

Wishing Every Member A Merry Christmas

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Grand Lodge Bulletin

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The Beautiful and Good

"In the elder days of art,
Builders wrought with greatest care
Each minute and unseen part,
For the Gods see everywhere.

Let us do our work as well,
Both the unseen and the seen;
Make the house where Gods may dwell,
Beautiful, entire, and clean."

—Longfellow

By the stream which flows from Bethlehem the flowers of the Beautiful and the Good have always blossomed. Christmas has always been associated with beauty and goodness. Dr. Leslie Weatherhead (England after a visit to Palestine wrote:—"The sheep with their little lambs passed by us on the road. We sat down among the flowers and watched the sun go down behind the little town of Bethlehem. I can see it now. After the flaming colours had died, the sky turned a daffodil yellow, with the towers and minarets of Bethlehem standing out black against it. The evening star shone in trembling glory. The bell from the mosque rang out with sudden music and then was still. One by one, lights peeped out in the historic town. A dog barked, a man shouted. Then followed the stillness and the hush of night."

"O little town of Bethlehem,
How still we see thee lie,
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by." (Brooks.)

Master artists of creative skill through the centuries have sought to place on canvass their vision of the Nativity, the sleeping shepherds on the hills, the angelic host, the radiant Mother and her child, the Pilgrim Magi as they

offered their gold and frankincense and myrrh. These are the intuitive triumphs of genius in heart and mind and hand, — and they have the eternal value of the Beautiful. In the realm of music, a Handel dreams his immortal Oratorio, "The Messiah", and as you listen, the haunting strains of the "Pastoral Symphony" awaken the bells in the Angelus of the Soul, — and they are vocal with the Beautiful. A maker of violins dreamed of an instrument which would be perfect in every part that it might flawlessly breathe forth tones of unearthly beauty.

"God be praised, Antonio Stradivari has an eye that winces at false work and loves the true, and for my fame, — when any master holds 'Twixt chin and hand, a violin of mine, he will be glad that Stradivari lived, made violins and made them of the best.'" (George Eliot.)

And some built cathedrals!
"Place your hands upon the stones the Norman
masons laid
Feast your eyes on lovely things that English
craftsmen made
Stand upon the hallowed ground where Kings
and pilgrims trod
See how men could build when they were
building for their God."

But the Beautiful is always associated with the Good. Christmas welds these two eternal values into one. They are made incarnate in the Christ Child of Bethlehem. Mountain-peak men have always sought for "The Good" as they have followed the gleam. Plato shared in this eternal quest and found in "The Idea of Good" the source of all Truth and Beauty and Goodness. The "summum bonum" (highest good) was the objective of his search and of all

men of good will. But "the Good" is not simply the result of convenience or of passing customs or of successive moves or of that which contributes to the welfare of the State. The "Good" is eternal in its essence and its source, for it is imbedded in the character of God. A sacred treaty between nations can never degenerate into "a scrap of paper". In 1914 as enemy troops crossed the borders of Belgium, the German Chancellor said, "The wrong we are now doing will be made right at the close of the war." No, a wrong can never be made right nor can a right be made wrong. Between the two a deep gulf is fixed.

Now there is a deep and inseparable relationship between the Beautiful and the Good. So closely were they entwined that the ancient Greeks took them into one word, "The Beautiful-Good".

This is Masonry. This formula sums up all the principles and the practice of Masonic lore, "The Beautiful - Good." The Lodge Room in which "the Brothers" meet is beautiful (or at least it should be). It is called "a sacred retreat", a Temple and sometimes a Cathedral. It is in the form of a double cube; the dome is the blue and starry firmament above; the centre is the Volume of the Sacred Law and the symbol of God is nigh. All things speak of the Beautiful and the Good. Enter thoughtfully; tread cautiously; speak kindly. The ritual which comes to us from the remote past is precious and meaningful. May it never be spoken slovenly or carelessly! In some Lodges (and I wish the number would increase), music has a place, — an organ, a choir or a quartette. May I use a specific example? What Mason will ever forget a visit to Empire Lodge, Edmonton, Alberta, on R.C.M.P. Night or on Commonwealth Night at the "Trooping of the Colours"? In Finland, near Helsinki, lives the greatest living composer, Jan Sibelius, — and he is a Mason. He has written the incidental music for the three Masonic Degrees, first produced before an American audience at a programme planned by the American Lodge of Research in 1935 in New York.

