



Grand Lodge Bulletin

Editor: SAM HARRIS, P.G.M.

INFORMATION and GUIDANCE

I believe it is a common feeling among newly initiated Freemasons to have the desire to know more about the fraternity into which they have been received. We have been so occupied with degree work that there has been little time to give more than just a glance at the history, philosophy or teachings of the greatest fraternity of all time. This glance has, however, been sufficiently enlightening to arouse the curiosity of the new Brother, along the lines: "What is this Freemasonry? Whence did it come? What are its aims and purpose?"

This enthusiasm on the part of the new Brother should be encouraged, and aided by the master and officers of the Lodge, as well as by the more experienced brethren. I have often thought it the duty of the sponsor or even the coach to see that ways and means of more instruction are made available to the brethren as they progress in knowledge.

Their enthusiasm is real, and if not given encouragement, or is pushed aside, it will cool and finally disappear. Once that happens, something is lost that may never be regained, or if regained, is done so with much greater difficulty and probably to a lesser degree. Therefore the time to strike is while the iron is at white heat, when most is accomplished with the least effort.

Our members, in common with all mankind, desire to be up and doing. They feel they want to belong and to progress. This characteristic of the human being is illustrated by the numerous things attempted by our people of today. They take on one thing after another, until they find a place for themselves, until they satisfy that desire to belong — to be doing — to be somebody. Probably this was the thing that prompted them to seek membership in the Freemasons. It is our duty to see that there is opportunity for such activity within our Lodge. Then they will be active members, and their interest in the lodge will be progressive.

An observer might consider the rite of initiation as a colorful ceremony, but an experienced Freemason knows that it is far more than that — it is a ceremony with a purpose. He knows that Freemasonry is a way of life, a mode of living which arises from within, and helps shape his life for all time.

Freemasonry is not something which comes in a packet, which lies waiting at the end of the third degree. It is present within every good man and is aroused, directed, and expanded as the candidate progresses in knowledge. It will reveal itself in his life and his work. It will blossom forth as he receives knowledge and inspiration.

It is only by actual practice that a Freemason can progress, and progress increases knowledge. Freemasonry has an unique method of making its teachings known. It teaches by allegory and symbols. There is a simple and ancient form of imparting truth. It is effective and universal, both as to time and place, so that the application of the truth taught is just as good now as it was hundreds of years ago, and can be applied as well in the Eastern hemisphere as in the Western. It is as good to the average man as to the most learned; each may draw his own interpretation and in his own way.

Therein lies the great appeal of our ritual. If its teachings had been given in ordinary text book form, they would have been of little interest to some groups and universality would have been lost.

Freemasonry places all of its great truth in allegory and symbols, and contents itself with keeping these ever before its members, leaving them to work out the details and applications for themselves, knowing that truth has its own appeal, and makes its own impression on the individual.

The duty of every newly initiated brother, then, is to study the ritual and to become familiar with the allegories which teach the great

truths of Freemasonry, and from which he must draw his own conclusions. It thus follows that regular attendance and attention to the ritual is the first step in the study of Freemasonry. As an aid to the study of this, the three degrees, some lodges use a series of three small booklets:

1. Entered apprenticed Freemasons.
2. For the use of the Fellowcraft.
3. For the use of the Master Mason.

These simply explain the work the candidate has recently completed. They may be procured from our Grand Secretary.

Having completed this first step, many brethren are lost as to what to do next. They are unfamiliar with the numerous paths that lead to a working knowledge of our Freemasonry. I have been requested many times to recommend books that will tell about Freemasonry.

Then comes our Grand Lodge Bulletin. As a source of information, and inspiration, it is hard to surpass. Easily read and understood, it still has much to do to arouse interest in subjects touched upon, interest sufficient to send the reader in search of more information along the line of the paragraph.

Nearly all lodges have some books in a library. Often the Key is lost, it is true, but still the books are there. One very common one, and also very useful, is the Concise History of Freemasonry, by Robert Freke Gould. This is a very good text on the history of our Fraternity, and is thorough enough to give one a working acquaintance with the origins of Freemasonry.

A Manual for Masonic Instructors and Students, published by the Grand Lodge of Canada in Ontario, contains a great deal of information and guidance for one seeking knowledge of the work. It was primarily intended to be used by an instructor for preparing his work for a class. This is the ideal way of assisting newly created Freemasons, and I would recommend it to all lodges. There are many well qualified Brethren who could spend twenty minutes with our Brethren in the banquet room before lodge opens, to discuss some aspects of the Craft's teachings, and the interpretation of them, or the history, or the philosophy. In studying the history, it is good to start with one's own lodge and work backwards. The Proceedings of Grand Lodge gives much valuable information.

After one has become acquainted with our history in outline, and desires further light on a particular period or subject, he should consult the History of Freemasonry — Its Antiquities, Symbols, Constitutions, Customs, etc., by Robert Freke Gould, Barrister-at-Law. This is an English point of view.

Mackey's History of Freemasonry, by Robert Ingham Clegg. This is from an American's point of view.

