



Grand Lodge Bulletin

Editor: SAM HARRIS, P.G.M.

DO WE PRACTICE WHAT WE PREACH?

For one, who during the past two years at least, has, for very good reasons been unable to attend lodge regularly, it may be presumptuous for me to talk to a group of past masters on the topic "Masonry and Service". However, I am presumptuous. In my 17 years as a Mason (14 years as a past master) I have found that we do a lot of talking but not enough doing. Most of us are salesmen in our private avocations and there is no doubt in my mind that in our own businesses we do all we can to sell our particular product. In Masonry we have a ready made product — the sales pitch is already written down for we privileged few and is committed to memory by all initiates; but do we use it? I suggest, generally, no.

I know that when a Mason has a birthday he receives a greeting card; I know that when a Mason dies and if the family wishes, and if the secretary remembers, he receives a Masonic funeral. I know that if a Mason is ill he receives flowers and a visit from the Sick and Visiting Committee — but I think that this is all lip service.

I wonder how many of us have given any thought to the ritual which we pride ourselves on knowing so well. Have we ever considered the relation of our ritual to others besides ourselves?

When I was inducted into Masonry, and as always happens at refreshment hour, was asked my impressions, I said that I was deeply impressed by the serious solemnity of the ritual. I, and you, belong to other organizations but nowhere — no one can show me where else — so much profound and solid thinking has gone into a ritual of initiation. But do we remember it? Do we use it? Do we practice it?

You say "What can we do?". Let me remind you first that contrary to opinions held by most non-Masons, Masonry is not a benevolent organization. It behooves us then, as Masons and

gentlemen, to practice those tenets which we profess to believe in as individuals in Masonry and not sit back and expect the lodge as a whole to do what actually is our personal responsibility.

What are these principles? Brethren, they are older than Masonry — they are as old as your church and mine — your faith and mine — your Bible and mine. I am proud to know that our ritual includes the words "Let there be light — and there was light." That is the third verse of the first Chapter of Genesis. In that same book too are the words "In the beginning was the word and the word was with God and the word was God." I submit that that "word" is the basis of our philosophy and that philosophy can be summed up in the words of Christ himself who said "Do ye unto others as ye would have others do unto you." — and not — do unto others as you expect others to do unto you. There is a difference, you know!

Similarly, our ritual refers to "brotherly love, relief and truth."

The point that I am trying to make is that many of us practice the principles of Masonry in the same manner that many of us practice our religious beliefs, namely, only on those occasions when we attend lodge or as far as religion is concerned, when we attend church.

How can we justify our position in Masonry if we adopt merely a "twice-a month" (or less) attitude toward it?

I have reminded you that Masonry in itself is not a benevolent or charitable organization, although in cases of dire distress, as you know, our various lodges with assistance from Grand Lodge do offer a measure of help. It is up to us, then, as individuals in Masonry to practice ourselves the tenets which our ritual preaches. The Junior Warden's lecture in the E.A.D. refers to Faith, Hope and Charity. Faith in the Great A.O.T.U.; Hope in salvation; and Charity toward all men; and we are assured that if we,

as individual Masons practice these principals we shall be deemed to have arrived at the summit of Masonry. I often think that we have all been too concerned with arriving at the summit of the official positions in the lodge rather than the summit as defined at our initiation.

We have the very good fortune to be living in one of the few remaining free countries of the world. We are free to practice our personal and private avocations; to attend the church of our choice; to belong to the organizations of our choice. Our country is going through its greatest period of economic prosperity. Our province is, in effect, the only debt-free state in the world. What more could we ask? I submit that in our new-found prosperity and our sustained freedom we are all to a degree overlooking what should be our good relations with our fellow men. We are forgetting Faith, Hope and Charity.

There is evidence that most of the world of Masonry is not as fortunate as we. In England, as you read in your papers last week, there is a schism in the Church of England concerning Masonry. Even though the highest officials of the church belong to the order there is open strife among the clergy concerning it. In the non-democratic countries Masonry has been forced underground. These countries point up the fact that political, economic and other conditions can and do affect our order and it will survive only if we as individuals outwardly and sincerely practice what we preach. In our third degree we have the quotations from the 12th Chapter of the Book of Ecclesiastes, verses 1 to 7, which begins "Remember now thy creator in the days of thy youth . . ." and we all know that this is a reference to the life of man from birth to death. It could well be taken, too, as a vivid description of what this world is faced with unless we as Masons contribute our share to the welfare of mankind.

