

A Merry Christmas To Everyone

Vol. 21, No. 4

DECEMBER, 1955



Grand Lodge Bulletin

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*May you enjoy
the peace of a
Merry Christmas*



THE BUILDER

The birth of the little Child of Bethlehem marks the apexed watershed of Time. All time leads up to Him, — B.C., — Before Christ." All time leads from Him, — A.D., — "Anno Domini," — "The Year of our Lord." We cannot date a letter without acknowledging His pre-eminence.

He came as a Builder. In the carpenter shop at Nazareth, He so skilfully and conscientiously made plows for the tiller of the soil and yokes for the oxen. "His trade was humble, but He gave to it such pride of high endeavour that His skill won fame beyond His borders, and men came from far to buy His plows that never turned poor furrows, and still more His perfect yokes."

He drew the graphic and arresting picture of a foolish man who built his house upon the sand, as contrasted with the wise man who placed the foundation upon a rock, — and "the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not, for it was

founded on a rock." At the age of thirty, He went forth to preach and teach and heal, and He said He would build a Kingdom not of the material things of this world but a Kingdom of Truth and Love and Service, and this Kingdom would never pass away.

Man in his highest and best has always been a builder. Primitive man was inspired by two compelling urges — the need of a place of shelter, a home for himself and family; the second came from a mystical instinct of his soul, — a temple of worship which would include the innate ideas of ritual and sacrifice and sanctity, as well as a sacred resting-place, permanent and indestructible, for the repose of his lifeless body. These buildings would be constructed from materials nearest at hand, — clay or wood or stone. Each completed work would reveal some definite form or pattern and also enshrine some mystery. Thus we find that strange stone circle at Stonehenge or the Pyramids by the lone and level sands of an Egyptian desert. As the minds of men were widened and deepened, from worshipping

in sacred groves and silent forests, they dreamed of massive columns of stone to match the tapering trees of wood and through the visions of his mind and the might of his hand he created the Temples at Babylon by the Tigris and at Luxor by the Nile.

But one of the greatest and most sacred Temples ever conceived by the upward-looking heart and soul of man was the Temple built by King Solomon, erected on the very summit of Mount Moriah on the threshing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite. Situated on a plateau over 2,600 feet above sea-level, this Temple of God was of unrivalled beauty. "Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion. Walk about Zion and go round about her; tell the towers thereof." (V.S.L.) What a scene of entralling beauty met the expectant eyes of the pilgrim bands as this noble structure burst upon their gaze! "High above the city, within the enclosure of marble cloisters, cedar-roofed and richly ornamented, the Temple itself stood out as a mass of snowy marble and of glistening gold, glittering in the sunlight against the half-circling green background of Olivet." Never in all his travels had the Jew ever seen any place of worship comparable to this Temple of his Fathers. Nothing in proud Antioch or even in imperial Rome on the Seven Hills excelled it in architectural splendour. Nor has there ever been, either in ancient or modern times a sacred building equal to the Temple of Solomon, whether for situation or magnificence. Behind those majestic Pillars of Boaz and Joachin at the entrance gate, the Light forever shone, — and it shines today.

As I dream and meditate on the building of this noble fane and the builders who wrought it with labour and sacrifice in cedar and marble and gold I pause to remember that all the work was done in silence. There was no shouting no applause, no sound of mallet or chisel, — all was wrought in this Temple Mount in muted stillness. Bishop Heber thus describes the scene:

"No workman steel, no ponderous axes ring,
Like some tall palm, the noiseless fabric sprung."

Thus do loyal Masons humbly live and work. They labour for the Great Architect who knows and understands, and He allots the wages.

Yes, we too are builders in this mould of time. Longfellow so nobly tells the tale:

"All are architects of Fate,
Working in these walls of Time;
Some with massive deeds and great,
Some with ornaments of rhyme.
For the structure that we raise,
Time is with materials filled;
Our todays and yesterdays
Are the blocks with which we build.
Truly shape and fashion these;
Leave no yawning gaps between;
Think not, because no man sees,
Such things will remain unseen.
In the elder days of art,

Builders wrought with greatest care
Each minute and unseen part;
For the Gods see everywhere.
Let us do our work as well,
Both the unseen and the seen;
Make the house, where Gods may dwell,
Beautiful, entire, and clean."

Let us therefore never think that because our talents are few and our work seems small that it is unimportant. On the Island of Jersey in the historic English Channel, stands an old stone church. It has been there a long time. The passing of centuries have not destroyed it. The church and the cliff on which it stands have withstood the wind and the waves and the storms of the long years. The walls of the church are made of stones of all sizes, for each one of the humble worshippers was asked to bring one stone, — as much as he could carry. Strong men brought large boulders; women and girls carried smaller one. A babe in his mother's arms clutched a pebble, — and the Master Builder used them all. There the old building stands to the glory of God and the service of mankind. In the Temple of the City of God, in a new and better world, each man man plays his part. In each Masonic Square each member with his working tools well and truly lays each stone.

