

# Wishing Every Member the Season's Greetings

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## Grand Lodge Bulletin

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### Only a Child

Christmas is centred in a person. By the Judaeen Hills, the sleepy shepherds heard an angelic voice,—“In the city of David, ye shall find a babe.” Magi from the Ancient Land of Persia, impelled by the quest and guided by a kindly star, “came into the house and saw the young child with Mary his mother.” This is “Christ-mass”, the Festival of a Child.

Long before Christmas Day, in the home, there are many secret conferences, many whisperings, many excursions to shops and stores, many wrappings with hollied paper and coloured cord, many secret boxes and corners where all parcels are carefully hidden; much care is manifested in the art of hanging the stockings by the fire-place; the tree is decorated with symbols and colored lights — and all is ready! Little feet climb the bedroom stairway slowly and reluctantly, pausing frequently for a glance backward, and tired eyelids cover tired eyes, unwillingly and rebelliously — and all is still. Soon it is Christmas morn! In the dim glow of early morning, the patter of little feet and hushed whisperings are heard. Then little faces glow and eyes sparkle and many “Ah’s” and “Oh’s” are heard. Little hearts are filled with joy and overflowing happiness. It is the Festival of the Child, — of each child, — of every child. It is the Festival of a Person.

We live in an age of the mass-man; we play our part in a mass-society. Psychology, sociology and politics are concerned with herds rather than with individuals, and in the herd, the value of the individual unit is lost and neglected. Great and powerful wave-movements in thought and action tend to submerge the human unit; the one is lost in the many.

The science of astronomy as it turned from the Ptolemaic theory in which our little earth was the centre of the universe to the Copernican postulate which extended man's sight to

finite space and endless worlds gradually dwarfed man to insignificance and littleness. The Hebrew poet of 2,500 years ago caught the vision and saw the contrast as he wrote in the V.S.L.,—

“When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars which Thou hast ordained; what is man that Thou are mindful of him?” He sees the endless worlds which are massed in endless space, and he is but a speck on a whirling ball. The stars count their age by milleniums of centuries; man's span is three score years and ten. In space and time, man is sadly dwarfed.

When we turn to the story of man's life on this earth, the same record is emphasized. In the development of man, his life is measured by succeeding ages, — the cave man age, the stone age, the iron age, and at last through the corridors of time to this strange atomic age. Each age included millions of human souls, but in the mass, the unit is engulfed.

“So careful of the type, she seems;  
So careless of the single life.”

(Tennyson)

Life in great cities brings the millions into one neighborhood where they live like ants in an ant-hill, like bees in a hive. Yet each one is a human soul.

Our modern industrial system smothers and stifles the life and genius of man. I spent a day in the Ford Motor Factory at Windsor, where 12,000 persons are engaged in the building of a car. One man spends his life in tightening Bolt No. 23. We have mechanized industry but we have depersonalized the human unit.

All of our language groups individuals into herds. We read in War II of an army of 6,000,000 men. Over 5,000,000 Jews were tortured and were slain at Belsen, Dachau and Buchenwald. Yet each was a person with a home and

dear ones, with hopes and fears, with visions and dreams. Each one was infinitely precious to someone.

Herein we have the predominating postulate of the Christian faith. Dr. Emerson Fosdick thoughtfully points out that though Sacred Books of the Ethnic Religions have much in them that is excellent and inspiring, yet in none of them, not in Mohammedanism, Confucianism or Buddhism, is there the proclamation of the supreme value of human personality, the dignity of man. As an individual, he is infinitely precious.

