



Grand Lodge Bulletin

Editor: SAM HARRIS, P.G.M.

SMUG COMPLACENCY

IN our day, when many age-old and time-honoured organizations and institutions are falling into decline, Masonry continues on its way, impervious to change. Age has not weakened its wide foundations, nor shattered its columns, nor marred the beauty of its fair proportions. The Initiate is early told: "Masonry is ancient, having subsisted from time immemorial, and is honourable because, by a natural tendency, it conduces to make all those honourable who are strictly obedient to its precepts. Indeed, no institution can boast a more solid foundation than that on which Freemasonry rests — "the practise of every social and moral virtue", and, to so high an eminence has its credit been advanced, that in every age monarchs themselves have been promoters of the art; have not thought it derogatory from their dignity to exchange the sceptre for the gavel; have patronized our mysteries and joined our assemblies."

Having so ancient a background and so honourable an existence, it is conceivable how we, in this day and generation, might adopt an attitude of complacency. Unfortunately, complacency is an enemy of growth and progress and must be shunned as an evil force which, if allowed to gain sway, would detract from our influence as a power for good, and consequently lead to decay.

We are all familiar with the Biblical story of the Pharisee and the Publican going up into the Temple to pray — the Pharisee thanking God he is not as other men are, extolling his own virtues, and claiming the special favour of Almighty God. The Publican, on the other hand, humble and contrite, cries out in agony of soul, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner!" but it is recorded the Master of Men said: "I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other, for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

The complacency of our Members at

Masonic gatherings and lodge meetings is cause for alarm. There seems to be a tendency to isolate ourselves from the everyday world, with its multiplicity of problems affecting the lives of Mankind — to content ourselves with the Constitution, the Ritual and our own self-sufficiency — to bask in the sunshine of reflected glory from the past achievements and accomplishments of our great Fraternity, forgetful of the fact that any organization, no matter how glorious its achievements may have been in the past — if it would justify its existence today — must ever press forward to new heights of attainment, new realms of service.

It is a regrettable condition which shows that only 25% of our members in city lodges attend meetings, and that includes the special nights where there is a large attendance. Therefore, the number of ordinary members present at regular lodge meetings is appallingly small, especially when we take into account the officers and past masters who attend in their official capacity.

How can we hold aloft the great torch of Freemasonry when a large percentage of members do not even attend meetings?

Goethe, a great philosopher and a great Mason, said that talent may develop in solitude, but character is created in society. It is the fruit of fellowship. Genius may shine aloof and alone, like a star, but goodness is social, and it takes two men and God to make a Brother. We are tied together, seeking that truth which none may learn for another, and none may learn alone. If evil men can drag us down, good men can lift us up. No one of us is strong enough not to need the companionship of good men and the consecration of great ideals. Here lies, perhaps, the deepest meaning and value of Masonry — it is a fellowship of men seeking goodness, and, to yield ourselves to its influence, to be drawn into its

spirit and quest, is to be made better than ourselves.

It is unfortunate that so few of our Members avail themselves of attendance at lodge meetings where they can associate with the Brethren and thus receive inspiration by association with them. It is not enough to become a member of a Masonic lodge. If we are to receive the benefits which Freemasonry has to impart, we must practise the tenets and teachings of our Fraternity. We must associate together with others. We must press forward to greater service in amelioration of the miseries of Mankind.

If we become active in the work of Freemasonry, we will automatically lose our complacency and realize the terrific responsibility that rests upon us who have seen the Light.

Imagine not that you will become indeed a Mason by learning what is commonly called the "Work", or even by becoming familiar with our traditions. Men outside the fraternity judge of the character of Freemasonry by the character of the men who compose it. These men do not read Masonic books, they read us, and Masonry rises or falls in their estimation according as they estimate the lives of those who compose it. They judge the tree by its fruits. They learn to know it by the living example of those who are connected with it. It should not be necessary to warn us of the need of practising these high principles in our daily lives and work.

