



Grand Lodge Bulletin

Editor: SAM HARRIS, P.G.M.

What Freemasonry Stands For

Freemasonry, today, is so complex, so many-sided, so varied in its activities, so different in view-point, that it is well now and again, to find out what it really does stand for, to arrive at its proper position in human society, and estimate its influence for good in this great and wonderful world in which we live.

It must be clear to every Mason that Freemasonry does not present itself in exactly the same way to any two Masons; each has a slightly different idea of what it means to him personally — one may be impressed by the outward aspect, the Lodge and its activities, to another the inner meanings that underlies the Rites and Ceremonies appeals most strongly. To some the Lodge is a haven of rest where they may retire for an hours quiet from the rush and turmoil of everyday life, and perhaps there is no better place for restoration of body and mind than an orderly, well regulated and harmonious Masons Lodge. To others the social side for making and strengthening human friendships appeals most strongly, and where can one find better and truer friends than those obtained by the careful selection from the Members of the Masonic fraternity. To others the symbolism of Masonry is the most attractive and prompts them to apply the tenets and principles of the Order to the betterment of their own lives and for the uplift of those among whom they live and labour.

But whilst this diversity is apparent to all Masons, there are certain principles, certain distinguishing characteristics which are acknowledged by and appeal to all Members of the fraternity, and perhaps it may be truthfully said that there is no Society on earth whose principles are more noble, more beautiful or more sublime than those upon which the Brotherhood of Freemasonry is established.

Among other things, Freemasonry stands for TOLERANCE for the opinions and views of others, for each one has a perfect inalienable right to form his own opinions and to hold them

tenaciously. It demands mutual respect for each other's feelings, mutual regard for each other's rights, mutual desire for each other's welfare and mutual regret for each other's misfortunes.

Freemasonry stands for EQUALITY, for there is probably no more democratic body in the world than the Masonic fraternity, alike in its constitution, laws and government. It draws its members from every rank, and from every honorable occupation in which men engage and all must go through the same rite and ceremony to obtain membership to its Lodges.

Freemasonry stands for SELF-RESPECTING MANHOOD, a manhood that rejoices in its freedom, while knowing and accepting willingly the limitations and responsibilities which freedom brings.

Freemasonry stands for FRIENDSHIP for all mankind, no matter what country, language or colour, provided only, that upon examination or inquiry, they are found to be good men and true, obedient to the moral law, and observant of the golden rule.

Freemasonry claims CIVIL AND RELIGIOUS LIBERTY for all men. Perhaps in no respect has the Masonic influence, in days gone by, been exerted to better and nobler purpose, than in the age-long struggle for liberty and freedom in the world. The Masons were ever champions of the oppressed individual and nation, and for centuries past every movement which has had for its object the emancipation of mankind from every form of tyranny, whether civil or religious, has received encouragement and support from the members of the Masonic fraternity. The consistent Mason will never be found engaged in plots or conspiracies against any government based upon the Masonic principles of liberty and equal rights.

Freemasonry stands for BROTHERHOOD. There is a universal craving, a deep-seated urgent longing for a real and genuine Brotherhood of Men, which will promote and establish

good-will, peace and harmony in this sorely troubled world. But what do we mean by Brotherhood and what does it involve? It means putting on one side the primary thoughts of self, and ceasing to struggle solely for our own interest and welfare — recognizing that others have rights as well as ourselves. It means that we acknowledge it as a duty to others, to act upon the square with all our dealings with them, never to take advantage of their ignorance to our own profit, but to deal with them in so honest and straightforward manner as we would wish others, in similar circumstances to deal with us, ever remembering that we are all members of one family whose father is the Grand Architect of the Universe. Brotherhood involves taking the Masonic Principles, inculcated and nourished in the quiet and serene atmosphere of the Lodge, out into the busy world, right into the turmoil of the daily life of humanity, and promptly and intelligently applying them to the uplift of the needy, the oppressed and the downcast, by assisting the weary to carry their heavy burdens, by raising those who have been beaten down in the battle of life, by bringing consolation to those who have lost what little hope they once had and by directing some rays of cheery sunshine upon all who sit in the darkness.