The last verse of that same chapter of the Bible is also worth noting. "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, for that is the whole duty of man."

W. Bro. W. C. Barrell, P.M., Unity Lodge No. 51, Alberta.

OUT OF PLACE

It is no time for amusement, when degrees are being conferred. When the members of a Masonic organization are permitted to amuse themselves at the expense of a candidate, while he is receiving the Degrees of Masonry, the charter should be promptly arrested. It is neither the time nor the place for childish pranks. The entire proceedings should be conducted with the utmost decorum or they should never be attempted. Moreover, the presiding officer who cannot properly govern his body, should be summarily removed from office, and another, better qualified put in his place.

Masonic News

THE CABLE TOW

The cable tow as a measure of length is not known outside Freemasonry, and has given rise to much fruitless argument. The Master Mason swears to answer and obey all lawful signs and summonses sent to him from a Master Mason's Lodge, "if within the length of his cable tow." Elsewhere in the ritual occurs the phrase, "a cable's length from the shore." Such allusions are symbolical of the binding covenant into which the Mason has entered, and of the "length" beyond which he should not go . . . In a Masonic catechism, dating back to early in the eighteenth century, the "length of the cable" was a figure of speech relating to the concealment of secrets.

What actually is a cable tow? We know that a cable is a strong rope made of cords twisted together, often around a centre cord. One definition of "tow" is the hemp or other fibre used in rope-making, but it is unlikely that this is the kind of "tow" here meant, in spite of the use in a Bradford lodge of the phrase "a cable of hemp or tow." The cable tow, or cable rope — that is, a towing rope or tugging rope — may colloquially be called a "tow," and it seems very likely that the term comes from German Masonry in which *kabel* means "ship's cable" or "rope", and *tau*, a "cord" or "rope," whilst *kabellaenge* means "cable's length."

The phrases "a cable's length," and "the length of my cable tow," can be regarded as having the same meaning. A cable's length is variously given at 100, 120 and 130 fathoms, equal to 200, 240, and 260 yards; but the length of an actual towing cable varies with conditions of water and wind, with the size and weight of the vessel to be towed, and with the thickness of the cable itself. A "cable" is a measure of length at sea, and is then about 100 fathoms, or about 200 yards—more accurately, one tenth of a nautical mile, and just short of 203 yards. No such length as any of the above was in the minds of those who arranged the early rituals, but eighteenth-century ideas of the length of a cable tow, as expressed by Dr. Oliver and still earlier writers, were arbitrary and unpractical. Every Brother was expected to attend his lodge if he was within the length of his cable tow, and that length is said to have been three miles — about as far, presumably, as he could be expected to walk.

An irregular print of 1766 says in a footnote; "A cable tow is three miles in length; so that if a Fellow-Craft is that distance from his lodge, he is not culpable on account of his non-attendance." It is idle to suppose that a speculative Mason's cable tow has, or ever did have, any physical length, in spite of Dr. Oliver and other early writers.

When a Freemason is summoned to attend the duties of his lodge, the phrase "if within the length of my cable tow" can mean only "if

THE BRIDGE BUILDERS AND MASONRY

The modern history of Freemasonry is intimately connected with the City of London. A congress of Freemasons was convened there by the four Lodges at the Apple Tree Tavern in 1717. Its results were the formation of the Grand Lodge of England and a modification of the Masonic system from which the Freemasonry of today has descended.

At high tide at London Bridge the Thames is some eight hundred feet wide.

In the reign of Henry II, Pious Peter, a chaplain of St. Mary's Cole—Church in the Poultry, built a stone bridge in lieu of the wooden one which had been destroyed by the great fire. The King helped him by a tax on wool, hence the saying: "London Bridge is built on woolpacks." The guild or Corporation of Bridge Builders, like the Corporation of Travelling Freemasons, from which it was an off-shoot, was a religious institution, but admitted laymen into the society. In other words, the great body of the Guild were secular, but the patrons were dignitaries of the Church. When by the multiplication of bridges, the necessity of their employment became less urgent and when the numbers of the workmen were greatly increased, the patronage of the Church was withdrawn and the Association soon afterward fell into decay.