Within every man there is an image of his Creator, the spark of immortality. Freemasonry's aim and purpose should be to develop those latent and eternal qualities. Every individual has gifts which, when stirred by Freemasonry's teachings, can stimulate and prompt him to greater service and greater good for the benefit of Mankind.

In the words of Albert Pike, "If Freemasonry will but be true to her mission, and Masons to their promises and obligations — if, re-entering vigorously upon a career of beneficence, she and they will but pursue it earnestly and unflinching, remembering that our contributions to the cause of charity and education deserve the greatest credit when it costs us something — the curtailing of a comfort or the relinquishment of a luxury — to make them — if we will but give aid to what were once Masonry's great schemes for human improvement, not fitfully and spasmodically, but regularly and incessantly, as the vapors rise and the springs run, and as the sun rises and the stars come up into the heavens, then we may be sure that great results will be attained and a great work done. And then it will most surely be seen that Masonry is not effete or impotent, nor degenerated nor drooping to a fatal decay."

If we follow the precepts of our Fraternity

and put them into action in our daily life then will smug complacency disappear and we will progress as a great force, inspired by lofty principles dedicated to the service of Mankind. Then Freemasonry will take its proper place, not only as the oldest Fraternal Organization in the world, but as a present-day influence for good in the lives of men.

"The Symbol of Freemasonry shines grand and glorious

Before our eyes today;

And we who march beneath the Name

With joy and pride allegiance vow;

We pledge to it devotion, steadfast, true,
Our manhood's strength, our hearts, our
souls, our all.

Thou Symbol of Freemasonry, we salute
and hail,

Revere and honour thee . . . And as the
years

Roll on, may'st thou be ever lifted high,
To challenge and inspire our Brotherhood
with zeal

To do and dare for God and for Mankind."

A grim challenge faces the world today. Freemasons must not stand idly by in smug complacency while Mankind is being engulfed in materialistic errors and communistic ideologies. We must arouse ourselves. Freemasonry has a task to perform. We must meet the challenge which confronts us and demonstrate to the world, by the shining light of our example and our labours, the worthwhileness of our philosophy. We, in our day, must transmit to humanity the wisdom of the ages which our Fraternity has accumulated, with her traditions reaching back to the earliest times, and her symbols dating further back than even the monumental history of Egypt extends. We must re-dedicate our Faith in the Great Architect of the Universe and demonstrate that the eternal truths of Freemasonry, if put into practice, would dispel the night of error, restore hope and confidence, and lead Mankind out of the morass of doubt and despair into a new day of Brotherhood.

*M.W. Bro. Howard B. Macdonald,
Past Grand Master, Alberta.*

APPLICATION OF SYMBOLISM

Experience has demonstrated that the most difficult thing to get into the mind of the average candidate is that the ritual has application to practical life. If you tell him that corn, wine, and oil are the wages of a Fellowcraft, that this was the method of payment used in ancient times instead of money, you teach him nothing at all. He must be taken through the analogy step by step, told that wages means something earned, that a man must earn health, plenty, and peace by diligent use of his faculties, that this is the corn, wine, and oil meant by the ritual.

The underlying idea of symbolism repre-

THE FELLOWSHIP OF FREEMASONRY

The Rt. Rev. the Bishop of Crediton, who is Provincial Grand Master of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Devonshire, England, preached at the annual church service of Virtue and Honor Lodge No. 494 in Axminster, recently. The service, which was attended by a large congregation, including members from neighboring Lodges, was conducted by the Vicar, Reverend W. H. Dormor, assisted by Mr. T. Mayo (diocesan reader), a Past Master of the Lodge.

Taking as his text, "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God" (Rev. 3:12), the bishop said the first thing required of a pillar, if it is to add to the strength of the structure, is that it must be firmly founded. The foundation of Freemasonry is the Great Architect of the Universe, God Himself, and in the Lodges they never attempt any work or take any step without invoking God's blessing on what they are about to do, nor without the Volume of the Sacred Law, the Bible, open before them to remind them of the presence of the Unseen.