"Nothing useless is, or low;
Each thing in its place is best;
And what seems but idle show
Strengthens and supports the rest."

And now we return to the Christ Child, the Child of Bethlehem, for Christmas is the Festival of the child. Little faces glow and eyes sparkle. Little voices sing and happy Carols ring. It is Christmas Day! Our thoughts and prayers are for all the children of a sad and bewildered world. So many are homeless; so many are hungry; so many are cold. Masons do not forget the uplifted faces of little children nor turn a deaf ear to their appealing cry. We will build a bridge for them to a happier and a better world, where none shall hunger nor thirst, where they again may laugh and play, and none shall make them afraid.

An old man going on a lone highway,
Came at the evening cold and gray
To a chasm vast and deep and wide
Through which was flowing a sullen tide
The old man crossed in the twilight dim,
The sullen stream had no fears for him;
But he turned when safe on the other side,
And built a bridge to stem the tide.
"Old Man," said a fellow-pilgrim near,
"You are wasting your strength by building here;
Your journey will end with the closing day;
You never again will pass this way.
You've crossed the chasm deep and wide.
Why build this bridge at eventide?"
The builder lifted his old gray head.
"Good friend, in the path I've come," he said,
"There followeth after me today
A youth whose feet must pass this way.
This chasm that's been naught to me
To that fair youth a pitfall be.
He, too, must cross in the twilight dim.
Good friend, I'm building this bridge for him."

—Author Unknown
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ARAB MASONRY

It is not generally known that the Arabs of Egypt and Asia Minor still practice a primitive Masonry, and have a Legend of its origin at Solomon's Temple, but they have no division of instruction into degrees such as practiced in Europe. They have not only the signs of the first three degrees, but many beyond them. The son of an Arab spends his entire youth in preparation and learning before he is "made a Mason," and given the "Charge of Solomon." The Arabs say that all Masons under the ancient Charges were allowed to make Masons of any worthy true descendant of a worker on the Temple, and further relate that Masonry was carried into Europe by the original craftsmen, their sons and grandsons who finally began to make Masons of certain of the nobility, in order to gain their protection and eventually of others not "true descendants."

M. Edmond Demoulins, in his work, "Anglo-Saxon Superiority," says that in all the Oases or Deserts, under Moslem rule, Secret Brotherhoods (Zalouahs) exist. They have their passwords, signs of recognition, and are ruled by an official hierarchy which starts from the Grand Master or Khalif, and ends with subaltern agents as messengers, banner-bearers, guards, etc. There are General Assemblies for receiving instructions from the Khalif, or the initiation of fresh members. Amongst the Moslems throughout the world there is a very ancient secret society which claims to derive from the Koreish, or guardians of the Kaaba, who were a superior Arab race and the descendants of Ishmel, and of which Mahomed was a scion.

—"Masonic News"

THE APPEAL OF FREEMASONRY

Freemasonry appeals to me, first, by its fellowship; and next to the home of the House of God it is the most blessed influence in my life. Its simple and profound faith, its wise and practical philosophy—uniting the wisdom of love with the love of wisdom—illumine my mind, as its genius of fraternity warms my heart. But still more, Masonry appeals to me as an agency for the organization of moral faith, practical brotherhood and social idealism, the worth and power of which we have not yet realized. In a day when the brotherhood of the world is broken, our ancient and noble Craft has an opportunity, the like of which it has never before, to use its influence and power to spread that fraternal righteousness without which the future will be as dark as the past.

—Joseph Fort Newton

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The lessons of Freemasonry are directed to the senses of man. It does not regard the outward and visible sign of a man's station in life, but tries in all the degrees to bring forth the mental, moral and spiritual attributes of the candidate.

Today, as never before, man stands upon the threshold of a new era. Our heritage is but a dream depending upon the principles of our civilization.

Our hopes and dreams of a safe and saner world are not beyond the possibilities of achievement when in focus with men with square actions and upright intentions, determined to share in the act of spreading the bond of friendship and brotherly love, beyond the door of the lodge. Our voices can be heard and our songs of glory told, but the mirror of our actions are but the pathway of our souls.

In the words of Emerson: "Life is a series of surprises. We do not guess today the mood, the pleasure, the power of tomorrow when we are building our own living."

Let us be the first to give a friendly sign, to nod first, smile first, speak first, and first to forgive. This is brotherhood.

—Brother Eric Williams, M.M.