The Great Teacher, the Christus, whose very name portrays our word Christmas and inspires our faith, heralded the flaming message of, — "One Coin", — "One Sheep", — "One Son." That is the philosophy our sad and troubled world needs today. Sir Arnold Toynbee states this axiomatic principle thus, — "The process of materialisation must give way to etherialisation, i.e., — a sense of human values." Man is more than a clod of earth or a collection of glands and corpuscles. He is made in the Image of the Creator. Man fundamentally is moral and spiritual; he is born to an eternal destiny for which this world is a training and probation. This means that he is a rational creature, capable of knowledge and able to distinguish right from wrong, true from false. He has the power of choice. He can say, — "I am; I choose; I can; I ought; I will." He has the power of self-determination — for better or for worse. He can climb to the heights; he may fall to the depths; for the very capacity to rise must of necessity carry with it the power of falling, — even to the depths. This is at once the glory and the grandeur of man.

This is the corner-stone of Masonry. This has been the magnetic pole that has ever drawn me to Masonry. This is the strength and power and hope of Masonry — the supreme value of each man and the pre-eminent dignity of each person. The Pilgrim seeking for Truth and a Highway which will lead to happiness and the highest good, enters the sacred gate alone. As he passes mystic pillars, he proclaims his trust in God, — and begins his journey. It is a long road, a difficult road, a hazardous road full of symbolism and thought and contemplation. With the assistance of fellow travellers, he climbs the stairs, step by step, each so meaningful, each higher than the other. Alone he descends to the depths; alone he ascends to the heights. Then as an individual, tried and proved, he is received into that wider Fellowship of men like unto himself, who receive him as "a Brother". He becomes a builder, — and into what a marvellous Building he enters!

"The pillars of it go up like brawny trunks of heroes; the sweet human flesh of mankind is moulded about its bulwarks, strong and impregnable; the faces of little children laugh out from every cornerstone; the terrible spans and

arches of it are the joined hands of comrades; and up in the heights and spaces there are inscribed the numberless musings of all the dreamers of the world. It is yet building, ever building, yet ever built upon. Sometimes the work goes forward in deep darkness; sometimes in blinding light; now beneath the burden of unutterable anguish; now to the tune of great laughter and heroic shoutings like the cry of thunder. And sometimes in the silence of the night-time, you may hear, if you will listen, the tiny hammerings of the comrades at work up in the Dome, — the comrades who have climbed ahead." (Kennedy).

All this and more, I learn as I ponder on the deeper meaning of Christ-mas, and with the Wisemen behold a Child. With them, I bow in worship; I offer my gifts in all humility, and then rising, I return to my own country another way, — the Pilgrim's Way. Here I behold the Light of the World! Here I see the Hope of the World! With eternal Truths locked safely in my heart, I look up and journey onwards.

"On God and Godlike men, we build our Trust."

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

#### WHAT MAKES YOU A MASON?

What induced you to become a Mason? If we knew the answer to these questions and would think and meditate on them, we would realize just how far we had advanced on the paths that lead in the Light of Immortality. Motive determines our advance in Freemasonry.

If we come to the portals of Light because we wish to make more money, or more friends, or think we are merely joining a mutual admiration society, or because we wish to wear collars and regalia of distinction, or to be called "Master," we may, in a small way at least, get some of those things in the Lodge, but we will never become real Freemasons.

If we come to the shrine of the Temple of Light with a sincere desire for Light, we shall not be disappointed even should we possess but little wealth or worldly honor.

If we come with unworthy motives we shall find naught but dust and ashes.

All of the so called higher degrees in Masonry are worthy and amplify the first degree from which they all spring, but in the true sense the Sublime Degree of a Master Mason is the highest of all degrees. It is indeed the Master Degree, and who ever takes this degree in the genius and spirit of the ancient craft will never be in the least disappointed. He goes forth a new man, as one risen from the dead. He may not accomplish all in a short space of time, but, if the heaven has been placed in a good and honest heart, he will grow in grace and knowledge and become a pillar in the Temple of Light.

*The New Age.*

### RECOMMENDING A CANDIDATE

There are six considerations which justify a Mason in endorsing an applicant's petition for Freemasonry:

1.—The readiness and suitability of the candidate for Masonic teaching. Is he likely to be suitable material for the principles of Masonry to work upon?