"We Masons are trained to look up to God as our Father, the Almighty, ruler of heaven and earth; we, His frail creatures, dependent upon Him for all our blessings. We have a firm foundation. Masonry is a very ancient institution, with its roots in the dim and distant past. If it had been ill-founded, that weakness would have shown itself in the passing of the ages. Our institution, our fraternity, has not shown that weakness because it is firmly founded on the strength of God. The power of lasting comes from the everlasting."

He said that, if a pillar is to be of any structural value, it must be upright and straight. If it is crooked and could not pass the test of the plumb-line, it is of no value. Generally, pillars in churches were built of a multitude of stones. In a pillar built of several stones from one rock it was requisite that each stone should be sound itself, otherwise it was a source of weakness to the whole pillar. Every Lodge that is a sound pillar in their fraternity is a source of strength to the whole institution, the whole of Masonry in the Province and, indeed, throughout England. Every brother who is truly built up as a living stone in God's temple of life adds strength to that pillar.

The pillar does not fulfill its function and purpose if it is by itself. It only does so when

senting actual life is implicit in every ceremony and symbol. Impress it in respect to one and you have impressed it in respect to all. The candidate understanding this will thereafter naturally apply the idea of symbolism to all parts of the ritual and see for himself how it is the vital part of Masonry, the active principle that has kept the fraternity alive for centuries.

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linked up with the rest of the building, bearing its share of thrust and weight. In isolation it fails in its purpose; in conjunction, it fulfills it. Isolation is unknown in Masonry. The members are knit together in a wonderfully close companionship.

"I always think this is God's purpose for all human life," the bishop continued. "Man was never meant to live in isolation, but always in close fellowship with his fellows. I always believe that is one of the great strengths of our institution; that it does bring you and me into wonderfully close fellowship with each other, and with others, so that we, like the pillar, bear our share of the thrust of life.

"In these days, when our lives are being brought so much closer together through the development of community life, it is becoming more and more important that we contribute to the full our richest contribution to community life and uphold, like the pillars are upholding this building, the honour, integrity and uprightness of life — business life, civic life and home life."

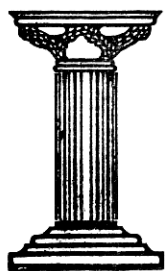
RESPONSIBILITY OF SPONSORSHIP

Few who recommend petitioners realize the responsibility of such sponsorship. When a member of a lodge signs the petition of a petitioner for the degrees of Freemasonry, he, by that very act, vouches that, in his opinion, the petitioner is the type that would be a credit to the lodge and Freemasonry.

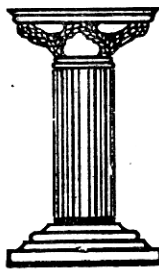
The sponsor's Masonic reputation is at stake. No member should ever sponsor a petitioner unless he is convinced that the petitioner will, if admitted, be a credit to Freemasonry. It is a responsibility that should not be lightly undertaken, and if undertaken should be recognized throughout the petitioner's entire Masonic career.

Sponsors are the Masonic fathers of the petitioner. A father naturally is interested in his son's welfare. He gives him advice. He tries to guide him. It is not enough that the sponsors be present on each occasion that their Masonic son receives the degree. When he receives his Entered Apprentice Degree he is apprenticed to them, his sponsors. It is their clear-cut duty to make certain the candidate understands and appreciates his membership in the Order. When he receives his Fellow Craft Degree it is their duty to make certain that as a Fellow of the Craft he has every opportunity of advanced knowledge and instruction and that he has a thorough knowledge of all the elementary fundamentals of the Order. When he receives his Master Mason's Degree theirs is the responsibility to guide his Masonic activities in a manner that will enable him to erect a superstructure perfect in its parts and honourable to the builder. Thus will he reflect honour on his Masonic fathers and on the Institution as a whole.

R.W. Bro. Enoch B. Carlson.



