



# Grand Lodge Bulletin

Editor: SAM HARRIS, P.G.M.

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## FREEMASONS AS CITIZENS

Freemasonry in Alberta is enjoying an era of great expansion and prosperity. Large numbers of applicants are crowding into our Lodge rooms. These are men who desire to join with us as Freemasons and work as Freemasons.

It is our aim and object to cultivate the mind of our brethren and to instruct them in the great tenets of our order — Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth, that they may help to promote a better way of life. We, in the Lodge, work with and for the individual and through the individual for the common good.

Once the member recognizes the aim of Freemasonry and accepts its teachings, he is free to go out into the world and work as a Master Mason. This is the point in a Freemason's career that is missed by many. We as individual Freemasons have a duty and obligation to our fellow men, that is, we are more than just members. We are workers in the affairs of the world. As I understand it, our objective is to be happy ourselves and to communicate that happiness to others.

I believe that was the original idea in the growth and formation of Speculative Freemasonry. There was some definite reason for its organization, and it has filled a void in the growth of our race, or it would not have its glorious history nor the prominent position it occupies today.

In order that you may understand and appreciate the object and aims of Freemasonry as I see them, I will refresh your memory on the very origin of our Speculative Freemasonry.

In the latter years of the 17th Century, when Puritanism became drunk with power, corruption ousted honesty, vice was loved for itself, while virtue was held in contempt. The Government basked in intrigue debauchery and brutality. Law was replaced by power, greed and desire. The Church had lost sight of its

duty to man and was fighting for political power in order to be able to prosecute those not in complete accord with its plans. The lot of the individual was unbelievably low. Power was everything and gambling, duelling, murder and rape, were the order of the day. The lot of woman was not as good as that of the beasts of the field. They were bought, sold or openly stolen just as circumstance dictated.

It was out of this slough of despair that was England at the end of the 17th century, that a new and brighter era developed. It was a slow tedious transition, and of course not popular with certain classes.

Hardship had fallen upon so great a number and in so many ways, that life became unbearable. Ways and means were sought to improve the lot of the common man. Groups began to meet and discuss their problems. Teachers and scientists met and organized to improve the study of nature, and later became known as the Royal Society.

The Masons' Lodges were soon seized upon as a ready-made foundation for the needs of the times. After the rebuilding of London, there was little interest in building. St. Pauls, the last of the great Cathedrals, had been completed by Sir Christopher Wren. But there was no money available for much building and Masonry fell upon hard times. The Lodges dwindled and members were few. In many cases a number of good, sound citizens had been taken into the operative lodges as non-operative Masons. Here was the ideal framework that was required. In the Masons' Lodges good men could unite in secrecy and enjoy their meeting without fear of reprisal by their enemies or the government.

The lodges began to grow in size and numbers, but their character had changed to Speculative Freemasonry, and their work became the

improvement of the mind, the cultivation of Brotherly Love and the promotion of happiness. William Preston in his 'Illustration of Masonry' (1772) gives the charges and tenets of our craft in the same language as we have them today. We are told the great objects and teachings of the Craft are the promotion of the correct knowledge of the duties we owe to God, our neighbor, and ourselves.

We are instructed to practice with assiduity the sacred tenets of our order which are: Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth. Preston says: "By these great principles Masonry unites men of every country, sect and opinion, and conciliates true friendship among those who might otherwise remain at a perpetual distance."

"Relief is the next tenet of the Craft, and, though to relieve the distressed is a duty incumbent on all men, it is particularly so on Masons, who are linked together by an indissoluble chain of sincere affection.

"To soothe calamity, alleviate misfortune, compassionate misery, and restore peace to the troubled mind, is the grand aim of the true Mason. On this basis he establishes his friendships and forms his connections."

"To be good and true is the first lesson we are taught in Masonry. On this theme we contemplate, and by its dictates endeavor to regulate our conduct. Influenced by this principle, hypocrisy and deceit are unknown in the lodge. Sincerity and plain dealing distinguish us, while the heart and tongue join in the promoting the general welfare and rejoicing in each others prosperity."

