



Grand Lodge Bulletin

Editor: SAM HARRIS, P.G.M.

Instructive and Interesting Lodge Meetings

"Our meetings are intended to cultivate and enlighten the mind to induce the habit of virtue and to strengthen the fundamental principles of our order: Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth; and if these meetings are blended with social mirth and a mutual interchange of fraternal feelings, then Freemasonry will be shown in its true light." Thus are we instructed by one of our lectures.

In each lodge we have an officer whose duty it is to provide refreshment and also the superintendence of the craft during the hours of refreshment. From such authority we can take assurance that the place for social intercourse is well established as an essential part of our order in the present day programme.

From a perusal of books on the history of our craft, we learn that from the earliest days of Freemasonry, there was always a portion of the afternoon set aside for refreshment and interchange of feelings. It is probably one of the reasons that our ancient brethren met at the local tavern. It was the centre of the community for friendly visits, and lent itself to a meeting at which food and drink were available and social mirth could hold sway. Dr. Anderson's Constitution of 1721 gave some directions for the Brethren while at refreshments. The taking of salt and sharing of food has been a symbol of hospitality and friendship from the beginning of time.

In some histories of the ancient lodges, we find mentioned the collection of a sum of money to defray expenses of refreshments. From these references, it can be taken that the refreshment period has been and is a vital part of our meeting in lodge. To some members it means more than it does to others, but we are all somewhat gregarious, and it devolves upon our officers to bring out the most that is in us — that is, to make the refreshment period a period of enjoyment and profit to all.

In this Jurisdiction our social hour usually comes after the business session of the meet-

ing. That means sometime late in the evening. I maintain that it is most important for the Worshipful Master and Junior Warden to recognize the importance and possibilities of the social period for the improvement and success of the lodge meeting, and the possibilities of increasing the attendance and influence of our Lodge among the brethren. It is just as important to have a properly organized social hour with a good programme, as it is to have a proper agenda for the business meeting, or good ritual work for the degree. Conversely, no social period should commence without proper preparation by our officers for food, fellowship, entertainment and education. These four factors are of equal importance to a successful conclusion, and it is a poor Master who does not use all of them for the pleasure and profit of his brethren. If the programme is neglected or only half heartedly presented, the brethren will react accordingly. Remember the charge: "The happiness of the brethren will be generally promoted in proportion to the zeal and assiduity with which you promulgate the genuine tenets and principles of the Fraternity."

It is not necessary, and I would strongly discourage the practice, to have a large repast and long programme. It is not the size of the lunch but the spirit accompanying it that makes the brethren free and easy in their fraternizing. There is no place I know so conducive to good fellowship and brotherly love as at the table of a Freemason's lodge. It is a part of our craft. Some of the best meetings that I have attended have been around the table after lodge was closed. Good fellowship and friendly interchange of conversation seem to be more prominent under these conditions and so they should be.

It is in such surroundings that friends open their hearts to their friends, and, being hospitable people, we endeavor to make our visitors and neighbors our friends. We learn about these people and their problems and they of ours, and in this interchange we give and re-

ceive sympathy and understanding. Here indeed should a Freemason's lodge become a place of peace and harmony. It is the duty and privilege of the Junior Warden to promote such peace and harmony. It is necessary for him to be happy and communicate happiness to others.

There should be no lodge business discussed at the table. Speeches and toasts should be few in number and of a definite purpose, that is — Educational and Entertaining, and should be on some subject closely related to the lodge or Freemasonry, or a subject of general interest that will appeal to many. The speaker should have been secured in time to give him a period for proper preparation for the task to be attempted. I heartily condemn the practice of calling on visitors without warning; it often embarrasses both visitor and the visited. Certainly welcome them with a few words and accept their thanks, but do not ask them to speak 'for a few minutes.'

I have seen the most successful social hours at which a good interesting address is given on some timely subject that has an interest to the members generally. This may or may not be a Masonic subject. It would appear a most happy solution to vary the meetings — a good speaker with a subject of interest, then next a meeting at which some form of entertainment is placed before the brethren, then an educational meeting, dealing with some Masonic subject. In this manner the meetings would be varied from time to time, and yet on the whole there would be good fellowship, entertainment and education. That is, our meetings are a source of pleasure and profit.

