



Grand Lodge Bulletin

Editor: SAM HARRIS, P.G.M.

MASONIC EDUCATION

MASONIC Education is a time-honored and frequently discussed topic. In view of present and apparently continuing unstable world conditions, the value of a proper understanding of Masonry by the membership may be more important than ever to the present and the future of mankind. We need only to look at the headlines of the newspapers, listen to the radio commentators, study the considered opinions of the greatest living statesmen, or even take part in the smallest discussion, and an already perplexed mind finds confusion increased by the constant repetition of contradictory words.

Individualism	—	Communism
Peace	—	War
Freedom	—	Slavery
Idealism	—	Realism
Progress	—	Annihilation
Culture	—	Materialism
Religion	—	Atheism
Democracy	—	Totalitarianism
Tolerance	—	Discrimination

A look at these words so commonly flung about makes it quite clear that Masonry is much concerned with the outcome of the present struggle between light and darkness; its life depends on a civilization based on Masonic philosophy.

That Masonry may exert its proper influence and help to preserve its way of life, it is essential that the workmen of the Craft be skilled, that they have a thorough understanding of the principles by which they must build. They must study to attain this knowledge, as did the apprentices of old. To a great extent this is an individual search and not entirely the duty of the lodge. The latter should be a seat of instruction, but many good students have to do homework. It is the thinking, digging and exploring for oneself that enriches the mind and makes it capable of going ever farther in the search for Truth. Such fields in Masonry are many and wide: history, tradition, procedure, philosophy lie open to discovery by the enquiring member just for the effort of thinking. A vast amount of knowledge is available in many books and libraries. But investigation shows

that in this jurisdiction, and probably in many others, there is one great source of information which is used too little and by too few of the members. While exact figures are not at hand, it is judged probable that this book is read by 3%, at the most 7%, of our membership. Yet this information is published each year at considerable expense, and distributed to every lodge in the jurisdiction for the use of the officers and members. The reference, of course, is to "The Proceedings of the M.W. Grand Lodge of Alberta."

A considerable part of the "Proceedings" is, as the name suggests, actually the business of our Grand Lodge. This invariably includes a worthwhile address by the Grand Master and frequently addresses by other outstanding Masonic speakers. To have an informed membership, the business of the session should be studied, as this is practically the only way for the fourteen thousand who do not attend Grand Lodge to learn their own business. If a member cannot be present at Grand Lodge communications, and certainly all can not, he can at least get a much better understanding of its actions and intentions than is generally gathered from the report presented by the Worthy Master or officers on their return. This is frequently meagre and fails to provoke discussion; occasionally the only report submitted to the lodge is the expense account. Perhaps through greater effort here, more interest could be stimulated in the study of the printed "Proceedings." It should be an important and never-ending duty of the Worthy Master of each lodge to induce greater use of this book by the members.

Particular reference must be made to the importance of the section on Fraternal Correspondence, which generally fills 75 to 100 pages. This entails a great deal of work on the part of the reviewers and the committee is to be congratulated on the wealth of Masonic material culled from the Proceedings of other Grand Jurisdictions and presented in such concise form. It seems a shame that so much time and

energy should be spent by these faithful brethren when the general membership make so little use of it.

Two difficulties confront the reviewers in compiling this section. One of these arises from the fact that as the number of jurisdictions with whom Alberta is in Fraternal Relations is gradually increasing, the reviews have in many instances had to be shortened very drastically. The result is that the reviewer can merely remark that some excellent suggestions or outstanding addresses were given, but because of lack of space these cannot be quoted. Thus this good thinking benefits only the reviewer and is lost to the membership. A further difficulty is encountered as the Proceedings of many Grand Lodges contain very little of interest outside that Jurisdiction and it is often evident that the reviewer has had to struggle valiantly to find material to do that Jurisdiction the courtesy of a place in our Proceedings. Is it necessary that page after page of this valuable space be filled with a repetition of uninteresting statistics? Would not mention that such and such Proceedings were reviewed be sufficient? The space thus saved could then be advantageously filled with those otherwise omitted suggestions and addresses to which reference is often made. Perhaps the individual reports of the reviewers could be examined by the Committee on Fraternal Correspondence as a whole, so that the agreed highlights and most valuable information could be printed at greater length.