In every man there is a propensity to friendly acts which if properly exercised spreads in an ever increasing circle. Each individual develops his friendship and happiness, and this spreads to his neighbors, thereby uniting them in an indissoluble tie. Where friendship is unknown, jealousy and suspicion prevail. Friendship is a wonderful thing. If all peoples of the world were friends, how perfect it would be. There would be a lot more reason too for happiness. The greatest gift one person can give another is friendship.

Let this prevail within the lodge and let it be developed to its greatest degree. Some one has called the world a lodge, and if we accept such to be true, we should apply our tenets of the Freemason's lodge to the rest of the world. We should so live out of the lodge that we put into practice that great characteristic of a true Freemason — Brotherly Love.

If we cannot so be brethren within the lodge that we remain and act as friends and Brethren in our social and business life — then we have not received the spirit of Freemasonry. If we are not friends among ourselves, how can we be friends to others? First we must be true and faithful Brethren, or we shall not be able to put into practice the excellent principles inculcated

by our order.

The trouble usually arises if when Brethren put away their aprons they also put away Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth. The five points of fellowship are shelved until the next time the third degree is exemplified.

This is a plea for harmony within our Craft, and for action as individual Freemasons in our daily vocations, in order to provide the means for a better way of life.

We can only produce from what we have within us. We are not just a part of a glorious past. We must be living, active Brethren, working in harmony among our Brethren and giving a part of ourselves in the service of our fellow men.

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

### MASONRY AND THE INDIVIDUAL

Every individual is by nature endowed with certain traits of character which form the basis of reason and the conduct of life. In fact, these natural traits or tendencies are but signposts along the highway of life directing us in our words, thoughts and actions. If, by self-analysis, we can discover and discard those traits which seem to lead us in the wrong direction, and at the same time, cultivate those natural tendencies which point the way to higher achievement, then we have carried into effect one of the great principles of Masonry.

Our station in life is fixed many times by conditions or circumstances over which we have no control, consequently, the individual is master of his own destiny only in a certain degree. It would, therefore, seem that the niche which we are to occupy has already been carved for us by some natural or divine power, and the heights to which we can rise are pretty well defined by powers and deficiencies within us. Our ability to make proper decisions, the height of our own ambitions, and the relationship existing between ourselves and our fellowmen are the cardinal principles which determine our success as individuals and as citizens.

Masonry recognizes the inherent faults of the individual member, and endeavors by precept and example to curb irregularities. It provides an opportunity for self-improvement by regular attendance at its meetings and throughout the study and application of its beautiful ceremonies and lectures. It provides the opportunity for social contact, whereby men from every walk of life may meet upon a common plane. Here are taught the correct principles of righteous living; here we learn to get along with our neighbors and our fellow man. Here, we are taught the three great virtues, Faith, Hope and Charity, reminding us of our triple duties as Masons — those we owe to God, to our brethren, and to ourselves.

If Masonry, as a Craft, is to survive, then we must have faith in God, in our brethren, in

ourselves. Our Hope in the future depends on the quality and the sincerity of our Faith, while the journey of life will be judged by the greatest of all virtues, Charity!

—*Courtesy, The Philalethes.*

### MASONIC ANCHORAGE

Lodges which are always in a great ado over an incessant round of suppers, dances, entertainments, card parties and the like, too often overlook the real object of Masonry, which is character building.

It is far from me to decry those Masonic functions which offer opportunity for really useful activities — we need and must have such activities, but we should not delude ourselves into thinking that these functions are in themselves enlightening or educating agencies. Eating lunches and paying dues are not the most important functions of Masonry.

Some Grand Masters have forbidden dancing in any Lodge room in their jurisdiction on the ground that a Lodge room to a Mason should be as sacred as a House of Worship.