MM IS CONFERRED 42 YEARS AFTER FC

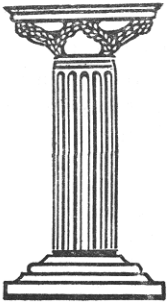
Maritime Lodge (Portland)—An event of April 29 in this Lodge is not likely ever to be duplicated in this or any other Lodge. The MM degree was conferred on one who had been a Fellowcraft for 42 years. The candidate was Charles Logan and the work was conferred as a courtesy for Unity Lodge No. 51 of Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. Adding a special touch was the fact that Wm. Wood, PM, who presided for the first section was present in the Canadian Lodge over four decades ago when Brother Logan received the FC degree.

—Oklahoma News.

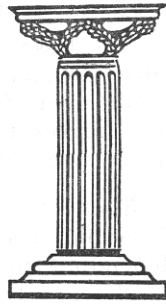
LOOK AHEAD

The golden age of Masonry is not behind us. It lies before us. Upon its past no human institution can long maintain a useful existence. It is an inexorable law, as applicable to Masonry as to the individual man, that through present worth and present deeds alone can the respect and approbation of mankind be deserved, and maintained. Glorious as in the past, or happy the present, how much more bright and glorious may be the future if the present opportunities shall be wisely grasped and improved. In Masonry he who merits bears the palm; Deeds, not words, are the standard by which the Craft estimates the value of its members.

—Selected



Between the Pillars



SEARCH FOR BROTHERHOOD

My article was written more especially for the attention of our younger brethren who have entered within our portals of recent years, in which our Craft has been well blessed. But, like all other projects in its form of development, it must constantly be remembered a solid foundation is a definite must. It is only obvious, to build one must start from the ground up.

Likewise, with Freemasonry we must build from the ground up. The next step is to see that we build with good material. This might be attributed to the fact that you are a member of our Craft. For all who knock and come of good report may enter into our deliberations and become a builder. All of us, irrespective of rank, are builders of men. This is not a simple task. What is in life that is worthwhile? We are the builders of character.

Each man who enters into our mysteries must first be obligated into our secrets. In doing so we obligate the candidate on the Volume of the Sacred Law, this being the centre pillar of our Order. On what better foundation could we build? But we go further and place the candidate at the N. E. corner of the lodge.

There we try to point out the first lesson of brotherhood. Poor and penniless we inform this brother of his uselessness to his fellowman. How important is this lesson? For it contains the real meaning of brotherhood and of sincerity of purpose.

No one can foretell the future of our lives, and still many are forced to look back over the past and recall this degree with a newer and fuller meaning.

We were asked to contribute something for the welfare of a needy brother. This was to all intents and purposes to deal with that ever-demanding cry for charity. A cold word. But one which should never be erased from the heart of a Freemason. In life one is faced with many problems and the road is extremely uncertain. How can one say when it will be your turn to give or receive. Let us not content ourselves with this as a matter of form, for one degree. For if we do, it becomes not only a mockery, but a falsehood.

To the brother who is desperate and in need may have the positive assurance of your honesty and your sincere purpose to give and not to count the cost. This is not always of a monetary form. It has a far deeper and reaching effect, for even the greatest blessings of life have no dollar and cent tag. But the cry is there and it must be faced. Far too many are crying, not for charity alone, but for brotherly love.

To see a brother through a rough storm in life, to find a solution to his immediate wants, to help him at all times and in all places is your solemn vow, my brother. Have you fulfilled that sacred trust? That is your challenge; are you prepared to see it through?

After all, to be a Freemason is not attributed to your regularity at lodge, important as this may be. For this is only the top surface and of no value to you as an individual unless it is carried with you into your everyday life. This is the testing ground of your innermost self. But this is not all, my brother.

A builder who locks up his tools in a tool chest and has lost his key is of no value. So obvious, so senseless, no matter how exacting and skilled in his workmanship he might be. His instruments by which he works and his skill and how to use them are together the final combination on which to judge.

Our tools are not of a metallic substance, but are of greater value than those of modern warfare if applied in their proper use. Freemasonry is to build, not to destroy; to withstand, not to withdraw; to go up, not to come down; to draw, not to push aside.

Humanity is hungry with all its achievements and scientific knowledge at hand. It may be well to ask why so many are utterly lost in a world of civilized achievements as we have today. Even recognized authority as we have of modern science has developed far beyond the understanding of man's conception, which has brought our present generation to the realization that we are only living on a frail thread of existence. For it would be only a matter of hours and it could be history. Not a pleasant thought. But it's now become a constant menace and awareness to all right thinking men. Destruction for greed, for power and domination. A perpetual menace to destroy all the finer and better things of life. Surely no man will endorse this in place of the teachings which we seek to find in the brotherhood of man and the Fatherhood of the Most High.

Our past has gone, but the future is the open door in which to focus our actions. Nowhere in our ritual is greed or menace upheld. Freemasonry is the dynamic driving force that is a perpetual motion of which the individual is at all times its engineer.

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