Freemasonry stands for BENEVOLENCE. Perhaps, by nature man is more prone to be selfish than generous, more inclined to get for himself than to give to others, more ready to claim help from others than to sacrifice himself on their behalf. But from our first introduction into Masonry, the duty, the necessity, the praise-worthiness of systematic giving is so constantly impressed upon us, that at length Benevolence and Charity have come to be considered the Distinguishing Characteristic of a Mason's heart. Although our Order is not a Benevolent Society, it is, I believe an indisputable fact, that no organised body of men, in equal numbers, gives or has of late years given so much time and money to charitable and philanthropic objects as does the members of the Masonic fraternity.

Freemasonry exemplifies the DIGNITY OF LABOUR. Our Rituals and Ceremonials have always been referred to as "Work". The duties of the Master and his Officers in the regular routine of the Lodge are just as truly their Work as squaring stones and building churches was the Work of Masons long ago. The Apron which we wear (although adorned with ribbons and emblems almost out of all recognition) was we must remember symbolized from the leathern apron of the worker, the badge of the man who does things. Labour is honourable, and the apron is our outward symbol of our faith in work — for without work there would be no progress.

Freemasonry also stands for a SIMPLE RE-

LIGIOUS FAITH. We have but one Dogma, a belief in GOD — the Grand Architect of the Universe and on this foundation stone we construct our simple religious faith; the Fatherhood of God, the Brotherhood of Man and the Immortality of the Soul, and all those seeking membership in our Order must acknowledge a full and free acceptance of these. Atheists only are excluded. By reason of this simple creed Masonry has been able to attract to its fraternity adherents of every religious faith as pointed out so clearly by Kipling in his beautiful poem, "My Mother Lodge".

And lastly by no means the least important, Freemasonry stands for the exercises of FAITH, HOPE and CHARITY — the three Cardinal Virtues of our Order, the three principal rounds of the ladder which links earth with heaven. Indeed no man can be a true Mason without the exercises of these virtues in his daily life, having Faith in God and His promises, he has also Faith in himself, Faith in his fellow-man, Faith in the boundless possibilities of a regenerate humanity and Faith in the ultimate happiness of mankind. With this Faith in his soul the consistent Mason has hope — Hope for himself, Hope for his fellows, Hope for all mankind, Hope for the present, and Hope for the future, And Charity, (not in the sense of alms-giving) but that perfection of all virtues which adorns the life of a perfect Mason, that too Freemasonry stands for, although each Brother well knows the difficulty of its full attainment in this world of conflict, error, sin and sorrow. To bring help to a suffering humanity, to relieve the distressed in body or mind, to shelter those whom a cruel world has cast out, to throw a veil over the faults and failings of all weak and over-tempted souls — that is the Charity placed before us in a Freemason's Lodge.

These are some of the things for which Freemasonry has stood and still stands, and we must all agree that they are worth living for, and worth working for, with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our mind and with all our strength.

R.W. Bro. W. H. Jackson,
Deputy Grand Master, Alberta.

THE SILENT MASON

The silent Mason is one who lives and acts out his principles in all his intercourses with his fellow man. We believe in Masonry that acts silently. We want no loud cry in the market place nor vain pomp and show. The Mason who tries to live according to our principles without ostentation will be a pillar of strength to the noble institution. The humblest craftsman who has been made a Mason in his heart is worth far more than any number of the distinguished members to whom its teachings are mere verbiage.

The Florida Mason

GUARD YOUR MENTAL DOOR

Why do you lock the door of your house? For security, and also to exclude intruders. You do not admit objectionable and unlovely people.

But how about the door of your mind? Is it open to all the varying thoughts that assail it from every side? Are you as discriminating here as you are with the door of your house?

Since you will be constantly bombarded by thoughts of good, bad and doubtful character, you would be well-advised to give a preemptory challenge to them before giving them hospitality.