A handy reference work to have at hand

when seeking concise information on a special subject is: Encyclopedia of Freemasonry, by Albert Mackey. There are two series of small booklets of great value to the new student of Freemasonry:

1. The British Masonic Miscellany.
2. The Little Masonic Library of the Masonic Service Association of the United States.

From here on the student should be able to select such reading as he desires.

There are hundreds of good readable books which treat various Masonic subjects in a variety of ways. I have used and enjoyed the works of Rev. J. F. Newton, H. L. Haywood, and A. S. McBride.

I have written this with the hope that it will lessen the burden of many of our brethren who are trying to help the newer members, and that it will guide these younger brethren along the pathway of knowledge.

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

FREEMASONRY IN JAPAN

Freemasonry is coming into its own in Japan, a country where, previous to World War II, only foreigners were accepted for membership in Lodges which existed there. These Lodges were under the jurisdiction of Scotland and England Grand Lodges, and by agreement with the Japanese government, only foreigners might become members. But today a new day has dawned and Japanese are being accepted into the Fraternity, marking one of the greatest steps in the history of that country.

The establishment of a Lodge at Okinawa (Okinawa No. 118) marked the first step taken by the Grand Lodge of the Philippines in extending its jurisdiction. Then came Saipan Memorial Lodge at Saipan, No. 121; Armed Forces Lodge No. 123 was established at Guam, and finally Far East Lodge No. 124 was constituted at Yokohama, Japan. Recently two other Lodges have been given dispensations, one at Tokyo (Tokyo Lodge No. 125) and Square and Compass Lodge No. 126 at Tachikawa.

Among the recent initiates in Japanese Lodges were Tamotsu Murayama, of the Nippon Times, and Prince Lee, of the royal family. Our new Brethren are said to be very receptive and appreciative of Masonic teachings.

Freemasonry will do a great work in Japan, and our Brethren of the Grand Lodge of the Philippines should be congratulated upon the very constructive job which they are doing, a job greater than that accomplished by any of their Sister Grand Lodges in America or Europe.

— Royal Arch Mason

I know not what the future hath
of marvel or surprise,
Assured alone that life and death
His mercy underlies.

— Whittier

AT REST

It is with sorrow and sadness in our heart that we record the passing of our beloved King George the Sixth, who passed away in his sleep at his Sandringham home where he was born 56 years ago, on Wednesday, February 6th last. Although he had been in poor health for some time, his passing was a great shock to all of his loyal subjects, he will indeed be missed. He was buried at Windsor on Friday, February 15th, solemn memorial services were held throughout the whole world. All over the world the people are saying "He was a good man." He gave a shining example of love and leadership to all people; he gave of himself un-sparingly at all times and his life was an example to us all.

King George the Sixth was an active Freemason being a Past Grand Master Mason of the Grand Lodge of Scotland and an Honorary Past Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of England. He was beloved by members of the Craft the world over, both in the British Commonwealth and other Countries. Freemasons in the Jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Alberta were numbered among his most loyal subjects and we humbly wish to express our sincere sympathies to all the members of the Royal Family and to our new Ruler, Queen Elizabeth the Second, our undying loyalty and sincere devotion and may the Most High bless her with good health and endow her with good wisdom and knowledge that she will reign over us wisely and well for many, many years to come.

LONG LIVE THE QUEEN

*"Beautiful life is that whose span
Is spent in duty to God and Man."*

S.H.

THE SQUARE OF VIRTUE

A society without standards will be a society without stability, and it will one day go down. Not only nations, but whole civilizations have perished in the past, for lack of righteousness. History speaks plainly in this matter, and we dare not disregard it. Hence the importance attached to the Square of Virtue, and the reason why Masons call it the symbol of their Craft. It is the symbol of that moral law upon which human life must rest if it is to stand. A man may build a house any way he likes, but if he expects it to stand and be his home, he must adjust his structure to the laws and forces that rule the material realm. Just so, unless we live in obedience to the moral laws which God has written in the order of things our lives will fall and end in wreck.

— Josph Fort Newton

His Majesty The King gave us the key to what that is in his message that I read out earlier. These were the King's words: "The world today does require spiritual and moral regeneration," and he went on to express his conviction that Freemasonry could play an important part in that vital need. It can do so if, as individuals, we Freemasons put into practice the principles we profess. It would be a fearful thing if England, like Ancient Rome, lost her character through a lowering of moral standards. As Masons we are charged to keep those standards high, and for each individual Mason to do that in his daily life is what the Craft expects of him.

Therefore, in estimating our position today we can add strength and vigour which we claim for Masonry as an organization, the opportunity which lies before each Brother to decide that in his personal life integrity, a spirit of service and brotherly feelings shall distinguish all his dealings with his fellows. So can a Freemason make his contribution to a better world.

— From the address of the M.W. Grand Master,
United Grand Lodge of England.

**TOLERATION**

"I believe that civilization has produced nothing finer than a man or woman who thinks and practices true tolerance. Some one has said that most of us don't think, we just occasionally rearrange our prejudices. I suspect that even today, with all the progress we have made in liberal thought, the quality of true tolerance is as rare as the quality of mercy. That men of different creeds do have fundamental common objectives is a fact one must learn by the process of education. How to work jointly toward these objectives must be learned by experience."

