



Grand Lodge Bulletin

Editor: SAM HARRIS, P.G.M.

MASONRY

It has been said that "Masonry is a great and noble institution" and I don't suppose there is any brother "worth his salt" who would deny such a title to our fraternity. Its greatness has been revealed down the centuries and its nobility has been engraved on the hearts and institutions of man by the many deeds of charity, chivalry and devotion to the finer things of life. These virtues, it has established in many countries and many climes, and out of Masonry have come men and groups of men whose dominating impulse is to serve their fellowman.

The foundation for such noble purposes is to be found in the opportunities presented in all our Lodges for the development of character among men of various talents and backgrounds. Artisan can meet with the artist, scholar with teacher, men with diversified talents, meeting in brotherhood and interchanging ideas. Here may meet all shades of political thought, diamonds in the rough, highly cultured citizens, but all willing to subjugate their individual likes and dislikes to the common ideal of brotherhood. Thus, coming from all walks of life, abiding friendships are cemented by this splendid majestic amalgam of "brotherly love". Each Lodge has for its ideal the seeking, striving, and finding of goodness, truth, beauty and wisdom, so that its members may work out their findings in the pattern of daily living.

That is the ideal, and it may be, conscious as we are of the heights we must climb toward that ideal, that discouragements, both individual and collective, may come. How often we fall short of our fondest dreams. "We would to good but Yet to fall short of the ideal is not to refute the ideal, and if we do not immediately attain the heights, we must see that, 'Not sudden in a minute all is accomplished, all is done'". This is revealed in the book of S.L. as we read how, step by step, the great Architect of the universe gradually unfolds his creation.

Let us remember that we, as individuals, progress toward the ideal of greatness and nobility. Through brotherly love, we are supported by the memory

of many a departed brother. "Our fathers were high minded men". They, being dead, yet speak and the foundation of chivalry and fellowship and charity they laid is a sure foundation upon which we may build progressively, rising toward the fulfillment of our highest hopes.

All this may come about by the practice of brotherly love. This, to some, may seem a mere figure of speech, but I do believe that any who have really seen Masonry at work, can think of this phrase as a mere sentiment. I have seen it work and this brotherly love of which I speak is such a love as was pictured so clearly in the story of David and Jonathan. The utter and complete subjugation of one's own ego in the service of another. It is such love that inspires and sustains, and enables us to practice toward individuals and groups the highest spirit of toleration, generosity and charity.

Many look upon Masonry as a great social organization, providing congenial fellowship, and the enjoyment of social functions. It is all of this, but something more. Such things have their merits and through such functions many a brother has been started toward the place of the light. No one would wish to curtail this festive spirit of our Lodges. The fun, the laughter and good feeling of such occasions lends for stability of character, as our famous brother, Bobbie Burns, sang:

"It's no in titles nor in rank;
It's no in wealth like London Bank
To purchase peace and rest."

In such fellowship, many of different economic status can find common ground and it all helps in the development of the whole man. "The love of the brethren" — it is a rare gift for us to be able to meet our fellow man with this spirit. A love that is so strong that it undercuts, or overwhelms, political, theological, and pious isolationism and brings the brethren together. It is more than justice, and is greater than faith or hope. It means the presence of the Great Architect Himself in the heart and mind of the brother. When this happens, as it does,

a new spirit is generated in the Lodge room, in the market place where Masons meet, and in all our public relations. Little differences seem trivial and harmony prevails.

In our work there are steps to climb, chambers for meditation, instruments to use and lights to light the way. All these are outward signs and symbols leading to one place, the centre place. The place where we are asked to kneel and make our covenant, and when the covenant is made, then "begins to be brought to pass" the whole reason for our being there and meaning for our whole existence, a complete and changed attitude toward life. Where as before we were in darkness, now we have seen a great light, a light to bring us more and more into the fellowship of men whose one increasing purpose is to bring free men into the bondsmanship of noble living.