No Master would attempt to put on the Master Mason's Degree without much preparation — neither does a good Master have a refreshment hour without preparation on his part, and also on the part of those who are involved. This applies in a like manner to those meetings that are of an entertainment character. Entertainment should be of the highest class available. Good in quality and short in quantity is a good rule. If a lodge has only a limited amount of talent available, it should not overwork that which it has, and the courtesy of asking in sufficient time to insure proper preparation should never be forgotten. The chairman should never make the mistake of calling on a musician without warning, because everyone needs some time for thought and preparation. Nothing will put an evening out of tune quicker than having the repetition of some previous programme poorly done because of lack of preparation.

The programme should not be long, as most members prefer getting home before the early hours of the morning. This is especially true in the city. In the country the members are more inclined to make a night of it. They see

one another less frequently and have more in common. Their like interests draw them closer in fellowship, and they therefore enjoy a social meeting to a much greater extent than our brethren of the city, and do not care if the evening is spent and morning comes before they have the Junior Warden's Toast.

My plea to the Worshipful Master and Junior Wardens is to recognize the immense opportunity presented in the social hour, and that they plan to make the most of the period of refreshment.

We all have a craving for fellowship of and fraternizing with our fellow men. If this spirit is developed under the auspices of the Freemason's lodge we should be prepared to mingle with our fellow men in better social, religious and business affairs. If there is any real value in Freemasonry, it should be noted in improvement in our relationship with our fellow man, and in creating harmony among our members.

If one is earnest and sincere, he cannot very well sit in lodge with his brethren, partake of refreshments, and enjoy a pleasant social hour, and on the next day be an indifferent man towards his brethren. We must communicate happiness to others.

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

WHEN LIFE IS DONE

I'd like to think when life is done
That I had filled a needed post.
That here and there I'd paid my fare
With more than idle talk and boast.
That I had taken gifts divine
The strength of life and manhood fine
And tried to use them now and then
In service to my fellow-men.

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tive forces of evil that annihilate the dignity of men and reduce them to the status of mere chattels.

The second episode, I would recall to your mind is that silent figure, hanging upon the cross, deserted and forsaken by his companions and the words of his enemies, "He saved others; Himself He could not save." The words seem a lofty eulogy and the figure an inspiration to stand firmly by our convictions. For I believe that those of us who work for others to the extent of our ability, hoping and praying that we may be of some use to others; that we may let some light in their minds which will lead them to higher conceptions of usefulness and their duty to God, their neighbor and themselves, do perform a high use in our day and generation, a use which eventually — not in our day, perhaps, but eventually — will glorify a new civilization as the sacrifice on the Cross glorified a life that ended there.

*R.W. Bro. Judge John C. Calhoun,
D.D.G. Master, Grand Lodge Missouri.*

MORE ABOUT EASTER

Easter, commemorating the Resurrection of our Saviour, the Christ, is a time for spiritual awakening; for renewal of our devotions; a re-consecration of our hearts and intellects to the cause of His Kingdom which He established in the hearts of men; a Kingdom founded upon the Gospel of Love (Love of God and Love of our Fellowmen) of Peace on Earth Goodwill Toward Men.

Where, save in the Love of God and a Supreme desire to be obedient to Him, can a dynamic be found that will overcome the inertia of indifference to the crumbling of our American ideals of Government and the destruction of our gracious way of living.

And so, it is quite proper that especially on Easter, we Masons of the Christian Faith, pay our homage and devotion and offer up our love to Him Who spoke such tremendous words of power, of hope and of faith and Who proclaimed so profound philosophy and so beautiful a religion:

As I, at this time, think of Easter two separate episodes that occurred at that first Easter Time many centuries ago, recall themselves to me.

