



Grand Lodge Bulletin

Editor: SAM HARRIS, P.G.M.

The World's Need - Our Opportunity

Elbert Hubbard once said "If I can supply you a thought you may remember it or you may not. But if I can make you think a thought for yourself, then I have indeed added to your stature."

If I remind you, my brethren, of the need for and the opportunity of Freemasonry in the world today, and you practice with increased fervor the tenets of our Order, then indeed have we together added to the welfare of mankind.

We are banded together to teach, to inspire and to stimulate; and, in every enterprise calculated to improve the physical, intellectual and moral condition of people, Masonry has taken a conspicuous and efficient part. In this era of world revolution, never perhaps has Freemasonry had more opportunity for the practice of its principles, nor the masses in all countries greater need of leadership.

The history of the human race is one of conflict between and among nations, communities, families and individuals; and, even after two world wars within a quarter of a century, the world stands today at the crossroads. In this year, one of the most dangerous on human record, the future of mankind will be affected largely by forces beyond our direct control: one in Russia, the other our friendly neighbor to the south; the one with a fixed policy apparently, the other in the throes of making up its mind, not as to objective but the best means to attain this. With two so varied ways of life, one striving for domination, the other seeking existence for its freedoms, there must be resultant confusion, discord, misery and insecurity in the world.

Up to recent years we have assumed that our form of democracy, our economic system and our living habits were the norm of human behavior to which all other peoples were inevitably moving as fast as possible. We have been so reared and have so lived through the generations that we can barely conceive argument against this fixed belief. We have accepted it for so long that it may come to us as

a shock that perhaps after all this may not be true. There may be many peoples who envy our living standards and accept our aid, yet who equally with ourselves believe that the way of life to which they have been accustomed is for them better; and they may not be prepared to accept our civilization. This may make us consider whether democracy is entitled to lead free peoples, even by persuasion and argument, in the path we believe best for their own good.

Again there are millions living in squalor, discomfort and degradation who are not free to make any choice in their manner of living, but who would gladly espouse our way of life if they could or dared. They have fallen into misfortune from which nothing but a long term policy of continued consideration, firm fairness and excellent example can extricate them. We must hope those who hold them slaves will eventually be influenced by the Sermon on the Mount.

There are also the combined forces of hunger, want and insecurity which put fear into the hearts of people, and create dread of worse catastrophe. This affects masses in many countries. Is it possible to remove this fear and its causes from these people by holding before them our high standard of living and suggesting they tighten their belts and make good? As citizens of one of the two countries with the highest living standards in the world, can we give needed leadership until we are ready to suffer at least some of the world's daily hardships?

What then is the objective and the real meaning of our civilization? Is it a mere appetite for more and still more goods, or an opportunity to share our goods, our democracy and its genius with mankind? What is the purpose of our civilization: profits, wages, high living standards; or something more valuable for which everything must be risked?

Are we to abandon our spiritual ideas and the simple faith of democracy, and retreat to

the old system of "root, hog, or die", or shall we practice with greater assiduity the sacred tenets of our Order: Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth. Brotherly Love! Perhaps that term may be simply defined as "right relations between men". Our experiences have taught us that difficulties such as the world now faces are not solved by wars, but by the saner and stronger forces of morals and ideas. It is a question of right and wrong that counts, and the answer lies in the individual mind of the individual citizen.

We are concerned with principles — not programs.

History, with its record of the rise and fall of many nations of wealth and magnificence, should clarify our vision, and make it clear that if this civilization of ours is to endure as other civilizations have not endured, it is above all necessary that men should strive to find some common ground where all may meet, irrespective of race, creed or condition. Masonry has that broad basis of principle upon which men of every race, country, sect and opinion may unite. What we have as Freemasons, the world has been trying to secure for centuries. Basic in our teachings — that which holds us together in the most tenuous yet the strongest bond between men — is mutual respect and faith in each other.