As Masons, we ask for light and yet more light. To what purpose? The source of gloom so often lies within ourselves. Our ego so often blocks the light, and when we fail — as we often do — to think of the brethren, and think of ourselves alone, then this ego is opaque and darkens all our thinking. It shuts out our light and the light of others too, and casts a shadow everywhere, but if we show forth the light we have received through the tenets of our work then the nobility of our profession and our fraternity is made manifest to all men.

The humblest life has within it the forces of great and noble manhood waiting only to be aroused and developed, and when set free, exerts its influence a thousand fold. Truly, the S.L. is right when it says, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity."

R. W. Bro. D. D. MacQueen,
Junior Grand Warden, Alberta.

FREEMASONRY AND GOOD CITIZENSHIP

No institution teaches more plainly the fundamentals of good citizenship than Freemasonry. The virtues which characterize a good citizen are found in the obligations and charges, while its ceremonies remind us of the duties we owe to constituted authority. A Mason may, of course, indulge in fair criticism, and even advocating change, in a sincere desire to champion any cause which endeavours intelligently to build a better human order. It is of the essence of a free government.

An eminent Masonic scholar has declared that no man has any right to claim to be a Freemason unless he has endeavoured to put into practice some of the teachings of the fraternity. "It is not necessary," he asserted, "to go up to the Lodge-room to practice Masonry. The place to practice Masonry is in the busy marts of the world, where men meet each other in their daily affairs, and where human kindness and helpfulness and honesty are so much needed."

—"Helena Masonic News"

TO THE WORSHIPFUL MASTER

The Worshipful Master, newly called to the Chair, and swelling with new honours and responsibilities, is favoured by his friends with wholesome advice concerning his duties and wise admonitions respecting the pitfalls that lie in his path. He is, indeed, a poor Mason who cannot tell the Master how to run the Lodge, and a churlish one who will not volunteer advice. Not to be out of fashion, the Journal at this time ventures one suggestion, as evidence of its good faith and interest in the success of the Worshipful Master.

The supreme problem which confronts every Master, and one which from time immemorial has vexed occupants of the oriental chair, is how to interest the members and induce them to attend the communications of the Lodge. We have no hesitancy in saying that this is the greatest secret in Masonry, and he who solves the riddle will achieve the perfect success which all Masters hope for. We shall not attempt to review this problem in all its forms, for it assumes various aspects according to the situation and circumstances. The "attractions" which are effective in the one instance would be of no avail in another, and it is impossible to prescribe a common policy which would suit all conditions.

There is one condition, however, which we believe to be pretty nearly universal, and one evil from which the Craft generally has suffered. That is the evil of late hours, the folly of frittering away the time of the Lodge and dragging out until midnight or later a communication that could and should have been completed by 10 or 10:30 o'clock. The average Mason is under the necessity of working hard all day. He must be up betimes, with a clear head and a vigorous body, in order to make his way in the world. He goes to his Lodge in the evening to refresh his mind with wholesome and inspiring lessons of Masonry to revive his spirit with the companionship of congenial Brethren, to find a haven of rest from the turmoil and strife of business life.

Such a respite is beneficial if it can be obtained without the reaction of a tired and regretful tomorrow. "The morning after" is the true test of a successful Lodge communication. No matter how pleasant the evening may have been, if the proceedings were dragged out to an unconscionable length, the busy Brother will stay away next time. If the Lodge means late hours it is a detriment rather than a benefit to its members, and the wise ones will govern themselves accordingly. This is not mere theory, but is the result of long observation and inquiry. There are thousands of Masons in this State, we know, who absent themselves from Lodge or attend seldom, because the Lodge opens late and closes late, and because the proceedings are conducted lackadaisically by dilly-dallying, shilly-shallying presiding officers.

If the Master will resolve to open his Lodge promptly at the hour appointed by the by-laws, to conduct the business and work of the Lodge with due order and decorum, but without waste of time, and to close at an early hour, he will find

THE QUIET FREEMASON

In every Lodge the larger of the attendance usually is made of Brethren who take little or no active part in the proceedings. They sit in the body of the Lodge, unassuming and respectful. They may seldom so much as second a minor motion. They participate in no verbal controversy on the floor, but they listen patiently and with interest to what the so-called active members have to say. In the postprandial session at the refreshment board they are equally unassuming. They participate largely by showing interest in what others have to say. If called upon they are embarrassed.