But the Beautiful implies the Good. Each reflects the other. Each is found in the inner man. The character of the faithful Mason is symbolized by the plumb-line and the square, the chisel and the mallet, the pencil and the rule. In his heart, there is the Good; in his hand, there is charity to a brother; in his soul, he looks upward to God. "All that is beautiful shall abide; all that is base shall die." Truth and Beauty are twin flowers which spring from a common root. A bad man cannot produce art of the highest kind.

We live in an age marred by the ugly and the evil, where nations are separated by iron curtains and bamboo curtains, — by curtains of hatred, suspicion, cruelty and revenge. Christmas comes to our shaken and shattered world, clad in the beauty of a thousand stars and be-

neath the stars, "ye shall find a Babe wrapped in swaddling clothes and in a manger laid." Behold the Beautiful and the Good!

"Hush all ye sounds of war,
Ye nations all be still,
A voice of heavenly joy steals over vale and hill,
O hear the angels sing the captive world's release,
This day is born in Bethlehem the Prince of Peace.

No more divided be,
Ye families of men,
Old enmity forget, old friendship knit again,
In this New Year of God, let brothers' love increase,
This day is born in Bethlehem the Prince of Peace."
(Draper.)

—Bro. Rt. Rev. A. H. Sovereign, D.D.,
Peace River Lodge No. 89, Alberta.

OUR HERITAGE

Today is but a threshold. You and I cannot dream what lies ahead. There is a Land of Promise in the tomorrow, but it is not ours to pierce the veil and see what lies beyond. Life is an expectancy and it is ever the indefiniteness of the future that makes life really worth living.

We take for commonplace what our fathers could never think to be possible. We cannot conceive the potentialities that lie at our door, yet, when this generation is gone, we will leave to those after us, a birthright, a something yet to be discovered.
—Masonry in Manitoba

The Grand Secretary is in receipt of a communication from the Hon. Minister of Food in London, England expressing the thanks of the Government and the many recipients of food gifts received from friends and well wishers overseas. These gifts were distributed by the Commonwealth Gift Centre which the Hon. Minister advises has now been closed. The Hon. Minister of Food wishes to express the gratitude of Her Majesty's Government and the people of the United Kingdom to all who have at any time contributed.
—S. H.

REMARKABLE RECORDS

W. Brother Samuel W. Sprague, a member of Medicine Hat Lodge, No. 2, celebrates his 94th birthday on October 19th, 1952 and has been a member of the Craft for a period of 70 years and 5 months being initiated on July 6th, 1882 into Corinthian Lodge, No. 13, G.R. of New Brunswick of which Lodge he is a Past Master. Medicine Hat Lodge has another honoured member in the person of Brother John H. Collier who is 94 years and 8 months of age. He was initiated into Medicine Hat Lodge, No. 2 on April 23rd, 1907. Both attend Lodge very regularly. We extend our sincere congratulations to these old stalwarts and may they celebrate many more birthdays. We wish them a Very Merry Christmas.
—S. H.

WHEN IS A MAN A MASON

When he can look out over the rivers, the hills and the far horizon with a profound sense of his own littleness in the vast scheme of things, and yet have faith, hope and courage — which is the root of every virtue.

When he knows that down in his heart every man is as noble, and as lonely as himself, and as vile, as divine, as diabolic seeks to know, to forgive, and to love his fellow man.

When he loves flowers, can hunt the birds without a gun, and feels the thrill of an old forgotten joy when he hears the laugh of a little child.