We, then, must dare to hold to that faith in the absolute rightness of our ideals and in the necessity for this true fellowship. We must be courageous enough to live under its influence and make it a guiding force in our lives, never ceasing to believe that honor, integrity, justice and mercy are man's noblest strivings.

Even though our voices cannot be heard very far, and as individuals we may not be influential in larger world affairs, we must do everything we can to add to the world situation that which it lacks to counteract hatred, lack of friendship and prejudice. That we must do as individuals. As brother Masons we can share confidence in each other. As citizens of a community we can manifest good will toward one another and give voice to those sentiments and thoughts which tend to bring men together into one common bond.

Civilization has the right to expect leadership and good things from us. We must appreciate that we have the God-given obligation to lead the way to a return to the practice of the Golden Rule. If we fail in this it will be a sad day for humanity. Let each of us take an inventory of himself and reconsecrate his life to the service of mankind. This is an individual responsibility and each one of us has present opportunity to discharge it.

"May war and hatred and greed die within nations and peoples, and from the travail and darkness of this day in which we live, may a new world arise — a world of peace, security and happiness — the Brotherhood of Man."

—M.W. Bro. C. C. Hartman, M.D.,
Past Grand Master, Alberta.

AT LABOR

Labor is one of the most beautiful features of the Masonic Institution in that it teaches not only the necessity, but the nobility of labor. From the time of opening to that of closing, a Lodge is said to be at labor. This is but one of the numerous instances in which the terms of Operative Masonry are symbolically applied to Speculative; for as the Operative Masons were engaged in the building of material edifices, so Free and Accepted Masons are supposed to be employed in the erection of a superstructure of virtue and morality upon the foundation of the Masonic principles which they were taught at their admission into the Order. When the Lodge is engaged in the form and ceremony of initiation, it is said to be at work. Initiation is Masonic labor. Labor is the most important word in Masonry; for this and this alone does a man become a Freemason. Every other object is SECONDARY or incidental. Labor is the accustomed design of every Lodge meeting. But such meetings do not always furnish evidence of industry. As Masons, we labor in our Lodges to make ourselves a perfect building, without blemish, working hopefully for the consummation when the house of our earthly tabernacle shall be finished, when the LOST WORD of divine truth shall at last be discovered and when we shall have been found by our own efforts at perfection to have done God service.

"To labor is to pray"; or, in other words, "LABOR IS WORSHIP".

—Masonic News.

GRAND LODGE

The Forty-seventh Annual Communication of Grand Lodge will be held in the Central Masonic Temple, Edmonton, on Wednesday and Thursday, June 11th and 12th next. It is desirable that all members of Grand Lodge be in attendance as matters of importance will be discussed. All Past Masters, Masters and Wardens have a vote in Grand Lodge and are requested to attend. One of the W. Master's duties is to see that his Lodge is duly represented at Grand Lodge.

—S.H.

To have a good friend is one of the highest delights of life; to be a good friend is one of the noblest and most difficult undertakings.

—The Craftsman, Miami Beach, Fla.

Yesterday is but a dream and tomorrow is only a vision. But today well lived makes every yesterday a dream of happiness and every tomorrow a vision of hope. Look well, therefore, to this day. Such is the Salutation of the Dawn.

—From the Sanskrit.

Truth is so great a perfection that, if God would render Himself visible to men, He would choose light for His body and truth for His soul.

—Pythagoras.

MORE ABOUT MASONRY

It is useless to try to prove by logic or by demonstration the immortality of man. We believe it, there is an end to it! And we do not believe it because we have proved it but we try to prove it because we already believe it. It is hope, a kind of inward certainty which finds its support not in this fact or in that, but in the cast and color or life as a whole. It rises up into our minds like an exaltation from all our thoughts, all our experiences, all our dreams, as the odor that drifts across a summer field distills from numberless unnoted plants. We are never so puzzled as when we are challenged to give a reasoned proof of this hope; and we are never so unreasonable as when we cease to believe it. Men everywhere and always have believed it not because priests have taught them or because scientists have found out the secret of it, but because life itself has taught them, and it is something that the universe itself is always whispering to them.