Obviously you should be receptive to the best thoughts, but how about negative and evil thoughts that often unexpectedly intrude?

You have the power to expel such thoughts, and your best course will be to do this promptly. Don't dally with an undesirable thought but dismiss it summarily.

It is not easy to keep the mind inviolate, but if you can do it even approximately you will greatly benefit. Much will depend upon your habitual mental attitude toward life.

Begin today to do some mental stock-taking. Analyze your thoughts for the past hour. Were they, on the whole, constructive or destructive, positive or negative, productive or worthless? Frankly examine them and resolve to stand porter at the door of your mind.

In daily complexities of life our thought-stream is constantly being altered and influenced by things happening to us, often without our being fully aware of it. But we can learn to control our thought-stream through vigilance.

Refuse to give allegiance to undesirable thoughts and they will gradually disappear — more and more. As you dwell upon constructive thoughts, they will tend to dominate your mind to the exclusion of opposite thoughts.

It is said that the most important victory will be won in the realm of your mind, hence the vital importance of guarding it.

Do not entertain thoughts that depress you, or in any way retard your best progress. By changing your thoughts you can be liberated from constructing fears. By substituting constructive ideas for destructive ideas, you can uplift yourself into a mental attitude of hopeful expectancy.

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(Continued from Page 8)

of humanity in faith, freedom and friendship. It finds "in the daily round, the common task," its sense of human unity, while its symbols teach those great truths which make for purity of character and the stability of society.

Introduction into Freemasonry makes men tenants for life in the palace of friendship. Clouds may gather and drift by, storm centres

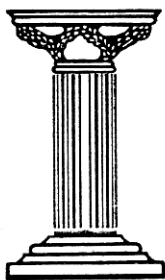
may send forth thunderbolts to pierce nature's wall, but the bond of friendship remains unbroken and becomes stronger as we pass from the summer into the winter of our years. Friendships have been formed within the portals of a Lodge that death only will sever, and despite the hum of a busy world, the ups and downs of life, its joys and disappointments, its sunshine and its sorrow, the friendly greetings at the Lodge makes brighter the sunshine and relieves many a shadow. It is incumbent, therefore, on every member of the Craft to be faithful to the fraternity, and to show in walk and conduct the abiding value of its fundamental principles.

There is further the privilege of mutual recognition and respect.

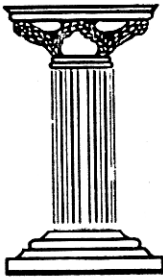
Masonry best serves society and the State by serving the individual. It is in no sense a reformatory, but an agency of moral and spiritual power, using its influence to bless the widow and the orphan, and teaching men everywhere to be just and gentle, generous, and forbearing in a world of feuds, bitterness and sorrow. It permits no politics in its domain, thereby avoiding much strife and rancour. In the industrial and political realm we are rarely ever free from acute problems, since the solution of one often means the creation of another. Masonry avoids these problems of industry and State and yet all the while she is training good citizens, and their quality indirectly influences public life. Whilst it is open to question whether politics corrupt character, there are many instances where high character has lifted politics. The practice of Masonry makes men feel, that knowing and loving each other better, is the surest way to mutual understanding and support. The atmosphere of mutual recognition and respect such as is created and fostered by Masonry, brings men together as men, and enables them to realise the strength of the bond which binds them.

This spirit of friendship and fairness, of democracy and fellowship, man with man, conserves and promotes the interests of humanity. This is the spirit that destroys all hostility arising from social, national or religious differences. It softens the hardness of men's hearts. It heals the haughtiness of the proud and the rich, and breaks down the envy of the poor. It appeals for fraternity not tolerance, for unity of spirit amid varieties of outlook and judgment, but not for uniformity. Masonry does not divide, it unites men, leaving each man free to cultivate his own thought and determine his own pursuits whether in the realms of art, literature, science or religion. In all this, true Masons the wide world over rejoice.

The Ashlar, U.G.L. Queensland.