When he can be happy and high minded amid the meaner drudgeries of life.

When star-crowned trees, and the glint of sunlight on flowing waters, subdue him like the thought of one much beloved and long dead.

When no voice of distress reaches his ears in vain and no hand seeks his without response.

When he knows how to sympathize with men in their sorrows, yea, even in their sins — knowing that each man fights a hard fight against many odds.

When he has learned how to make friends and to keep them, and above all how to keep friends with himself.

When he finds good in every faith that helps any man lay hold of things and see majestic meanings in life, whatever the name of that faith may be.

When he can look into a wayside puddle and see something beyond mud, and into the face of the most forlorn fellow mortal and see something beyond sin.

When he knows how to pray, how to love, how to hope.

When he has kept faith with himself, with his fellow man, with his God; in his hand a sword for evil, in his heart a bit of song — glad to live, but not afraid to die!

Such a man has found the only real secret of Masonry, and the one which it is trying to give to all the world.—Joseph Fort Newton in his book "The Builders".

—*The Builders*

"The greatest asset in any Masonic Lodge is the character standard of the men being initiated today. This standard will determine the lodge of the future. The reason some Masonic Lodges fail can be traced to just one cause — carelessness at the ballot box."

It takes peaceful people to make peace. It is foolish to believe quarrelsome people can establish peace.

—*A. W. Heinle.*

He is richest who is content with the least, for content is the wealth of nature.

—*Socrates.*

LODGE ANNIVERSARIES

On Tuesday, October 14th, 1952, Edmonton Lodge, No. 7, Edmonton, celebrated its Sixtieth Anniversary, on Thursday, September 17th, Quarry Lodge, No. 70 at Redcliff celebrated its Fortieth Anniversary, on Monday, October 27th, Wetaskiwin Lodge, No. 15 celebrated its Fiftieth Anniversary, and on Friday, Nov. 7th, Chief Mountain Lodge, No. 58 will celebrate its Fortieth Anniversary.

These Anniversaries were interesting and largely attended, their brethren in Alberta wish them well and hope they will celebrate many more Anniversaries. Forty, Fifty and Sixty years represent a long time in our young Province of Alberta.

—*S. H.*

WE REAP AS WE SOW

The beautiful precepts of Masonry appeal strongly to the men who are seeking the finer things of life. The value and usefulness of her tenets and the comforting power of her faith have been sources of blessing and delight to countless generations of Masons in all parts of the world.

It is indeed wonderful that men are privileged to enjoy these fine qualities as they endeavor to make their lives worthwhile. However, it must be remembered that they are not something handed down to us without any effort on our part. They do not come to the man who is constantly striving to obtain something for nothing.

It shall be our lot to share the profit and happiness found in Masonry only as we are willing to work for them. We must dig deep into the treasure house of Masonic knowledge and apply in our daily living the truths thus revealed. In this way only can a member of the Craft be truly benefitted, and his life contribute something of worth to the era in which he lives.

—*Orphans' Friend and Masonic Journal*

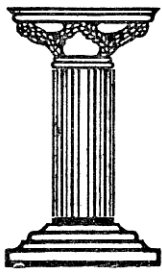
No man is ever cheated out of an honorable career unless he cheats himself. Believe in yourself. Do your work the best you know how and you will not be cheated — your efforts will bless all who come in touch with you.

—*Emmerson*

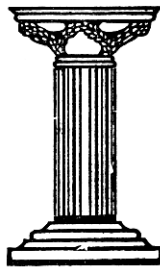
Masonry, taking her wisdom from the ages, says: "Give to your brother the same freedom you ask for yourself. Believe him to be as honest in his opinions as you are in yours; work the clearest visions and strive for the noblest attainments your particular form of belief can conceive."

"Those who expect to reap the blessings of democracy must, like men, undergo the fatigues of supporting it."