—Bro. H. L. Haywood in Iowa Grand Lodge Bulletin.

"Go forth into the busy world and love it, interest yourself in its life, mingle kindly with its joys and sorrows, try to do what you can do for others, rather than what you can make them do for you, and you will know what it is to have a friend."

—Selected.

LONG TIME REQUIRED FOR DEGREES IN ICELAND

In these days when candidates often are rushed through the degrees at minimum time, and when there are some requests, usually refused, for shortening the time between degrees, it is of interest to learn how leisurely the candidate works his way through the degrees in Iceland. Those who picture Iceland as a place of nothing but ice may be astonished to learn that there is Freemasonry in Iceland.

A Brother stationed in Iceland for a time writes the following comment: "A Brother in our armed forces visited a Masonic Lodge in Iceland and witnessed the first degree ceremonies of the Danish ritual. Being anxious to see their second degree ceremonies, he asked when the candidate would be advanced. He was told it would be at least six months, because it would take that long for the candidate to acquire the necessary knowledge of the meanings of the ritual to merit advancement."

—Maui Scottish Craftsman.

The eyes of the world cannot see a system of morality, but they can see its advocates. The words, "That man is a Mason," may be a benediction or a sneer, depending on you and on me.

—The Freemason, Canada.

This issue of our GRAND LODGE BULLETIN completes our 17th year of publication.

examination requires of us the answer to this reputation: are we good neighbors, with all this implies; square employers; good employees; in short, do we "play the game" with and among those with whom we live and work? Unless the precepts of the Craft are diffused, by personal example, to the world at large, then our ritual becomes merely a ceremony with delightful phraseology and suggesting beautiful thoughts, but leaving a strong tinge of cant; for the fruit of a man's personal religious convictions, if really sincere, should manifest itself in his life with his associates. Sanctimoniousness is repugnant to a Mason, but to live quietly and uprightly is the very bond and strength of brotherhood in the Craft. This is where the silent influence of the brethren could permeate society and gradually raise mankind throughout the universe from the savagery of the animal instincts of the jungle to that ideal we, as Masons, believe to be the will of the Great Architect of the Universe, viz. the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man.

Then shall be fulfilled the vision of that patron saint of Freemasonry, St. John the Evangelist, as recorded in the Apocalypse, "Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."

—Malcolm J. Brodie,
Past Grand Steward.

NEW LODGE. Temple Lodge U.D. was instituted by the Grand Master, M.W. Bro. W. F. Empey, in the Central Masonic Temple, Edmonton, on Friday evening, May 19th. There were approximately 200 brethren present, including several present and past Grand Lodge Officers. Temple Lodge U.D. is a "daughter" lodge of Edmonton No. 7, who sponsored the new lodge. The new lodge has 36 charter members, and under the guidance of W. Bro. E. G. Ellerton, P.M., a successful career is assured. They have the good wishes of all their brethren in the Grand Jurisdiction of Alberta.

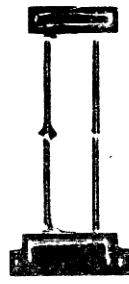
—S.H.

YELLOWKNIFE LODGE No. 162, North West Territories, was visited by the Grand Master, M.W. Bro. W. F. Empey, accompanied by R.W. Bro. H. E. Howard, Deputy Grand Master, M.W. Bro. George Moore, P.G.M., Grand Secretary, and M.W. Bro. Sam Harris, P.G.M., on Wednesday evening, May 8th. The first degree was conferred on one candidate in an excellent manner and the Grand Master was very pleased indeed at the progress made by Yellowknife Lodge and the splendid manner in which they were carrying on and fulfilling the traditions of Freemasonry. Yellowknife being located on the north shore of Great Slave Lake, this visit necessitated a plane trip of approximately 1,500 miles, Yellowknife being 750 miles north of Edmonton, Alberta.

—S.H.