It may be that the Committee on Fraternal Correspondence would find sufficient valuable Masonic information that this could be printed separately in booklet form and made available to members at minimum cost through the lodges. Members, especially newly made Masons, frequently appear anxious for Masonic reading and study, but do not know where to start. If they do, they quite often get a book little adapted to these times.

"Water, water everywhere,
But not a drop to drink."

The Grand Lodge Bulletin, as is its due, is widely circulated and well read by the membership. For this reason, the need for increased Masonic Education is emphasized through its pages, in the hope that through the consideration of many brethren, some good policy may evolve. We cannot be negative in our Masonry and expect things to do themselves. We must remember that there is a great difference between intention and achievement, between motive and consequence. It may be that because we are convinced that the principles of Masonry are right, we feel they must prevail and are inclined to calmly await the fulfillment of their high ideals. It will take every Mason's best effort! We have received the world as a legacy which none of us is allowed to impair, but which, on the contrary, every generation is bound to bequeath in a better state to its posterity.

Make Masonry the gateway to a brighter future for mankind.

M.W. Bro. C. C. Hartman, M.D.,
Past Grand Master, Alberta.

THE BURDENSOME JOURNEY

Once upon a time, there lived in a far off land a group of simple folks who were not endowed with many wordly goods. Theirs was a hard lot and they determined to move on to a better place. They gathered together their few belongings and started on their long journey.

Each had so few goods to carry that he was able to place them in a bag which he carried on his back. The load was light; but as is well known by carriers of burdens, even a light pack gets heavier as one progresses along the way.

One of the younger men of the group soon began to tire. He noticed that others in the group were carrying such lighter packs that he began to envy them. Before too long he induced one of the others to exchange packs with him.

For a time he was happy as he had acquired a lighter bundle. But soon he noticed that this too was starting to be too heavy for him. Again he looked around and envied another who was carrying a lighter bundle. And again he made an exchange.

The experience was repeated. Before too long this pack was too heavy to carry. He then tried to exchange the pack with an older man of the group. But he was not successful. The old man asked him how many times he had done this before and the young one told him.

"My son," said the old man, "you have not yet learned that in this life everyone has his burden to carry. Sometimes we look about us and cannot see the pack upon the shoulders of our neighbor, and we envy him. Sometimes that burden is not visible as he is concealing it for reasons of pride, or because he has courage. But everyone has his burden to carry. Wise is he that can carry his with dignity and courage."

(Adapted from an old Italian folk story)

—Brother Alphonse Cerza

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JOY OF GOING ON

Those marvelous old ritualists in the eighteenth century who fabricated the degrees of Freemasonry had many objects in view. They were not concerned with building primarily a splendid and lofty ceremonial; nor were they interested in constructing an arcanum in which amazing secrets should be hidden. The secrets of philosophy and mysticism, like the secrets of chemistry or mathematics, are forever reserved for the chosen few who have the native capacity to understand. The teachings of esoteric Masonry are, like the formulas of the chemist and the axioms of Euclid, proclaim everywhere as conspicuously as the summer sunshine, but only the seeing eye observes them. No, the purpose of the Masonic ritualists was simpler.

They desired to instill into the heart of the young Mason a love of knowledge; that is the ostensible and declared meaning of the second degree. They sought to inflame his soul with a passion for mental

LODGE ATTENDANCE

There seems to be many conflicting ideas among members of the Craft as to why it is important to attend Lodge communications. The first thing we must all realize is that in order to accomplish anything worthwhile we must keep working at the task at hand. Far too frequently we hear those who are quite regular in attendance complain that Lodge meetings are dull, uninteresting, and at times boring, which causes us to wonder just where the fault lies.

The object of a Masonic meeting is the setting forth of certain ideals and truths in order that harmony and growth in spiritual values may be promoted. Some Brethren mistake a Lodge communication for something like a debating society. Others, and we are thankful they are few in number, seem to think it rather smart to pick flaws and enter into senseless argument, with the result that many gatherings take on the likeness of a verbal contest where much is said and very little accomplished.