Many of us have grown old in the labor of Freemasonry — at least this seems to be the thought, even if unexpressed, of the younger members respecting us of older years. But let these young Brethren diligently compare their modern conceptions of the eternal fitness of things with the achievements of Masonry as presented today at the hands of these older members, and be content to follow the lead of sound, conservative thinking.

The danger to Freemasonry today is, in our opinion, not in the radio, not in the automobile, not in the picture theatres, but in the failure of our members to realize the fact that true Masonry is to be found only in the Ancient Craft Lodge and that the first care and duty of a Mason is to his Lodge. The tendency to change and modify the principles laid down in the early history of Masonry is too prevalent in many Grand Jurisdictions, and too often these changes are advocated by those to whom the leadership of the Jurisdiction has been entrusted. The Masonry which underrates ancestral and traditional truth soon ceases to deserve the name of Masonry either in theory or practice. It is for us, therefore, to cling to our time-honored system, preserve inviolate the lessons of those who have gone before us, guard our traditions and usages from sophistication from within and innovation from without.

—*The Masonic News (Illinois).*

### FUTURE OF MASONRY

The future of Masonry lies not simply in the dissemination of Masonic principles throughout the world. The great function of Masonry is to raise mankind to a higher realization of the beauty of truth, of the importance of human freedom, of the dignity of labour, of the glory of service in every righteous cause.

—*Masonic Trowel.*

### NO FUMBLING IN THE EAST

When a presiding officer of any fraternal organization is elected and takes the Chair, or advances "to the east," the level of his operations has been raised. Psychologically he faces new problems and they are of no lowly proportions. Naturally he believes that his demonstrated and recognized competence in his position is of the highest importance. And it is true, be he Worshipful Master, Most Wise Master, or Commander-in-Chief. But this mistake must not be made. He must not rest on his ability and underestimate or ignore the continuing psychological problems of getting along with his associates and superiors. If this factor is neglected, his competence will not be enough to ensure his continued success. For the brother who has been advanced "to the East," this problem is more acute than during any former year when he has been in an advancing line. Believe it, my dear Presiding Officer, your entire future may rest upon the skill with which you handle, let's say, your human relations. What a difference between a good popular brother "in the East," and one who is an egotistical fumbler.

—*Selected*

Legend of Hiram Abiff (Continued from Page 28)  
for having the guidance and light the drama has given him.

I have said that it is a mistake to accept the drama as history. Please bear in mind the admonition and warning of our Grand Master when I say to you further that it is also a mistake, if not an inexcusable blunder, to treat the drama as a mere mock tragedy or serio-comedy. It is not an ordeal to test nerve and courage, nor is it hazing or horse-play, for Masonry is neither savage nor juvenile. The exemplification of this drama should be as sincere, as solemn and as earnest as prayer; he who takes it trivially, or with perverted humor, betrays the shallowness of his soul.

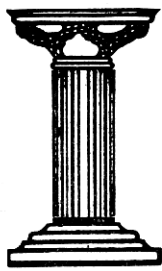
—*Courtesy of The New York Masonic Outlook.*

Make yourself nests of pleasant thoughts. None of us yet know, for none of us have been taught in early youth, what fairy places we may build of beautiful thoughts, proof against all adversity. Bright fancies, satisfied memories, noble histories, faithful sayings, treasure houses of precious and restful thoughts, which doubt cannot disturb, nor pain make gloomy, nor poverty take away from us — houses built without hands, for our souls to live in.

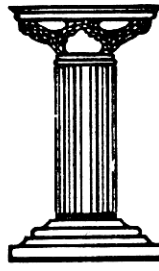
—*John Ruskin.*

If we aspire to and would be worthy of the true fellowship, we must so live, labour, and give that we may touch the stars, and bring down gifts of great truth for mankind.

Do you wish to start your next life with a profit instead of a loss? Then put God in your debt; serve humanity while on earth.