—*Thomas Paine.*



Between the Pillars



THE FREE MASON A MORAL BUILDER

The word Mason signifies a Builder and in view thereof a link is found by which Freemasonry is linked — Builders of Character. A Builder is born, not made, and this truth applies to Freemasonry, born not made. Realizing this truth it naturally follows that there must be that gradual development of those facilities by which the acts of life are performed. In discussing this we are led to the important question about the freedom of the Will, for this refers to the relationship between Character and Conduct.

Character is on the whole the most important element in life from the ethical point of view, and much may remain latent in the character which would be necessary to take into account in forming a complete moral estimate of a given individual, for it remains true that the tree is known by its fruit. The good character necessarily expresses itself in good acts of Will. (Mackenzie, Manual of Ethics). In view of these facts and confronted by the fundamental laws of Ethics, we are summoned to review and practise those laws in our own lives, necessitating self examination. It must be fully realized that our vocation as Builders of Character is not limited to the monthly meetings of the Lodge in general, neither is the aim just a Brotherhood, it includes more, we are destined to be Builders in the lives of those whom we contact in the profane world. Our duties as such are unlimited, our aims, to influence our fellow creatures, demanding true sincerity and loyalty in the execution of our duties as Freemasons.

The vital questions for everyone are: is there that deep sense of duty in and outside the Lodge? Is the standard of life set by Freemasons' exemplary, worthy of being copied and accepted by those in the profane world? Is the behaviour beyond criticism? As members of that great and grand Brotherhood amongst men it must be our aim at all times and places to be exemplary. In order to attain this goal the G.A.O.T.U. of the Universe has entrusted us with His infallible word as the only foundation for that great and grand structure of Freemasonry, and in addition we are blessed with our Ritual by which we are conducted how to live and act so that our deeds and acts may be in conformity with those Divine Teachings the most sublime of all moral laws. Complying with those teachings and executing our duties

with that deep sense of our responsibility, Freemasonry will, though criticized, justify its existence.

As moral builders let us take to heart to re-examine ourselves submitting ourselves to the test according to those ethical principles as the only fundamentals for a true and upright character. Let us in all sincerity take to the task to which the G.A.O.T.U. has destined us, devoting our time to studying the finer arts of the Craft, building and developing our characters accordingly so that we may become and always be moral builders in the fullest sense of the word in the lives of those whom we contact. The task entrusted to us is unique, we are called to be builders in life's sojourn. We are not destined to live in isolation far from that, every moment of our existence we come in contact with our fellow creatures, and every contact made is an opportunity granted to set the example how to live and act; an unjustified word or act, does more harm in the lives of our fellow men than ever can be realized. Bear in mind that every Freemason is a marked man. The profane world is always on the lookout and always prepared to criticize, and to our regret we must admit that their criticism is to some extent justified, this being due to the fact that the example set by Freemasons was not exemplary of being copied, neither in accordance with the noble and elevated teachings of Freemasonry, and here again the truth prevails, "A tree is known by its fruit." Does this not signify the lack of knowledge, the weakness of character, or will power and sincerity? Take heed never to be the instrument of disappointment, rather the instrument of encouragement, how to live and act in this great arena of life. Let us remember a friendly smile; a sincere hand shake and a kind deed penetrate deeper than any bullet, they penetrate the soul of humanity. An upright and devoted life is always exemplary of being copied; it is and ever will be the source of true inspiration. Let this be our aim, our ideal, then and only then will the profane world cease criticizing, and enquire to know more about the Divine and golden rule: do unto others as you would like them to do unto you.

Lives of great men all remind us,
We can make our lives sublime,
And when parting leave behind us,
Footprints on the sands of time.

—Bro. Rev. N. J. Dekker, District Grand Lodge of South Africa

SOMEONE HAS SAID

"Masonry redirects the attention of any thoughtful man to the fundamental questions of his being and his destiny. Surely, he is dull of soul whose spirit is not quickened by this experience, and whose heart is not warmed by this great fellowship!"

A straight line is a lesson in economy.

—A. W. Heinle.