Between the Pillars



THE UNIVERSALITY OF THE SCIENCE

*"Their pleasant dwelling place. Thrice happy men,
And sons of men, whom God hath thus advanced,
Created in His image, there to dwell!
And worship Him."*

—Milton.

At the commencement of our Masonic progress we learn that the way before us, perplexing and difficult as it may appear, has been traversed by generations of wise and thoughtful men, who in solitude have pondered over the spiritual relationship between man and his Divine Creator.

Speculative Masonry has ever had, among its students, men of divers races and color. It does not stress the virtues or supremacy of any particular nation or people holding a philosophy to be withheld or disseminated as they may see fit, for its teachings and precepts should be and are universal, and like the Volume of the Sacred Law belong to mankind in general. The Ancient Charges instructed its members "therefore, no private piques or quarrels must be brought within the door of the Lodge, far less any quarrels about religion, or nations, or state policy, we being only as Masons of the universal religion . . . We are also of all nations, tongues, kindreds and languages, and are resolved against all politics, as what never yet conduced to the welfare of the Lodge nor ever will."

It is true, some races are more backward than others, but it is believed God will, in His own good time, unfold to them His divine purpose, maybe using as His instruments people who have been more fortunate in receiving the benefits of His spiritual enlightenment and commands. But we must not be so arrogant as to suggest to these people, materially less fortunate, that we alone know the truth and possess the keys to the gates of Heaven, for we must humbly remember that only the Most High is the Light of the World.

Then what is this Institution to which we so proudly belong and so jealously guard, on what is it based, and why do we claim it to be universal? It is based on the firm belief in the Supreme Being and that He has revealed His will to man, and on the necessity of man's strict obedience to the moral law.

Now the moral law is open to several interpretations. For instance, the Concise Oxford Dictionary defines it "The requirements to which right action must conform". Mackey quotes Grove, System of Moral Philosophy,

London, 1749, as follows: ". . . the will of God, relating to human actions, grounded on the moral differences of things; and because discoverable by natural light, obligatory upon all mankind". This second definition is undoubtedly more in conformity with the accepted view of the universality of the Science of Freemasonry.

However, to the average Mason in Alberta the Moral Law may well be summed up in the Ten Commandments as given by God to Moses and delivered to the Children of Israel, and which were later confirmed by our Divine Master, who also gave a new commandment to his disciples "that ye love one another". Nevertheless, no brother would be so rash as to assert that our Society is the only institution with this belief and that Masons consider themselves more righteous than those outside the Craft. Far from it — in fact humility is emphasized in all its teachings, but because of man's innate moral weakness this association of men bound together by a common obligation and having a belief in the highest ideals or principles should tend to strengthen the character to withstand the fierce temptations of life and thus earn the respect of those among whom he lives. No — self-righteousness is abhorrent to the members of the Craft.

The art or science of Freemasonry should develop the latent mental and spiritual faculties of its members over and above the animal or physical nature and by its symbolisms widen the understanding of the beauty of the world of nature that lies around them and the absolute dependence of the creature on his Creator. A symbol may be defined as a "design or material object which suggests to the initiate something of the spiritual life of man", or as a signpost directing the initiate to the hidden spiritual truths to be found behind or beyond the design or material object.

That is, no doubt, rather a crude definition and many of the brethren will have a more concise and intellectual interpretation than has been given. However, we are of one mind in the knowledge that we are searching for the Spirit or Truth that has been lost.

While the science or art may be termed universal, it must, of necessity, be confined to those capable of assimilating its truths, hence the strict qualifications required and the searching enquiries made of those desiring to become members and enter the portals of the Order. It would never do to admit all and sundry who have expressed a wish to become Freemasons, as many men are quite unsuitable to receive its moral instructions and participate in the happy, good-natured environment that should at all times prevail in the lodge. There is, therefore, quite a responsibility placed on those of us who are known to be Masons, a responsibility which is carried with us in the everyday world outside the lodge. Strict self-