



Grand Lodge Bulletin

Editor: SAM HARRIS, P.G.M.

What Freemasonry Means To Me

Were it possible for our 16,500 brethren in this Grand Jurisdiction to give voice to this bald statement, we might realize just how far we have advanced along the path leading to more light in Masonry. As Masons we do not claim to possess all truth, but truth and not error is the objective search of all.

Before Freemasonry can mean anything, men must, before they enter our portals, be Masons at heart. The Lodge room is not a reform school. The mission of Freemasonry is "to make good men better", not to take bad men and make them good; that is the work of the Christian Church. In the days when lodges were working in Operative Masonry, the requirements for physical perfection were necessary because it was expected that every member of the Craft should become a skilled workman. But as we have long since ceased to work as Operative Masons, and since we are taught that the internal and not the external qualifications of a man are what Masonry regard, the requirements for physical perfection no longer have any significance. Freemasonry today has to do with the heart, mind and soul of the individual.

What does Freemasonry mean to me?

1. It links me with a glorious past.

History is an afterthought written only when greatness has already been achieved. There was no Hebrew history before David, who united the tribes and conquered their enemies. Nor was there any Masonic history, as we know it, until the Operative stonemasons of England had established their Craft by building some of those marvellous monuments of Christian civilization — the Gothic Cathedrals. But there were Masons and there were Hebrews long before there were books about either. In the widely separated beginnings of both Hebrew and Masonic history we find reference to the building of a Temple.

King Solomon's Temple was not built in a day or without the accumulation and expenditure of a vast treasure in materials, craftsmen and human organization. So likewise the

Masonic Fraternity started simply too and the magnificent brotherly structure of the past two hundred years was many centuries in the making. Unlike the Temple, the Fraternity, in its formative years, had no powerful king to protect and support it and the growth was far less spectacular than that of the great monument at Mount Moriah.

The legends of Masonry are very old and they tell of times older than themselves. The earliest legendary Masonic writing which has survived in manuscript is a little book consisting of thirty-three leaves of parchment — written in England probably before 1390 A.D. "Here begins the constitutions of the art of Geometry according to Euclid" are the opening lines in Latin. He taught the art of geometry to Egyptian noblemen. This mediaeval stonemasons' organization was already of respectable age when the book of Euclid's constitutions was written. Such is the information gleaned from the historians.

In the oldest Masonic legends the building of King Solomon's Temple was not the only nor even the principal event commemorated. Nor is the Bible mentioned in these early times as the Central Light of the lodge. But the Masonic organizations in which these legends were cherished, like Masonic lodges today, were religious bodies. Their motto was "Pray and Work". We are informed that there is a repeated reference to the "book" in these old manuscripts. What was the book? Was it the Book of Charges, containing the charges of the Craft, equivalent probably to the Book of Constitution? We can say that the repeated references to the book almost certainly mean the Bible. As far as recognition of the Bible by early Masons is concerned, this is quite as much as could be expected in an age before printing had been invented, when every book in the world had to be laboriously copied by hand and when the Bible, moreover, was written only in Latin.

Few people could read the Bible, and fewer still could own a copy. It was a book to be

venerated but not read. The religious instructions and inspiration which the Bible supplies nowadays was then derived from three sources: (1) the Ecclesiastical symbolism and ceremony, (2) Mystery plays and Bible entertainments and (3) Architecture. Masons may have participated in the second, they were of primary importance in the third.

When people could not read books the lessons of religion had to be taught in other ways. They were taught by sermons of the priests and by the ritual of the sacraments. They were also taught dramatically through mystery plays, performed often by the Craft Guilds. The Masons may have used a mystery play whose story survives in the third degree. Above all, the lessons of religions were taught during the middle ages (5th - 15th centuries) through Architecture and Culture. Every village church was a message from God and every cathedral was an entire Bible. We belong to the past.

2. Again it deepens my reverence for the G. A. O. T. U.

A belief in the existence of God is an essential point of Speculative Masonry, so essential that it is a landmark of the Craft that no atheist can be a Mason. Nor is this left to an inference, for a specific declaration to that effect is demanded as an indispensable preparation for the initiation. Freemasonry means a deep personal trust in God, for trust is one of the first words an Entered Apprentice has to deal with in his initiation. Hutchinson, an 18th century Mason, said: "The worship of God was the first and corner-stone on which our originals thought it expedient to place the foundation of Masonry".