2.—The candidate's attitude towards Benevolence. Is he stingy miserly and mean, has he a generous disposition (apart from the means of benevolence) towards his fellow men?

3.—His capacity to keep up with the lodge's demands and responsibilities. Will his family and business suffer?

4.—His general social position. Will he adjust himself to the social side of the Craft?

5.—What effect will his admission have upon the members? Will they welcome him or ignore him or make him feel that he is not wanted?

6.—Will his admission raise or maintain the standard and tone of the lodge. Would the lodge be better off without his influence working among the brethren? Will he uphold the tradition of the lodge?

Can the lodge afford to admit any one who does not come up to all these requirements?

*The Masonic Sun  
in the York Rite Trestle Board*

The Grand Lecturer of Mississippi believes that we are letting down the bars in accepting petitions for degrees, and states that the Masonic Lodge is not a reformatory and reformation should precede, not succeed, initiation. "If we accept men of immoral character we become a partner in his evil doings. No lodge ever went defunct because of carefully screening its membership. When we accept a petition of a man of doubtful reputation, we thereby sow seeds of dissension. It is easier to keep an immoral man out than it is to get him out. Getting him out disrupts the lodge; retaining him destroys the usefulness of the lodge in that community.

*The Masonic World, Missouri.*

### MASONRY'S JOB

For more than two centuries Freemasonry as we know it has pursued its peaceful way alone. It has sought no public acclaim; it has asked no help from outside its circle; it has permitted the world to think what it may about its object and its works.

Its best advertisement has been the fact that it does not advertise itself or its works. It has had and today has, only one job to perform, only one reason for existence. That job is to take the material that comes to it and make good men and better men out of that material. Everything else, our charities, all our works, are incidental to that one purpose.

### Masonry as a Character Builder, (concluded)

made at initiation but is acquired through the years with a combination of harmony, beauty, order and strength in accord with Masonic principles. Masons are admonished to cut, smooth, restrain and fortify some of the elements such as will-power, desires, courage, sympathies, fortitude, hopes, and affection, into a beautiful harmonious satisfactory life.

Let us bring them into play some cardinal virtues, temperance to aid us temper violent passions, fortitude to strengthen our weaker qualities, prudence to exercise wise judgment, and justice to make commendable use of the material at our disposal. This will result in the honour of calling ourselves truly Masons.

"Out of all that I hear and see  
Day and day I am building Me,  
I alone have the right to choose  
What to reject and what to use.  
"Nobody's workmanship but mine  
Can keep my structure true and fine  
Strong or feeble, false or true  
I build myself by the deeds I do."

*V.W. Bro. Fred Slade, Grand Steward G.L. of C. in  
Ont. in the Illinois Enlightener.*

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."

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

*A. W. Heinle*

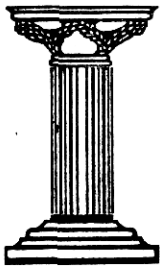
### A SACRED TRUST

Masonry had its origin in response to a demand of human nature for a community or fraternity wherein the welfare of a brother was to be a moving cause. Everyone who has come into this community has done so of his own free will and accord, and his avowed purpose only was advancement of the welfare of his fellowman. In coming thus freely into the fraternity he has yielded his individual will, in certain respects, to the government of the majority, or to the government of the Craft, in such manner as its laws and usages prescribe. In doing this he has trusted to the good faith and the combined wisdom of his brethren. He has placed in their hands in certain instances his honor and reputation. A trust more sacred could be reposed in no one.

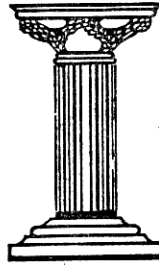
—The Freemason (Eng.).

If Masonry does that job — if it works at it honestly, even if with only a measure of efficiency, it has lived up to its purpose and fulfilled its highest ideal.

