live with our fellow man despite race or creed. We know, too, that within our organization we recognize all faiths — provided the individual believes in it for himself. We advocate no change in church for any member. We offer no substitute for his church. We do, however, offer him a continuation of his belief, united with other beliefs that God is our strength and refuge. He alone guides us in the paths of righteousness and the ways of peace toward all men. The strength of a republic lies in mutual agreement on that measure of compromise which encourages general participation in the democratic processes and not in the consummation that there is only one church and that church alone knows what is right.

In my opinion, one cannot preach brotherhood from the pulpit and then condemn others because of their affiliations with organizations as well as other churches. A good democratic association — whether it be a church or otherwise — would talk and teach love of our country, admiration for the men who developed this nation, loyalty to the Constitution and then willingness to support it and the laws and ideals that have grown up under it. They would preach the spirit of brotherhood, freedom of speech, freedom of worship, and freedom of rights for everyone regardless of faith.

There will always be religious differences of opinion as long as we permit this religious intolerance. Churches should be a matter of personal choice, not of necessity of compulsion. Condemning organizations who recognize members from all churches is not the way to meet the problems of this present day. Personal religious name-calling is un-American and no doubt has a tinge of socialism about it. There seems to be enough confusion in this world without the churches participating in criticism of others who do not belong to one faith. Surely that is not God's way. We are His children regardless of our creed, and no man or church can condemn us for this belief.

When religious indifferences become a part of our struggle for survival, we don't deserve to survive — but rather be washed away in the rising tide.

Editor, Masonic Chronicler.

Decisions of the Grand Master of Canada in Ontario, approved by the Grand Lodge, were (1) that the practice of nominating candidates for office in a Lodge election is irregular, and (2) that the Traditional History is a part of the Master Mason degree and must be given whenever the Master Mason degree is conferred.

—Indiana Freemason.

Just to be good, to keep life pure from degrading elements, to make it constantly helpful in little ways to those who are touched by it; to keep one's spirit always sweet, and to avoid all manner of petty anger and irritability — that is an ideal as noble as it is difficult.