



Grand Lodge Bulletin

Editor: SAM HARRIS, P.G.M.

HAPPY EASTER

THEME OF EASTER AND FREEMASONRY.
A subject close to the heart of the Editor of the Bulletin, causes me to venture into submission of a few thoughts.

The Easter Season should be of especial value to true Freemasons, to whom it is an inspiration. Eastertide always inspires, particularly as we grow older in Masonic life.

Fully conscious the framing of these thoughts would be better entrusted to wiser minds, they are offered in the hope of awakening members of our beloved Order to more and profounder thoughts in future years.

There is an ancient allegory that relates how, after our Lord's resurrection and ascension into Heaven, He was asked as to the wisdom of entrusting the faith He had taught, to such ordinary people, who had been His chosen friends; and that He had replied "Oh, but, you do not know" "Peter and John and Mary". I like to think in all reverence, that seems likely in this 20th century, men of the character of our Lord's Apostles, would be active Freemasons.

During His ministry upon earth, our Lord shewed a fine sense of humour and alround understanding of humans. The Gospels are full of such instances of practical dealings. Where else can be found such wise reasoning and justice as "Let him that is sinless cast the first stone", which words stirred the consciences of the crowd.

Or the story of two disciples walking the road to Emmaus some days after the crucifixion, discussing the events of the times. Upon our Lord overtaking them He asked the reason for sad faces, and was in turn asked if He did not know of things that had happened, to which He said "what things" surely proving a high sense of humour.

Or in the wheat fields on Sabbath Day, or the countless healings of sickness, both of body and mind. All rich examples of complete sympathy for ordinary humans and their problems.

Of particular appeal to Freemasons, is our Lord's understanding of men's liking for ceremony and ritual, made clear in the institution of breaking of bread and sharing of wine at His last gathering with close friends, before crucifixion, leaving us a ritual in remembrance of Him. These various

episodes and many others are familiar to all of us. They should be important at Easter for all Freemasons.

The joy of Easter, following the sadness of Maundy Thursday, is so because it is Divine, with constant evidence also of the problems and pleasures of men, women and children being understood, giving a firm belief by us in the wisdom of the G.A.O.U.

In these latitudes, Easter time is Spring time, with life shewing in trees and flowers and return of birds, more evidence of God's wisdom in giving to mankind, bodies, minds and wills with freedom to use them in this universe, wonderful in its order and fascinating in its beauty.

Small wonder that long years ago, a member of our Order wrote these words:

"He was born in an obscure village. His early manhood spent as a carpenter. He never had riches, or held public office, or travelled more than 200 miles from where born.

His closest friends deserted Him when most needed. He was arrested, condemned and put to death in the most shameful manner of His day. But all the armies that ever fought, all the rulers that have ruled, have not affected the world as much as this one solitary life."

R. W. Brother F. F. W. Lowle, No. 21.
Past Grand Master, Alberta.

SUCCESS

Success is in the way you walk the
paths of life each day;
Its in the little things you do and in
the things you say.
Success is not in getting rich or rising
high to fame;
It's not alone in winning goals which all
men hope to claim.
Success is being big of heart and clean
and broad of mind;
It's being faithful to your friends and,
to the stranger, kind.
It's in the children whom you love and
all they learn from you;
Success depends on character and every-
thing you do.

—Author Unknown.

AN EASTER MESSAGE

The most significant and descriptive word on this glorious day is "dawn". It was early in the morning that the riven tomb gave up its Tenant.

This victory over the grave has forever symbolized a new day, a new beginning, a new life, and set the heart of humanity beating faster with a great faith. It has taught us anew that each day comes from the east.

From the Bible we read anew on this day: "He is not here: for He is risen as He said. Come see the place where the Lord lay!"

This is the Biblical story of the Resurrection. Easter is the completion of the Christians' pledge. It is the common, sacred, holy ground on which all Christendom unites reverently to commemorate the life of Him who is our Exemplar and Redeemer, and who pointed the way with the hand of love, for us to travel, that we might achieve the soul's destiny.

Easter has begotten a great hope in the human heart and mind. Man is no longer the creature of a day. He is the pilgrim of the infinite.

Religion is the establishment by man of his relation to the Infinite Existence which we call God, and of which he feels himself a part.

The resurrection from the tomb of the meek and lowly Galilean is recognized as the crowning achievement of all time. He had conquered and rose supreme over death, through obedience to God and the creative laws of the infinite. He revealed the way of life for the constructive guidance of human destiny. He had more love, wisdom and power, together with the courage to do right, despite all opposition, than ever before embodied in human form.

He made plain that man must transform and transmute gross sensual passion into the refined and exalted beauty of those sublime emotions of forgiveness, generosity, magnanimity and love, all of which constitutes resurrection from the tomb of self. Our Founder Constantine would have his followers, follow along the pathway of Him whose birth, life, death and resurrection demonstrated, life's greatest achievement — triumphant victory over death, and the complete and perfect Master of Destiny.

Only in this spirit can we solve the difficult problems that confront the people in so many lands in these days. Only when new laws, new plans and new commitments are conceived in the spirit of Jesus Christ can we hope to erase the bitterness and conflict that prevails in the world and set our feet upon an assured path of constructive achievement and universal peace.