Between the Pillars



THE MINISTRY OF MASONRY

What is Masonry? What is it trying to teach? What does it seek to do? Above all, what can it do for the man who receives it into his heart, loves it, and lives in the light of it? What profound ministry may it render to the young man who enters its temple in the morning of life, when the dew is on his days and the birds are singing in his heart? Let me try to answer these questions this summer afternoon in the spirit of Count Tolstoi, who must hereafter be numbered with those prophets and bards — with poets like Goethe and Burns, musicians like Mozart, patriots like Mazzini and Washington — who loved this historic order. Such names shine like stars in the crown of humanity, and none with truer lustre than that of Tolstoi, who was a teacher of purity, pity, and peace among men.

Time out of mind Masonry has been defined as a system of morality, veiled in allegory, and illustrated by symbols. That is so far true — far enough, indeed, to describe a world-encircling fellowship and its far-ramifying influence. But it is not of the extent of Masonry that I wish to speak this afternoon, but rather, of its depth — its service to the lonely inner life of man where the issues of character and destiny are determined for good or ill. No more worthy purpose can inspire any order than the earnest, active endeavor to bring men — first the individual man, and then, so far as possible, those united with him — to a deeper, richer fellowship with spiritual reality. Since this is the purpose of Masonry, let us enquire as to what it is, whence it came, and how it seeks to reach the souls of men where the real battles of life are fought, now with shouts of victory, now with sobs of defeat.

It is true that Masonry is not a religion, still less a cult, but it has religiously preserved some things of highest importance to religion — among them the right of each individual soul to its own religious faith. Holding aloof from the separate sects and creeds, it has taught all of them to respect and tolerate each other; asserting a principle broader than any of them — the sanctity of the soul and the duty of every man to revere, or at least regard with charity, what is sacred to his fellows. Our order is like the crypts underneath the old cathedrals — a place where men of every

creed, who long for something deeper and truer, older and newer than they have hitherto known, meet and unite. Having put away childish things, they find themselves made one by a profound and childlike faith, each bringing down into that quiet crypt his own pearl of great price.

“The Hindu his innate disbelief in this world, and his unhesitating belief in another world; the Buddhist his perception of an eternal law, his submission to it, his gentleness, his pity; the Mohammedan, if nothing else, his sobriety; the Jew his clinging through good and evil days, to the one God, who loveth righteousness and whose name is “I AM”; the Christian, that which is better than all, if those who doubt it would only try it — our love of God, call Him what you will, manifested in our love of man, our love of the living, our love of the dead, our living and undying love.” Who knows but that the crypt of the past may yet become the church of the future?

To one who regards mankind with tenderness, a time like this is full of hope, but full of many perils also. Men are confused, troubled, and strangely alone. Anything is possible. Forms of faith are changing, and many are bewildered — as witness the number of those running to and fro, following every wandering light, and falling, often, into the bogs of fanaticism. Oh the pathos of it: A strange indifference has settled over the world, but underneath it there is a profound, unsatisfied hunger. There is a mood today which will soon utter a cry, and it will be a cry for a more vivid sense of God: that is our hope. Yet that cry may fling many a soul upon the bosom of doubt and despair: that is our fear.

Amid this peril, Masonry brings men together at the altar of prayer, keeps alive faith in the truths that make us men, seeking, by every resource of art, to make tangible the power of love, the worth of beauty, and the reality of the ideal. Who can measure such a ministry, who can describe it?

Joseph Fort Newton.

WARNING

One, Joseph Irving, claiming membership in memorial Lodge No. 327, Victoria, Australia, has circularized our Alberta Lodges requesting the Secretary to send each of four letters he encloses to selected members who might be willing to donate to him the sum of \$25.00 each, for the purpose of paying his expenses of a trip to Scotland and Canada. The Grand Master directs that this appeal be ignored, being un-Masonic and un-Constitutional. Protest has been made to the Grand Lodge of Victoria, Australia.

G. Moore, Grand Secretary.