Albert G. Mackey informs us that there never has been a time since the revival of Freemasonry when this belief in God as a superintending power did not form a part of the system. The very earliest rituals that are extant, going back almost to the beginning of the 18th century, contain precisely the same question as to the trust in God which is found in those of the present day, and the oldest manuscript Constitutions, dating as far back as the 15th century at least, all commence with, or contain an invocation to the "Mighty Father of Heaven". There never was a time when the dogma did not form an essential part of the Masonic system.

Though Masonry neither usurps the place of, nor apes religion, prayer is an essential part of our ceremonies. It is the aspiration of our souls towards the Absolute and Infinite Intelligence which is the one Supreme Deity, most feebly and misunderstandingly characterized as an "Architect".

Prayer which constitutes a belief in God is essential in the laying of a good foundation upon which to build a life. For man's greatest building is his own life; his greatest monument

is his own character; his greatest achievement is the erection of himself. There is but one rock foundation for life — that is faith in God. God's universe is built on laws. Man is no exception, save that he can disobey the laws. But man reaches his "norm" of life only through obedience. Faith in God brings man into such an accord with the Author of his being that he obeys His laws. Such faith is more than vision, impulse, attitude; it is action, obedience. The man who built upon the rock was the man who heard the Great Teacher's sayings and did them. This is the only kind of faith worthy the name.

Robert L. Stevenson said that when God entered his life it was as if the unseen hand was placed on the helm of his ship — it righted about and sailed straight on. Faith in God puts the helm in His hands — opens up in our lives channels for the workings of His power.

The Freemason all along his journey, when his attempts to build a noble edifice have been only of partial success, registers his vow: "Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul, as the swift seasons roll, leave thy low-vaulted past. Let each new temple nobler than the last, shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast—till thou at length are free, leaving thine outgrown shell by life's unresting sea."

—R.W. Bro. Rev. Peter Dawson,
Deputy Grand Master, Alberta.

THE NEWLY INSTALLED MASTER: HIS RESPONSIBILITIES

There can be little doubt that the Installation Meeting is the most important in the Masonic year of every Lodge.

It is the meeting which marks the end of an old and the beginning of a new administration.

It is the occasion on which the newly-elected Master takes over the gavel of authority and, together with his elected team of officers, assumes responsibility for the affairs of the Lodge.

It is appropriate that this important annual event in the history of every Lodge should cause every Master-elect to pause and take stock and to consider the future.

In view of the confusion and strife in the world today, and Freemasonry as a part of the world, each Brother assuming the high office of Master of his Lodge is called upon to give serious and careful thought to his duties.

In the first place, on the night of Installation the new Master should realize that in elevating him to the important and distinguished position of leadership, the Lodge is conferring on him the highest honour in its gift.

He should, too, be deeply sensible that with that honour go serious duties and sober responsibilities.

Foremost among these is to preserve within his Lodge the sacred and unswerving loyalty of the Craft to the Crown and Her Most Gracious

Majesty the Queen.

Each Master in his own Lodge is the guardian of the Ancient Landmarks of Freemasonry — a tremendous responsibility.

These Landmarks are so fundamental that if they were to be altered or changed, Freemasonry in its time immemorial form would no longer exist.

It is, of course, assumed that in his years of preparation to fit him for the high responsibilities pertaining to the Chair, the Master-elect will have become fully informed as to the Ancient Landmarks and their nature; and not only of these, but of the laws of Freemasonry generally.

Disregarding the fantastic lists of Landmarks enumerated by Masonic Authors, it becomes the first duty of every Worshipful Master to guard and defend with the utmost zeal and vigilance those Landmarks which are basic and about which there can be no dispute.

Among the important duties and responsibilities of a Master is the realisation that he is the leader of his Lodge, and as such, is responsible for its conduct and work.

With all humility he may seek and accept the counsel and advice of his Past Masters, and others in whom he has confidence, but he cannot in justice to his Lodge shirk the responsibility of final decision.

During the time he holds office he should never forget that he is the Master elected by his Brethren, and that he is responsible to them as a Lodge, and not to any particular individual or group.