It is the duty of the Master of a Lodge to see to it that the work is conducted impressively and with dignity at all times.

The manner in which degrees are conferred, educational or entertaining programs rendered or business transacted, should be of such nature that every Mason present could go away from the Lodge with the feeling of having been strengthened and uplifted by the contacts held with all present. Nothing is more contrary to the purposes of Masonry than for any of the Brethren to leave with an unpleasant taste in the mouth.

Let us remember that Masonry is a co-operative institution, and that anything separative is definitely out of place. Masonry is a builder, not an agency for tearing down. We should never lose sight of the fact that building requires working together from the same blueprints or ideals.

Once this is deeply imbedded in the minds of the Brethren, attendance records will reveal a great increase, and what is still better, Masonry will push on to greater heights in character development, and there will be a marvellous advance toward the attainment of its goal—that of promoting true brotherhood in the world.

—Orphan's Friend and Masonic Journal



JOY OF GOING ON (Continued)

and spiritual growth; that is the lesson of the first degree. They desired him to devote himself to a search for the truth that should dominate his life; that is the ideal of the third degree.

The marks of the Masons are not glib phrases, ready answers and shiny jewelry, but an insatiable curiosity, a love of learning and an irrepressible desire to know. Truth, the radiant angel, driving men onward, and upward, a flying ideal, forever pursued and never overtaken, this is the ideal of the true Mason.

—Masonic Digest

MASONIC GOOD TASTE

The Masonic Order has its conventions and its formalities just as society and the common associations of men must have accepted codes of conduct. And a proper deference to these recognized conventionalities, whether in the common exchanges of individuals or in Masonic relationships, always mark one as possessing and practicing the traits of good breeding.

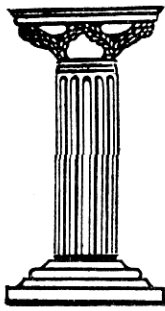
While there are no written penalties for violations of the accepted courtesies, beyond the censure or contempt of others, the man who is indifferent to the little niceties soon finds himself quite isolated—even within the narrow walls of a temple.

The Lodge room is no place for exhibitionism, nor should it ever become a sounding box for partisan politics, intolerance or bigotry. The altar is not a rostrum for the voicing of purely personal ideas, and the great lights of Masonry should never shine on those who have no better use of their time than to undermine and destroy the good name of another. The Masonic Temple is neither sanctuary nor an asylum for those who would slander others; it is not a harbor or a refuge for those who would hide behind Masonry while indulging in unMasonic activities.

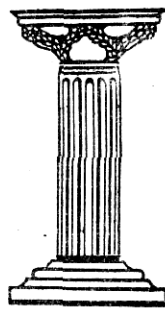
Masonry had its origin in antiquity and there are no definite historic dates to mark the epoch when this great fraternity first set its anchors in the human heart, but Masonic lore is rich with testimony that in the early days Masons took Masonry seriously because they regarded the fraternity as an institution deep-rooted in piety and the latent virtues of men. They never mixed levity with Masonic activity; they apparently never felt the urge to rush proceedings to adjourn in short form in order to get the card games under way. When the Craft was at labor the world, with all its concerns, was shut away, and no matter how repetitious the ritualistic and routine orders might seem, no one tired of them and no one was disposed to gloss over them.

In the intervening years the Order has not changed though one may sometimes be inclined to think otherwise; and there are evidences at times that some individuals regard their Masonic obligations rather lightly. When such revelations are made, no Mason should hesitate to call to the attention of the errant Brother, the gravity of his offense. For after all, Masonry is old and rich with tradition; its lessons have never become commonplace, and while it is neither a religion nor a philosophy, it is a way of life that has fired the imaginations of millions just as it has buoyed the hopes and faith of other millions all over God's world. And just as some natural laws are obvious to everyone, so good form, fraternal courtesy and the common graces inherent in Masonry are without mystery, and every man worthy of being called a Mason should have no difficulty in showing his respect for them.