Some might say that such Brethren have little to do with the success of the Lodge, that the Brethren who fill the chairs, that those who ever are ready to take part in debate, who always have a message at the banquet board are the ones who keep Freemasonry operative and virile and a moral force in the world.

Without decrying the part played by the officers, by those who always are at the forefront in the affairs of the Lodge, attention may be called to the importance of those whose part is largely a silent one. For one thing, they form the larger part of dues-paying members, and what would a Lodge be if it were not adequately financed? They are the ones who fill the greater number of the seats and provide a background for the vocal efforts of those described as the active force in the Lodge. They are the ones who must be persuaded by the vocal efforts of those ever ready to take part in debate. They are the ones whose presence convinced a candidate there must be something real and wholesome in Freemasonry when persons of their caliber get something out of the repetition of the ritual. Being in the majority, these non-vocal ones are those by whom Freemasonry is in large part judged by the world.

Let us not minimize the part played by the silent Freemason. He is a quiet but effective influence that we may mistakenly underestimate.

—Brother Elbert Bede, Oregon.

CONGRATULATIONS

JUBILEE LODGE, U.D. was instituted in Calgary on Tuesday, January 17th, 1956. A very appropriate name in commemoration of the Jubilee Year of our Grand Lodge. We welcome this new Lodge into our ranks and wish them every success in the years to come.

S. H.

that he has gone a long way toward making the Lodge popular with the kind of members he desires to interest. Probably many plans to make the meeting interesting will be suggested, and doubtless some of them will yield good results, but we believe that prompt opening and early closing are at the foundation of Lodge success.

—"Masonic Home Journal"

LIGHT MUST TRIUMPH

One great nation poses our only serious threat to world peace today and the peoples of that nation live in the darkness of ignorance. They have no chance to receive the light with which we Masons have been blessed and their leaders keep an iron curtain between them and the rest of the world so that the light of understanding may not reach them. Knowing, as we do, that light must triumph over darkness, we must also realize that the leadership of a people which keeps them in darkness will eventually destroy itself or be destroyed by those who have been oppressed. Mankind has a natural craving for the light of understanding, and that desire can only be suppressed for a limited time regardless of the apparent power of those who seek to profit from a down-trodden people. It is the plan of the G.A.O.T.U. that all men should have light. Knowing these things, we should zealously guard the light we have attained. We should endeavor to keep it burning in every land not held by darkness in order that we may be ready and willing to bring the blessings of Light and Truth to our brothers when they shall be released from bondage.

—Exchange.

FEMALE FREEMASONRY

The Australian Masonic conference in 1928 recommended to all the Grand Lodges of Australia that no Mason be permitted to attend a meeting of or be a member of the Eastern Star and forbidding the Star to meet in any lodge room. This rule is still in effect and was recently reaffirmed. In the U.S., only Pennsylvania follows this rule. Australia also has "Co-Masonry," an organization of men and women which likewise comes under the ban.

—Indiana Freemason.

BE TAUGHT

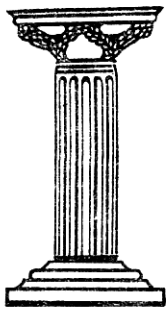
"Imagine not that you will become a Mason by learning what is commonly called the 'Work,' or even by becoming familiar with our traditions. Masonry has a history, a literature, a Philosophy. Its allegories and traditions will teach you much."

—Albert Pike.

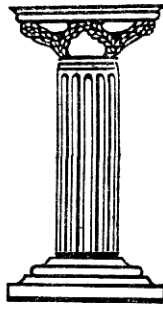
God always has an angel of help for those who are willing to do their duty.

—T. L. Cuyler.

All progress is made by men of faith who believe in what is right, and even more important, actually do the right in their private affairs. You cannot add to the peace and good will of the world if you fail to create an atmosphere of harmony and love right where you live and work.—Thomas Dreier.