Another responsibility all Masters should bear in mind is the loyalty and fealty they owe the Grand Master, and Grand Lodge of which they are a part.

Especially should the Masters see that every communication received from the Grand Secretary is promptly acknowledged when an answer is required.

The burden of the Grand Secretary is heavy enough without having to contend with indifference and delays on the part of Masters of individual Lodges.

Every Master-elect upon being placed in the Chair is desirous that his administration be successful. He is anxious that both he and the Lodge have a good year. He wishes that each meeting will be interesting, instructive and well attended. He should then exert the kind of leadership that will assure these results. He should be especially careful to see that all meetings start on time, not drag, and end at a reasonable hour.

Good meetings demand good Ritual, and good Ritual requires practice.

Therefore, every Master should see that only Brethren who attend rehearsal meetings are appointed to undertake work.

The office of Master, with all its responsibilities, obligations and duties, carries with it great compensations.

Apart from the honour and dignity of the office, the principal compensation of the Master lies in the service he is privileged to render to his Brethren during his year.

It is compensation which cannot be measured in honours or in money.

—The N.S.W. Freemason.

THE BULLETIN

I am pleased to announce that our subscriptions again increased in number last year, but we have not yet attained our objective, a Bulletin for every member, and it is rather disappointing to note that three Lodges do not subscribe at all. It is suggested that all Lodges check their number of subscriptions with the number of their members and order accordingly. Thank you.

—S.H.

(Concluded from Page 4)

tive duty. His retirement takes place as at October 1st unless the state of his health makes an earlier date necessary. The Board of General Purposes recommended to Grand Lodge, which recommendation was endorsed by Grand Lodge, that R.W. Brother E. H. Rivers, Past Grand Registrar be appointed as Grand Secretary assuming office as at October 1st next.

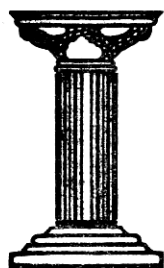
One Lodge celebrated its 60th anniversary; one Lodge its 50th anniversary and two Lodges their 40th anniversaries. \$1,000.00 was again set aside for the 50th anniversary of Grand Lodge in 1955.

The following Grand Lodge Officers were duly elected and the M.W. Grand Master was duly installed into office by M.W. Brother George Moore, P.G.M. and the other Officers by M.W. Brother W. F. Empey, P.G.M.

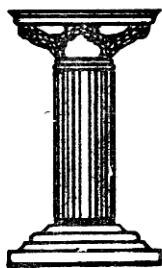
Grand Master	M.W. Bro. W. H. Jackson	Innisdail
Deputy Grand Master	R.W. Bro. Rev. P. Dawson	Champion
Senior Grand Warden	R.W. Bro. S. Carl Heckbert	Vermilion
Junior Grand Warden	R.W. Bro. Ross S. Sheppard	Edmonton
Grand Treasurer	R.W. Bro. A. J. Davis (R)	Calgary
Grand Secretary	M.W. Bro. George Moore, P.G.M. (A)	Calgary
Grand Secretary as at October 1st.	R.W. Bro. E. H. Rivers (A)	Edmonton
Grand Registrar	R.W. Bro. W. H. Harper	Calgary
Grand Chaplain	R.W. Bro. Canon Morgan (R)	Calgary
Grand Tyler	V.W. Bro. F. J. Pearce (R)	Calgary

Another prosperous and harmonious Grand Lodge and year of Freemasonry in the Province of Alberta was brought to a successful conclusion. Grand Lodge in 1954 will be held in the City of Edmonton on June 9th and 10th.

—M.W. Bro. Sam Harris,
Past Grand Master, Alberta



Between the Pillars



A FEW HIGHLIGHTS OF GRAND LODGE

The Forty-eighth Annual Communication of Grand Lodge was held in the City of Calgary on Wednesday and Thursday, June 10th and 11th, 1953 with the Board of General Purposes meeting on Tuesday afternoon, June 9th.

Grand Lodge was presided over by the Grand Master, M.W. Brother Harry E. Howard in a very able manner. There was a slightly larger attendance than last year.

His Worship the Mayor of Calgary, Mr. Don Mackay brought the greetings of the City of Calgary and his remarks were greatly appreciated.