— Frank Knox in *Masonic Historiology*



"The most difficult thing in life is to keep the height which the soul has reached."

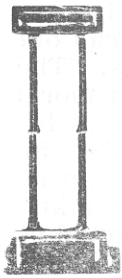
— Rev. David Riddle

LEGEND OF HIRAM ABIF

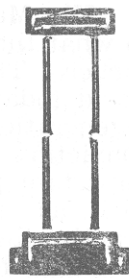
(Continued from Page 28)

Master when I say to you further that it is also a mistake, if not an inexcusable blunder, to treat the drama as a mere mock tragedy or serio-comedy. It is not an ordeal to test nerve and courage, nor is it hazing or horse-play, for Masonry is neither savage nor juvenile. The exemplification of this drama should be as sincere, as solemn and as earnest as prayer; he who takes it trivially, or with perverted humor, betrays the shallowness of his soul.

— *Masonic Outlook*



Between the Pillars



THE LEGEND OF HIRAM ABIF

When one is raised to the Sublime Degree, he is impressed by the tragedy of Hiram Abif beyond all other features of its superb ceremonies, for as the degree itself is the climax of initiation, that tragedy is the climax of the degree. To know and understand it, and to appreciate at the full its profound richness of meaning is something to cherish and value while life lasts.

The great actor, Edwin Booth, said that in all his research and study, in all his close analysis of the masterpieces of Shakespeare, in his earnest determination to make those plays appear real upon the mimetic stage, he had never and nowhere met tragedy so real, so sublime, so magnificent as the Legend of Hiram. It is substance without shadow — the manifest destiny of life which requires no picture and scarcely a word to make a lasting impression.

Our understanding should begin with realization that this drama is not intended to be historical but is, instead, ritualistic. We all know that a drama is a conflict between a man and other men or other forces, producing a crisis wherein his fate or fortune lies at stake. We do not mean a play as acted on a stage, which is merely the representation of drama, but actual drama as it occurs on our own lives. If it turns out favorably to the man, the drama is a comedy in that it has a happy ending; if it is adverse and he becomes a victim or a sufferer, it is said to be a tragedy.

Since a ritual is a set of fixed ceremonies which address themselves to the human spirit solely through the imagination, a ritualistic drama does not pay heed to historical individuals, times and places, but moves wholly in the realms of the spirit where time, space and individuals are ignored. The clash of forces, the crimes and fates of the human spirit alone enter into it, and they hold true of all men, everywhere and always. There was a Hiram Abif in history, but our third degree is not interested in him; its sole concern is with a Hiram Abif who is a symbol of the human soul — yours, mine. It is, therefore, a mistake to accept the drama as history.

The work of Hiram Abif of our legend was engaged to supervise is the symbol of the work you and I have in the organization, supervision and direction of our lives from birth to death. The enemies he met are the symbols of those

lusts and passions which in our own breasts, or in the breasts of others, make war on our characters and lives. His unhappy doom is that which befalls every man who becomes a victim to those enemies — to be interrupted in one's work, to lose mastership over one's self, and at the end to become buried under the rubbish of ill fame, defeat, weakness, disgrace, evil habits, scorn and misery. The manner in which he was raised from that dead level to a living perpendicular again is the same manner by which any man may rise from self-defeat to self-mastery. The Great Architect, by the power of Whose word Hiram was raised, is the same God whose help we also need to raise us out of the graves of defeat, or evil, or death itself.

Why is it that, in the exemplification of this drama, one is required to participate? Why could he not just view it as a spectator? Simply because it is his drama and not another's; no man can be a mere spectator of that drama, since it takes place in his own soul; it is intended to teach him one of the secrets of a Master Mason, that the soul must rise above its own internal enemies if he is to be a Mason in reality as well as in name, for the reality of being a Master Mason is to be master of one's self.

Why did Hiram's three enemies come from within his own circle and not from without? Because the enemies to be most feared by the soul are always from within — its own ignorance, lusts, passions and sins. Our Great Light reminds us it is not that which has ability to kill the body that we need most to fear, but that which has power to destroy the spirit.

Why, after Hiram was slain, was there so much confusion in the Temple, so much anarchy among the Craftsmen? Because the Temple is the symbol of a man's character, which crumbles and falls when the soul, its architect, is rendered helpless; because the Craftsmen are symbols of our powers and faculties, which fall into anarchy when not directed by the will at the centre of our being.

Why does not the Lodge attempt to explain this ritualistic drama at the conclusion of the Degree? Because it is simply impossible for any man, or group of men, to discover the truth for another. The tragedy of Hiram Abif, therefore, cannot be explained — each Mason must learn it for himself. The best he can obtain from others are hints and scattered suggestions. But if he will print the legend indelibly upon his mind, he may recall it and it may serve him when he is at grips with his own internal and personal enemies. He will be wiser and stronger for having the guidance and light the drama has given him.

I have said that it is a mistake to accept the drama as history. Please bear in mind the admonition and warning of our Grand

(Concluded on Page 27)