## Between the Pillars



### THE LEGEND OF HIRAM ABIFF

*Leon D. Schemerhorn, Post District Deputy Grand Master,  
Albany District, New York*

When one is raised to the Sublime Degree, he is impressed by the tragedy of Hiram Abiff beyond all other features of its superb ceremonies, for as the degree itself is the climax of initiation, that tragedy is the climax of a degree. To know and understand it, and to appreciate at the full its profound richness of meaning, is something to cherish and value while life lasts. The great actor, Edwin Booth, said that in all his research and study, in all his close analysis of the masterpieces of Shakespeare, in his earnest determination to make those plays appear real upon the mimetic stage, he had never and nowhere met tragedy so real, so sublime, so magnificent as the Legend of Hiram. It is substance without shadow — the manifest destiny of life which requires no picture and scarcely a word to make a lasting impression.

Our understanding should begin with realization that this drama is not intended to be historical but is, instead, ritualistic. We all know that a drama is a conflict between a man and other men or other forces, producing a crisis wherein his fate or fortune lies at stake. We do not mean a play as acted on a stage, which is merely the representation of drama, but actual drama as it occurs in our own lives. If it turns out favorably to the man, the drama is a comedy in that it has a happy ending; if it is adverse and he becomes a victim of a sufferer, it is said to be a tragedy.

Since a ritual is a set of fixed ceremonies which address themselves to the human spirit solely through the imagination, a ritualistic drama does not pay heed to historical individuals, times and places, but moves wholly in the realms of the spirit, where time, space and individuals are ignored. The clash of forces, the crimes and fates of the human spirit alone enter into it, and they hold true of all men, everywhere and always. There was a Hiram Abiff in history, but our Third Degree is not interested in him; its sole concern is with a Hiram Abiff who is a symbol of the human soul — yours, mine. It is, therefore, a mistake to accept the drama as history.

The work the Hiram Abiff of our legend was

engaged to supervise is the symbol of the work you and I have in the organization, supervision and direction of our lives from birth to death. The enemies he met are the symbols of those lusts and passions which in our own breasts, or in the breasts of others, make war on our characters and lives. His unhappy doom is that which befalls every man who becomes a victim to those enemies — to be interrupted in one's work, to lose mastership over one's self, and at the end to become buried under the rubbish of ill fame, defeat, weakness, disgrace, evil habits, scorn, and misery. The manner in which he was raised from that dead level to a living perpendicular again is the same manner by which any man may rise from self-defeat to self-mastery. The Great Architect, by the power of Whose Word Hiram was raised, is the same God whose help we also need to raise us out of the graves of defeat, or evil, or death itself.

Why is it that, in the exemplification of this drama, one is required to participate? Why could he not just view it as a spectator? Simply because it is his drama and not another's; no man can be a mere spectator of that drama, since it takes place in his own soul; it is intended to teach him one of the secrets of Master Mason, that the soul must rise above its own internal enemies if he is to be a Mason in reality as well as in name, for the reality of being a Master Mason is to be master of one's self.

Why did Hiram's three enemies come from within his own circle, and not from without? Because the enemies to be most feared by the soul are always from within — its own ignorance, lusts, passions and sins. Our Great Light reminds us it is not that which has ability to kill the body that we need most to fear, but that which has power to destroy the spirit. Why, after Hiram was slain, was there so much confusion in the Temple, so much anarchy among the Craftsmen? Because the Temple is the symbol of a man's character, which crumbles and falls when the soul, its architect, is rendered helpless; because the Craftsmen are symbols of our power and faculties, which fall into anarchy when not directed by the will at the center of our being.

Why does not the lodge attempt to explain this ritualistic drama at the conclusion of the degree? Because it is simply impossible for any man, or group of men, to discover the truth for another. The tragedy of Hiram Abiff, therefore, cannot be explained — each Mason must learn it for himself. The best he can obtain from others are hints and scattered suggestions. But if he will print the legend indelibly upon his mind, he may recall it and it may serve him when he is at grips with his own internal and personal enemies. He will be wiser and stronger

(Concluded on Page 27)