Seventeen of the eighteen District Deputy Grand Masters were present and eighteen of the nineteen newly elected District Deputy Grand Masters were present to be installed into office. Masonic Districts Nos. 3, 10 and 12 were re-arranged and a new district, No. 19 was formed, these districts are in and contiguous to the City of Edmonton.

During the year two Especial Communications of Grand Lodge were held to Constitute and Consecrate Canada Lodge No. 165 in the City of Calgary and Evergreen Lodge, No. 166 in the City of Edmonton. Temple Lodge U.D., Highlands Lodge U.D., Avon Glen Lodge U.D. all located in the City of Edmonton and St. George's Lodge U.D. at Elk Point were granted Charters by Grand Lodge and these Lodges will be Constituted and Consecrated in due time. Two Lodges, namely Barrhead Lodge at Barrhead and Milo Lodge at Milo were continued under dispensation for another year.

There are presently 158 Chartered Lodges and 2 Lodges under Dispensation. 131 Chartered Lodges were represented at Grand Lodge and 27 Chartered Lodges were not represented, the total attendance at Grand Lodge being 475 members and 40 Master Masons.

During the year there were 785 initiations, being 19 more than last year, this makes a net increase in membership of 398. Our total membership as at December 31st, 1952 was 16,553 members. We mourn the loss by death of 271 of our members who were summoned to that bourne whence no traveller returns.

The Grand Lodges of Argentina and Panama were accorded fraternal recognition. Four Grand Lodge Representatives were appointed to represent the Grand Lodge of Alberta near other Grand Lodges, namely:— the Grand

Lodges of Havana, Cuba; Iowa, Montana and New York. Five Grand Representatives were appointed by other Grand Lodges to represent them near the Grand Lodge of Alberta, namely the Grand Lodges of the District of Columbia, Iceland, Montana, Philippine Islands and Iowa.

The Board of Benevolence distributed \$9,706.61 and individual Lodges an additional \$13,781.00 during the year, and in addition \$1,000.00 was forwarded to the Lord Mayor's Flood Relief Fund in London, England and \$1,000.00 to the Netherlands Flood Relief Fund.

The M.W. Grand Master, the R.W. Deputy Grand Master, the R.W. Grand Secretary and the Editor of the Bulletin attended the All Canada Conference held in Montreal, Quebec and the Grand Masters' Conference held in Washington, D.C. and the first named three Grand Lodge Officers attended the Western Conference held in Banff, Alberta. The M.W. Grand Master accompanied by the R.W. Grand Secretary attended all of the Eighteen District Meetings, quite a task in itself. These District Meetings are becoming more interesting and instructive every year.

The Notice of Motion regarding the Bank Safety Box, etc., was passed, whilst the Notice of Motion regarding the examination of visitors was lost. It was decided to make no change in the date of our Annual Communications of Grand Lodge.

No rulings were given by the M.W. Grand Master during the year. The following were our guests at Grand Lodge this year:— M.W. Brothers Rt. Rev. Bishop George R. Calvert and Maurice Donovan and R.W. Brother Thomas Jackson, Grand Secretary from Manitoba. M.W. Brother Guy W. Hummel, Grand Master and R.W. Brother Robt. A. Tate, Grand Secretary from Saskatchewan. R.W. Brother W. A. Curran, Deputy Grand Master and R.W. Brother O. H. Nelson, Past District Deputy Grand Master from British Columbia and R.W. Brother John A. Graham, Deputy Grand Master from North Dakota. M.W. Brother Rt. Rev. Bishop George R. Calvert was the guest speaker at the annual banquet on Wednesday night. This address was greatly enjoyed and appreciated by all who had the privilege of hearing it.

The rank of Honourary Past Grand Master was conferred on M.W. Brothers Bishop Calvert and Guy W. Hummel, the honorary rank of Past Deputy Grand Master on R.W. Brothers W. A. Curran and John A. Graham and the honorary rank of Senior Grand Warden on R.W. Brothers Thomas Jackson and O. H. Nelson. M.W. Brother M. Donovan and R.W. Brother Robt. A. Tate were honoured some years ago.

It is with sadness and regret we announce the retirement through ill health of our Grand Secretary, M.W. Brother George Moore, P.G.M. Whilst his health is not a cause for immediate alarm, he finds it necessary to retire from ac-