*Masonic Beacon.*



## Between the Pillars



### MASONRY AS A CHARACTER BUILDER

The most important job of Masons is the building of character, the material of which better men are built. The way to build a better world is first to build better man. In this vital work Freemasonry is a great aid. Every Mason gains from attending lodge. Let us remember always that it is not what we profess, but what we practice, that makes Masons. Unfortunately, many think of Masonry as a vast benefit society helping only each other, but actually in truth the real theme of Masonry is fellowship. Through Masonry we derive a wonderful education in history, public relations, public speaking, and good citizenship.

Masons are under obligation to build out of the material at their disposal, a character worthy of the fraternity whose confidence and fellowship they enjoy. If you take your personality and segregate its various components, ideas, ideals, dreams, ambitions, passions, hopes, likes, dislikes, loves, and hatred, and effectively use some and discard others, the resultant material character makes for harmony and happiness or discord and grief.

As we go through life it seems only natural that men can be small, mean, envious, deceitful and selfish, if not outwardly, at least in their thinking. Some of you have read or heard of that old saying, "What man needs not, nor sows, most abundantly grows." Character then must be cultivated, requiring unending toil and care. In that beautiful charge so ably handled by the Junior Warden, with reference to the Mosaic Pavement of King Solomon's Temple, with its black and white squares, seems to me descriptive of man's inner nature and outward life. How often have we been guilty of two opposite thoughts, wondering in the force of personal passion, whether to cool off and hesitate for better judgment and knowledge, or foolishly go right ahead, regretting soon a hasty decision.

Masonry then is constantly undertaking the very commendable, though sometimes arduous task of checking bad impulses and bringing out the finer qualities. We then can accept Masonry as a moral discipline, helping us to curb our passions, harmonize conflicting desires, and cultivating life's finer traits and graces.

It is only fair to state that the taking of degrees no matter how many, does not make a man a Mason. There must be constant repetition since the significance of the ritual takes

a while to penetrate. A full fledged Mason is in a position to take advantage of all the privileges and secrets of Masonry, but the taking of degrees merely places him in the path of becoming a true and worthy Mason.

We instruct the candidate that Masonry is a progressive science. We are not alluding merely to his growing conceptions and discoveries of Masonry and its ancient landmarks contained in Masonic literature. It emphasizes the need of advancement in personal knowledge and control, pointing out the climb ahead of us to gain life on the highest plane of Masonic behavior. Thus we are either straining upward or sliding backward. Masonry urges its members to strive always toward higher levels. The candidate is reminded that there is always something to follow, something ahead, some new knowledge to be discovered, some new truth to be applied. Masonry is a lifelong study and discipline.

We must endeavor to plan or blueprint perhaps our lives for the future by preparing a sound foundation. As an illustration you have been out in the country and noticed rambling farm houses, one room added here and there as necessity arose, or closer to home, errors in planning our municipal roads, buildings, water and sewer mains. Vast time, effort, and money is spent destroying and improving the original unimaginative look into the future. As an architect's blue prints are indispensable to praiseworthy constructive work, so equally essential is a definite objective to character building. Masonry has provided both principles and patterns. Its patterns inspire the Craft with the desire to acquire moral excellence and the application of Masonic principles in our daily conduct.

The candidate is presented with the Lamb-skin apron, a sign of purity, and is commanded to keep it unsoiled since we accept it as an emblem of virtue. It serves as a constant reminder of the ideal cleanliness of conduct Masons should strive to emulate, never allowing members of our Order to forget the objective of producing better men, and through them a finer social order. Practically every passage of the ritual urges the cultivation of virtue.

As the youngest Entered Apprentice, the candidate is ordered to stand erect, when the Instructor informs him that he now stands a just and upright Mason, and orders him ever to walk and act as such. In the excellent charge from the Book of Constitution, the candidate is reminded that his virtue, honour and reputation will be judged by the dignity with which he maintains the character he represents as a Mason. The subduing of evil passion and practicing of charity is the great objective that Masonry sets before its members as worthy of attainment. There is constant need of aid for distressed Masons, their widows and orphans.

Masonic character is not received ready-