First, that incident in the Garden of Gethsemane, where Christ knelt and prayed, "Father, let this cup pass." We gather inspiration from this event. Christ had fought a gallant fight for the things that He believed to be good and against the things that He believed to be evil and He knew that His enemies would go to any length to kill Him. Could He endure the frightful death He knew portended? He knelt and prayed while His followers dozed. "Let this cup pass, O Father, let it pass!" Then waited, waited for the words which did not come, and when He'd tried in vain the 3rd time, rose in dignity and said, as He calmly awaited His doom, "Not Mine, O Father but Thy Will be done!" In its broader meaning, this Garden incident epitomises all human life. For each of us must come as Christ came to Gethsemane, and face some ordeal we think we cannot stand, and in the darkness reach out, as He did, for a friendly hand and wait — wait for words which do not come and then realize we must fight our way alone. Yet had God answered that prayer uttered in the Garden of Gethsemane, men would never have had that supreme example of self sacrifice and courage so nobly exemplified upon Calvary that has ever incited them to die for science and take to the Cross for truth.

What the world needs today, what the world must have, if peace is to be restored to it, if righteousness, truth and honor are again to become controlling virtues in the affairs of men, is for men to possess more and more that supreme faith of our Saviour and to emulate His courage too, and sacrifice their lives rather than submit to the effacing of moral standards, the lowering of human values and the destruc-

OVER AND OVER

Some brethren have suggested that Masonic speeches were too much the same. They ask for something fresh, some new facts, something with some spark of life in it. They accuse me of too much sentiment. But, on the contrary, I hold there is not enough sentiment and am quite sure that they are wrong in this view.

This world is not ruled by logic, by scientific formulas or by man-made rules and regulations. It is ruled by hate, fear, anger, trust, love; primitive feelings inborn in every one of us. Our hospitals, asylums, prisons, are full of those poor devils who have failed to recognize the need to school and control the emotions.

What does Mother Love know of logic? What regard has a starving man for scientific formulas? What respect for law and order has a man who gets punched on the nose? Does he fill in a form and report the matter? Of course not; he punches the other fellow back. In any case, a world where logic, science and law reign supreme is not wanted and I should hate to live in it and so would you.

What has all this to do with Masonry?

I am old fashioned enough to believe that our Masonic fathers, in their wisdom, recognized the power of the emotions, and, still, more important, recognized the need to develop our control over those primitive feelings.

The pageantry of the ceremony, the beauty of the ritual, will, if we attune our hearts aright, raise our sentiments to wonderful heights and train our emotions so that they enrich our lives.

The same old ritual in the same old way! Of course it is the same. Life is the same—spring, summer, autumn, winter. The awakening, the working, the eating, the going to sleep. The building-up, the pulling-down. Birth, Life, Death. Always the same; and the same old ritual offering you wisdom, truth and beauty—yours for the having—all things worth while. But, in order to enjoy them you are required to make yourselves receptive. To live your lives in such a way that the wisdom of the ages enriches your mind, the love of truth lights up your soul, and the beauty of the universe can penetrate your vision.

Masonry if you will open your hearts to its finer concepts will do all this for you; but you must look deeper and yet deeper to attain it.

*Bro. Bernard E. Woodford,
In New South Wales Freemason.*

The real use of Freemasonry in the world is its effect on man outside of the lodge room. Its teachings and ritual, beautiful as they are, are only means, not ends. We are brought to light in order that we may let our light shine before men, that they may see our good works and join us in glorifying the Great Architect of the Universe. If we fail to do this, we are untrue to our obligations and are unworthy Freemasons.

Illinois Grand Lodge Report.

"THIRD BIENNIAL CONFERENCE ALL CANADA GRAND LODGES"

The Third Biennial Conference of All Canada Grand Lodges was held at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel, Montreal on February 19th to 21st inclusive, 1953.

All Grand Lodges in Canada were well represented, including the District Grand Lodge of England and the District Grand Lodge of Scotland from Newfoundland. The meeting got under way on Thursday, February 19th and due to illness of the President, M.W. Bro. C. L. Roman, Grand Master of Quebec, R.W. Bro. W. A. Curran, D.G.M. of British Columbia, took the Chair. Following the Invocation and opening remarks of the Chairman a word of welcome was extended on behalf of the Grand Master of Quebec.

The Agenda was a heavy one and dealt with the following topics:

1. "Liability Insurance for Grand Lodge and Constituent Lodges," which has become a topic of high importance both in the U.S.A. and Canada.

2. "Grand Lodge Bulletins and Magazines in Canada." As Alberta pioneered in this field we were able to present our experience to the meeting.