Between the Pillars



THE RESPONSIBILITY OF MASONIC PRIVILEGE

Entrance into Masonry not only confers on the newly-initiated many privileges which, rightly make for high character and the development of true manhood, but these privileges entail great responsibility on the Brethren admitted into the fellowship of the Craft. The day is rapidly passing when the sum-total of Freemasonry consists in a good dinner and an evening's enjoyment at the close of a Lodge session. Happily, Brethren are coming more and more to realise that the social side of Masonry is the least important, and that their supreme purpose should be to inculcate and spread the high ideals of the Craft, and to encourage one another in translating those ideals into everyday life and conduct.

The principles and tenets of the Craft are of such a high order, that their dissemination can never fail to be of abiding value to the community as well as to the individual. In these days, when there is such widespread mistrust and suspicion prevalent in various sections of society; when, sad to say, the Bolshevich spirit is permeating the mind of a considerable section of the toilers, and when there is a manifest decline in reverence for Divine institutions, for age and authority, it is specially incumbent on members of the Craft to enforce by example as well as by precept, the high aims and ideals of this ancient institution.

Freemasonry has no ministry and consequently no appeal to the morally or socially lapsed sections of the community, it has no mission to the halt, the lame and the blind in the by-ways of life. It was never designed to be a ministry of reclamation from vice, or for the reformation of the prodigal. That is the special mission of Christianity, and is in no sense part of the work of the Craft. Freemasonry is not opposed to Christianity and is not antagonistic to it, but by its genius it is non-sectarian.

We of the British Empire have much pride in our Monarchy, and in all that it means to the Empire, and we delight to know that Masonry is pledged to the safety and security of the British Throne. This is beyond all doubt, and however much its security may be threatened by certain sections of the community, Masonry is standing on guard — "its altar lights, like signal fires, along the heights of liberty, keeping watch." The very existence of

such a great fellowship as Freemasonry may be justly regarded as among the most precious assets of human society — making all good things better by its presence. What does all this mean?

Think of the great privilege this imposes on every member of the Craft in upholding the redeeming ideal of humanity.

Human life is a strange mixture of sweet and bitter. No one can determine the course it will run with an individual, nor can anyone forecast the changes and upheavals it will undergo. It is beset with perils, as well as opportunities, and from beginning to end, as far as concerns this earth, it is full of variations of good and evil, light and darkness, joy and sorrow. Without committing its adherents to any system of credal doctrines, ecclesiastical status of government, Masonry provides a bond of fellowship suited to all types of character and grades of society. The very root and foundation of the order is charity in thought, in word and in action; whilst the fruit and flower of it is seen in its capacity for and practice of soothing calamity, alleviating misfortune, showing compassion to the distressed, and in restoring peace to those of its fraternity troubled and broken in the journey and struggle of life.

The quest and service of this great privilege makes a valuable contribution to the social beauty, welfare and greatness of humanity. This may to some extent explain why men, remarkable in intellect and of outstanding thought and position in every walk of life, have been attracted to its fellowship. Indeed, it stands to its credit that no social order has brought together from every rank of life men so diversified in type, temper, training, status, and achievement, as Freemasonry, and what is equally remarkable, it binds them together by the ties of a great spiritual kinship, making all the time for the exaltation and ennobling of humanity.

Think also of the responsibility of the privilege of this great circle of friendship.

Sincere and seriously minded men who come into the Craft — and the number of this special class is increasing — enter into the enjoyment of a privilege which they do not assume light-heartedly. When the true meaning of Masonry begins to dawn upon them, and in some cases it is months and even years before they realise its true perspective; then the brethren begin to feel their faith exalted, their ideals refined, and their sympathies enlarged. One great authority defines Masonry as: "Friendship, Love and Integrity — Friendship which rises superior over the fictitious distinctions of society, the prejudices of religion, and the pecuniary conditions of life; Love which knows no limit, nor inequality, nor decay; Integrity which binds man to the eternal law of duty." Masonry has, as its aim, the upbuilding

(To Bottom of Col. 1, Page 7)