Nothing has remained in modern Masonry to preserve the memory of the former connection of the Order with the bridge builders of the middle ages, except the ceremony of opening a bridge, which is found in the rituals of the last century, but even this has now become obsolete.

Masonic News

THE VALUE OF A SMILE

It costs nothing but creates much. It enriches those who receive without impoverishing those who give. It happens in a flash and the memory of it sometimes lasts forever.

None are so rich that they can get along without it and none so poor but are richer for its benefits. It creates happiness in the home and fosters good will in business. Yet it cannot be bought, begged, borrowed or stolen. It is something that is no earthly good to anybody till it is given away.

If at times you meet someone who fails to give you a smile, may I ask that you give one of your own? For nobody needs a smile so much as those who have none left to give.

—Texas Grand Lodge Magazine.

Grand Lodge will convene this year in the City of Edmonton on June 9th. All W.M.s and Wardens are invited to attend.

within all reasonable possibility," or "if within the scope of my ability," pleading no excuse thereto except, "sickness or the pressing emergencies of my public or private avocations."

*Bro. Bernard E. Jones,
In Freemasons' Guide.*

A GREAT BROTHERHOOD

Freemasonry having its temples in almost every civilized country in the world, seeks by its teachings to make its initiates wiser and better, for the individual benefit of each; but its chief object is to benefit the people, and make the world a better world for men to live in. It has at heart the welfare in this life of the people among whom it exists — in this life for its own sake, and not merely as a term of probation, and of preparation for another. This field of labor and exertion is large enough for it.

To set free the captives of power, and deliver those who are imprisoned in the house of bondage of craft, to make the life of the poor less a burden to them and some human hearts happier; to teach men their rights and enlighten those whom ignorance and error hold in fetters, is the work that it requires of its initiates.

And it thinks that every man who works to benefit others earns the right to have, and is worthy of honor and reward. It holds that no creed is of value except as it bears fruit in action; that what those learn who sit at its feet and listen to its teachings is chiefly valuable because it enables them to enlighten others. It is the advocate and defender, all the world over, of free government and liberty of conscience; its mission the apostolate of truth, justice and toleration.

It constitutes a great brotherhood of men of many tongues and races, cherishing for each other warm affection, cultivating the sympathies that make the hearts of thousands beat in unison, thrilling with the same emotions, inspired.

Selected

TONGUE OF GOOD REPORT

Being under "the tongue of good report" is equivalent in Masonic technical language, to being of good character or reputation. It is required that the candidate for initiation should be one of whom no tongue speaks evil. The phrase is an old one, and is found in the language of the eighteenth century.

In these early rituals the tongue is called the key to the secrets of a Freemason; and one of the toasts given in the lodge was in these words: "To that excellent key of a Mason's tongue, which ought always to speak as well in the absence of a brother as in his presence, and when that cannot be done with honor, justice or propriety, that adapts the virtue of a Mason, which is silence."

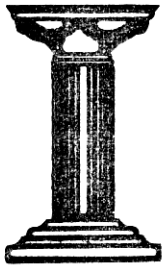
Coronado Trestle Board

"CONFERENCES"—Concluded from Page 36

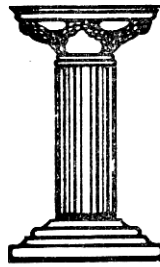
his untiring work has built up a most beneficial organization.

The Alberta delegation was honored to be present at the conferences. Much useful information was given and we look forward to receiving the Proceedings to refresh our memories.

M.W. Brother W. H. Jackson, Grand Master, Alberta.



Between the Pillars



CONFERENCES OF GRAND LODGES

The Conference of All-Canada Grand Lodges convenes only once every two years. It was not held this year but arrangements have been made to hold it next year in Toronto.

The several Conferences of the North American Grand Lodges were held, as usual, in Washington, D.C., from February 22nd to 25th inclusive, as follows:

1. The George Washington Masonic National Memorial Association;
2. The Grand Masters Conference;
3. The Grand Secretaries Conference;
4. The Masonic Service Association.