Between the Pillars



Masonic Education

Freemasonry, being a science of progressive enlightenment, must of necessity go hand in hand with education. For the Craft to achieve its ultimate objective, every member must aid to the utmost of his ability in the Masonic education of himself and his Brethren. Every Mason must possess some knowledge of the traditions of the Craft, its history, its aims, its place in our social scheme, and its lessons. One and all must seriously consider the effect of Masonic teaching on himself, his attitude towards God, his relationship with his fellow-men.

It is not sufficient to say that Masonry is a great thing and that if practiced in so far as each one is able makes men better in every way. It is of no advantage to say Freemasonry has deep spiritual qualities if it cannot be substantiated by a knowledge of the Craft. Masonic education is a positive and absolute necessity. Very few men perceive of themselves the integral truths of the Craft, and failing this perception their second condition is no better; indeed, it is worse than the first. They are members of the Masonic Institution, they help to swell the number of members, they are among the hundred and fifty thousand, but estimable though their virtues may be, great as their ritualistic ability may be, they are not, and can never hope to be, good Masons, for they have not received their Masonic education.

All Freemasonry is not contained in the Ritual. It extends its influence to every corner of the private and public lives of its adherents, and these must be educated, these must be taught that such is the case. Too many of our Brethren accept the Craft at their own valuation, which is like placing a human valuation on things immortal.

Too many are satisfied to drift along, attending their Lodge, voicing their puny sentiments, not fully or even at times remotely grasping the fundamental principles of the Faith they profess. They are satisfied that Masonic Life is only the visibility of darkness and in that darkness they are content

to remain. Few, pitifully few, seek to know the Truth underlying the allegory and symbolism. Few realize the relationship between Freemasonry and good citizenship. Few understand the assistance the Craft gives to make men better sons and better parents. Fewer still have any but the faintest conception of the great philosophy and glorious promise of the Craft. How many Masons grasp, even after years of connection with and active participation in their Lodge, the lesson of the Third Degree, the uncertainty of the mundane existence and the sure promise of the Resurrection and the Immortality of the Soul? How many know anything of the traditions of the Craft, or its history, or even the history of their own Lodge? It is not altogether their fault, for they have not received the benefit of Masonic education. The destiny of Masonry is not the negative singing of Omar. No Mason should come out by the same door wherein he went. If he does, and all too many do, the fault lies in the lack of instruction.

Yet it remains a fact that those who seek enlightenment have a hard and difficult task. Their elders and superiors in rank have had no education themselves, and are, therefore, rarely qualified to teach. Some there are who earnestly seek, but not knowing where to look, give up the search as hopeless. Some few reach their goal and endeavour to transmit their knowledge to others, but owing to lack of organization or encouragement, theirs is, indeed, as a voice crying in the wilderness.

We teach in our ceremonies the necessity of acquiring Masonic knowledge and fail to give any instruction. We stir up a desire without making any attempt to fulfil. We exact an obligation from every candidate to make some daily progress in the Art, but we have no organized system of Masonic education. Each and every one is, once he is a Master Mason, permitted to admonish his Brethren and correct his fellows, but except for what he may have achieved by his own efforts, he has no information, correct or otherwise, on Masonic matters. The position seems almost Gilbertian, and if it were not so serious might even be humorous.

Master Masons are being turned out in hundreds, but how few Masters of Craft.. Once a brother has received his Third Degree he is allowed to shift for himself, the interest of his sponsors and of the Lodge Officers is at an end. For exactly the same reason the newly-made Master will neglect his candidates in the future, for, having received no education he is not competent to instruct.

In the light of the fact that education is compulsory in the State it should prove a good thing if Masonic education was made compulsory in our Lodges. In the latter condition, Masonic knowledge would flourish and the Brethren and the world be the better thereby.

Masonry is truly enlightenment and knowledge and education are its handmaids. We are bound as Masons to educate ourselves and to provide means for the better understanding of our Brethren.