3. "Schools of Instruction for D.D.G.M.'s." This was another timely topic which lead to much discussion.

4. "The Right or Wrong of Lodge financing," was an exceedingly fine paper and brought out a great deal of valuable information.

5. "The use of Lodge funds for non-Masonic purposes." It was generally felt that it was time to put a stop to this growing practice and in many jurisdictions legislation has been enacted against it.

6. "Report of Special Committee on Foreign Relations." This is, of course, a highly specialized branch of our Masonic life and much information was placed before the meeting. The Committee, of which your Secretary is one and the Chairman of which is M.W. Bro. R. V. Harris of Nova Scotia, and Dr. Cross of Ontario, received commendation for supplying much needed information.

7. "Is there need for a Masonic Service Association in Canada?" It was generally conceded there was no need.

8. Interchange of information regarding brethren holding Dual membership in different Grand Lodges, also regarding Suspensions, Rejections, etc. This developed into a mass of technicalities as the discussion went on and no conclusions were arrived at.

9. "Are the Ancient Historical Rights of Craft Lodges slowly giving way to modern Grand Lodge expediency?" This paper was presented by your Grand Secretary, and which brought the meeting to a close.

The Canadian Masonic Research Assoc. held their eighth meeting in the Masonic Temple, St. Mark Street, that evening where a most enjoyable program, dealing with early Masonry in Canada was given. M.W. Bro. Reg Harris, Nova Scotia, presiding.

Alberta members in attendance at the Conference were the Grand Master, M.W. Bro. Harry E. Howard, D.G.M., R.W. Bro. Wm. H. Jackson, M.W. Bro. Sam Harris, Editor of the Bulletin, M.W. Bro. LeRoy W. Bond and the Grand Secretary, M.W. Bro. George Moore. It was decided to hold the fourth Biennial Conference in Toronto in 1955. Farewells were said and most of those present proceeded to Washington for the opening of the

"WASHINGTON CONFERENCES"

The Washington Conferences were held at the Hotel Statler from February 23rd to 26th inclusive, except the George Washington

National Memorial Assoc., which met in the Memorial Temple in Alexandria, Va.

As the representatives from Alberta had received a cordial invitation to be present, we joined our American brethren. Buses left the Statler Hotel promptly at 9 a.m. The drive to the Temple took us through some very historical places all redolent with early British Colonial history. The Temple itself is magnificently situated on Shooters Hill and commands a view of the country for many miles around. After participating in the Conferences we made the rounds of this beautiful building, not yet completed and partaking luncheon at which all present were served by ladies dressed in old Colonial fashion. Later we took the bus back to Washington for a Grand Masters' Reception.

Tuesday the Grand Master's Conference got underway quite early. Besides Representatives from the forty-nine Grand Lodges of the U.S.A. Representatives were also present from 8 Canadian Grand Lodges. Representatives were also present from Philippines, Cuba, and from the Argentine and from some of the Mexican Grand Lodges. A very Distinguished Visitor was Dr. Theodore Vogel, Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of Germany. I am sure you will be pleased to know our Grand Master, M.W. Bro. Harry E. Howard, presented a paper on the Philosophy of the First Degree, which was enthusiastically received and on which he was highly complimented. M.W. Bro. Sam Harris, one of the most widely known Masons in North America, was as usual in much demand. The Addresses of our foreign Brethren were highly instructive, presenting as they did of necessity, an entirely different view from our own way of life. Altogether your Grand Officers gained a great deal of knowledge of conditions both at home and abroad which should be most helpful.

The Grand Secretaries Conference got under way on Wednesday morning. On Thursday the Masonic Service Assoc. held its thirty-fourth Annual meeting. The papers throughout were of very high order; space does not permit mention of them all.

G. MOORE,

Grand Secretary.

THE CORONATION

The United Grand Lodge of England expect to extend hospitality to Brethren visiting London during the Coronation period. Their names, and addresses in England, if forwarded to this office, will in due course be forwarded to London.

Canada Lodge advises that special meetings are to be held on May 26th, June 23rd, and an Installation meeting on October 20th at Freemasons Hall, Great Queen Street, London, at which visiting Brethren will be welcome. Meetings usually open at 4:30 p.m.

G. Moore,

Grand Secretary