The Grand Lodge of Alberta was represented by the Grand Master, M.W. Bro. W. H. Jackson, the Grand Secretary, R.W. Bro. E. H. Rivers, and the Editor of the Grand Lodge Bulletin, M.W. Bro. Sam Harris, who arrived earlier in order to attend meetings of other bodies of which he is a member, and on the very kind invitation of the American Brethren they were privileged to attend the George Washington Memorial Association's meetings at the beautiful Memorial Temple situated at Alexandria, Virginia. Buses left the hotel at 9 a.m. Monday for a drive through the picturesque country to the Memorial Temple. It is a very striking and large building situated on Shooter's Hill overlooking the Potomac River and the surrounding country, which is closely integrated with the life and work of George Washington.

The meeting was held in the large auditorium of the Temple and was very expressive of the high regard and deep respect held for the life, work and ideals of George Washington, Master Mason, the first President of the United States of America. After viewing the various parts of the building and partaking of a delicious luncheon, we were taken by bus to Mount Vernon, to the home of George Washington, and also to his tomb where a fitting tribute was given by the Grand Master of California, and a wreath was laid to his memory. After viewing the Old Homestead we returned to the hotel and were entertained at a reception, and registered for the Grand Masters Conference which was to officially open at 9:30 a.m. on Tuesday. The meeting was called to order by the Grand Master of Tennessee, 1953 Chairman. After an Invocation and an Address of Welcome by the Grand Master of the District of Columbia, M.W. Bro. Joseph A. Hearn, Grand Master, Grand Lodge of Canada, in the Province of On-

tario, was duly elected Chairman for the 1954 Conferences — a pleasant honour for a brother Canadian. M.W. Bro. Hearn thanked the meeting for the honor and then very ably proceeded with the following agenda:

Freemasonry in the Modern World, J. McBrayer Sellers, Grand Master of Missouri.

Freemasonry in Peru, Gilberto Morey Sotomayor, Grand Master of Peru.

The Legends of Freemasonry, Newell A. Lamb, Grand Master of Indiana.

Freemasonry: An Instrument of Social Action, Carlos M. Pineiro, Grand Master of Cuba.

Clandestine Masonry in the Middle East, Ward B. Arbury, Grand Master of New York.

Kipling — The Mason, Charles B. Hayes, Grand Master of Iowa.

A banquet was tendered to the visiting Brethren at 7:30 p.m. and the meeting reconvened on Wednesday morning at 9:30.

The Commission on information for recognition presented its report. The individual members presented special topics on:

The Bible, Thomas S. Roy, G.M. Massachusetts; Freemasonry in France, O. H. Dabiesies, P.G.M., Louisiana; Freemasonry in Germany, E. W. Johnson, P.G.M., Minnesota; Freemasonry in Argentina, Arthur M. Warren, P.G.M., California.

The attendance was large, with representatives from the Grand Lodges of the United States, seven Canadian Grand Lodges, also from the Grand Lodge of Peru, Cuba, The Philippines, Argentina, Venezuela, Mexico, Germany and Costa Rica. A number of these Brethren gave interesting information on the practice of Freemasonry in their respective jurisdictions, which, while varying in many particulars from our own procedure was very instructive and will enhance our general knowledge of Freemasonry and may be quite useful.

The Grand Secretaries Conference was convened on Wednesday morning and a highly instructive and interesting program was presented covering the many phases of statistical and other work carried on in the Grand Lodge Offices, stressing the necessity of exercising every care to ensure the efficient and harmonious operation of the many constituent Lodges. The exchange of ideas will, without doubt, prove useful to all, and probably will broaden the entire outlook on Freemasonry.

On Thursday, the Masonic Service Association holds its 35th Annual Meeting. This Association presented a voluminous report on its various activities during the year 1953. It is to be complimented on the many forms of service rendered, both within the jurisdiction of its member Grand Lodges and to others outside the United States. It also operates a very efficient and extensive educational program and supplies much literature on Masonic Subjects, which is available to its members. M.W. Bro. Carl H. Claudy is the Executive Secretary, and

Concluded on Page 35