—The Trestle Board



Between the Pillars



DRAWING THE LODGE AN OLD CUSTOM

The old custom of "Drawing the Lodge" is one dropped entirely from sight within our modern lodges:

It was the custom of early brethren to meet at various taverns, and the name of the lodge was derived from the tavern in which it met. In these taverns the floors were often sanded, just as they are today in some of the old out-of-the way inns.

The tyler drew the designs that we now show by means of the chalk or charcoal. The figure employed was an oblong square representing a building with various Masonic emblems. Of course, the two pillars always had the most prominent place. In addition there were the Seven Steps, Tesselated Pavement, the Dormer or window, the Flaming Star, the Letter G, the Tomb of Hiram, the Square, the Plumb Rule and the Laced Tuft.

These figures were carefully depicted in black and white, the floor having been often whitened to form a strong contrast. This was the origin of the modern Tracing Board of our Lantern Slides.

The emblems were much more carefully explained to the candidate than they are today. After he had received his first Masonic lesson he was handed a pail of water with a "mop" and directed to rub out the drawing on the floor, lest some "cowan" or intruder might by chance see the "drawings on the floor" and so learn the secrets of Masonry. The old French rituals described it as "The Mysterious Picture," thus drawn on the floor.

The tyler usually received a small sum—say 1s.6d., for "Drawing the Lodge." In the old cash books we find frequent entries such as "Paid Tyler and Drawer"; "Tyler's Fee for four Makings."

One of the first entries made of the purchase of "pails" in Old Wapping Lodge was in 1766; The first purchase of a "mop" was recorded in 1793. The last mop bought was in 1808.

Lawrence Dermott, in his "Address to the Reader," makes sarcastic reference to this old custom when he says "Nor is it uncommon for the tyler to receive ten or twelve shillings for drawing "Two Sign Posts" with chalk, etc., and writing "Jamaica Rum" upon one, and Barbodoes Rum" on the other;

and all this (I suppose for no other use than to distinguish where these liquors are to be placed in the lodge."

The lodge is those days referred, not to the room in which the brethren met, but to the actual "Drawing on the Floor" of the various Masonic signs and emblems. In the "Consecrations of a Lodge," as practiced today, the brethren who sign the petition for the warrant are placed around "The Lodge," that is, around "The Tracing Board of the First Degree," and the consecrating officer in his preambulation performs certain acts symbolical of the tenets of the Craft; so that as late as 1820, the Tracing Board was referred to as "The Lodge."

Drawing the designs on the floor with chalk and charcoal must have been quite some task, so that later metal or tin templates, cut to the shape of the object required to be delineated, were used. This saved the tyler a great deal of extra hard work and gave better results. From this grew the expression, "Framing the Lodge." Tape was also used for the outer lines of the design or to serve as a guide for the draughtsman.

—The Masonic World



What impressiveness would be added to our work if we were to realize that every word spoken during the exemplification of the Master Mason's Degree is an expression of some portion of the handiwork of the Great Architect of the Universe.

Unhappily we realize that the time is fast passing when the officers of our Lodges and those who witness that great tragedy of the Master's Degree go home from the Lodge feeling that they have spent an evening just a little closer to God. Nor will those days ever return until we realize that we, as Mason's, are working for the glorification of God and the instruction of the initiate, rather than for the amusement and entertainment of the onlookers.



ATTENTION all Grand Lodge Officers, Members of Grand Lodge and all Worshipful Masters and Wardens. The Fiftieth Annual Communication of Grand Lodge will be held in the City of Calgary, at the Hotel Palliser on Wednesday and Thursday, June 8th and 9th, 1955, commencing at 9:00 a.m. All Worshipful Masters are particularly requested to attend.

A POETIC THOUGHT

He has not served who gathers gold,
Nor has he served whose life is told
In selfish battles he has won,
Or deed of skill that he has done;
But he has served who now and then
Has helped along his fellow men.

THIS CONCLUDES OUR FIFTIETH YEAR OF
PUBLICATION.

—S|H.