"Who shall roll away the stone?" This is the great, surpassing challenge of Easter! This is the challenge of obligation which we face to-day. It is a sacred duty, a task which no Christian dares shirk. It is the solemn challenge placed before all people of goodwill, and toward that objective I commit our Order of the Red Cross of Constantine without reservation — and the service consequent

thereto, I invite the militant co-operation of Christian men and women everywhere.

This is the transcendent message of Easter of to-day, a dynamic charge for an atomic day. It is Christ or chaos.

Bro. Fred A. Nicholson,
Grand Lodge of New York.

WHAT IS THE "LODGE OF THE HOLY STS. JOHN AT JERUSALEM"?

Many a master has been puzzled to answer this simplest and most natural of questions. As there is not now and never was such a lodge, there is certainly some reason for confusion.

Originally, lodges were dedicated to King Solomon. Later — at least as early as 1598 — Masonry connected her name with that of St. John the Evangelist. Dedications to the Sts. John were made by other organizations as early as the third century, when the Church adopted the two pagan celebrations of summer and winter solstices and made them our St. John's Day in Summer and St. John's Day in Winter. It was wholly natural for operative Masons, having dedicated their Craft to the Holy Sts. John, to begin to believe that both Johns were Craftsmen. Craftsmen must have a lodge — where should that lodge be put in Jerusalem? Hence "The Lodge of the Holy Sts. John of Jerusalem" came into imaginary existence.

No such lodge ever existed in fact, and yet it is not a fiction — it is an ideal, and without such ideals our life would be dim and drab. The thought back of the question and answer, then, is that we come from an ideal or dream lodge into this actual work-a-day world, where our ideals are to be tested.

To-day, as we use the phrase as the starting point for a Masonic career, Masons mean only that their Craft is dedicated to these holy men, whose precepts and practices, ideas and virtues, teachings and examples, all Freemasons should try to follow.

From the Short Talk Bulletin,
Masonic Service Association.

SYSTEM

He who every morning plans the transactions of the day, and follows out the plan, carries a thread that will guide him through the labyrinth of the most busy life. The orderly arrangement of his time is like a ray of light which darts itself through all his occupations. But where no plan is laid, where the disposal of time is surrendered merely to the chance of incidents, all things lie huddled together in one chaos, which admits of neither distribution or review.

—Victor Hugo.

Friendship is a chain of gold.

Shaped in God's all perfect mold,

Each link a smile, a laugh, a tear,

A grip of the hand, a word of cheer.

As steadfast as the ages roll,

Binding closer soul to soul,

No matter how far or heavy the load.

Sweet is the journey on Friendship's Road.

WHO COMES HERE . . . AND WHY?

Since the lodge already knows who the candidate is, obviously the first part of the question posed in the title is intended to obtain a specific reply for a definite reason. The answer clearly fixes the candidate's position in relation to Masonry by admitting and describing his condition. The "and why" part of the question is an addition of our own for the purposes of this discussion because it opens inquiry in a direction not fully covered by the ritual.

The full answer as given in the ritual does appear to satisfy the "and why" query but only in the sense that all conditions are assumed to be met in perfect order. This would mean the candidate understood and accepted all of the qualifications on his signed petition and that the investigating committee's subsequent inquiries proved his statement true and the man to be worthy and well qualified.

In the actual work of the Craft, however, experience, ages long, convinces us there is danger in total dependence upon the ideals and beauty of those ideals frequently appeal to the most unworthy of men. Such will unhesitatingly subscribe to them with no fixed determination, purpose, or expectation of conforming to them. These people do have a good opinion of the Fraternity. They know many others do also—and they want to get in on it. People of this type covet association with others held in high esteem by the community. Their hope is that the pleasant incense of the Temple may somehow hide the stench of their own bad living habits. Few lodges escape having to deal with this kind of applicant. All know the embarrassment and unpleasantness that follows mistakes in these cases.

There is another type of applicant with whom it is much more difficult to deal. This type is represented by the man whose manner of life recommends him for membership and who probably will not deviate from it, yet who seeks affiliation only because membership might be helpful in his business or profession. Although his application warns him not to expect this and plainly states admission should not be sought from any such motives, nevertheless it is very often done.

These applicants also have a good opinion of the Fraternity, else they would not wish to join it. That good opinion, in their case, is formed largely from observation of the Craft, some knowledge of its antiquity, numerical strength and rating in public opinion. The stated objectives of Masonry are proper and agreeable to them. The application's reference to the mysteries of Masonry is lightly regarded as referring to the initiation and ritual. They do not anticipate or expect any astonishing revelations of philosophic truth nor do they feel the need of any. And in spite of what the application states they do expect some benefits of a material nature will be derived from membership, if not

directly from the brethren then from being known as one of them.

It is impossible, of course, to know—and without knowledge we have no right to judge—the secret motives that may impel any man to seek Masonic membership. Therefore, in these cases where reputation, character, and all visible evidences appear to be satisfactory refusal of admission is difficult. It is also probable that such a member will do nothing to bring dishonor or censure upon the lodge. But it is also certain and soon will be apparent, he will do little to help it nor will he spend much time in search of further light in Masonry. Membership only is what he wanted. He has and so long as he pays dues will retain it. Such men are members only—not Masons. And on the membership rolls of every jurisdiction will be found thousands of them.

The "and why" of any applicant's petition is quite as important as knowing who he is. It is believed the Craft would benefit considerably if more stress were placed upon it. The "why" of any man's actions is a better indication of his character than his reputation. Reputation is only what people think a man is; motives are what he is actually.

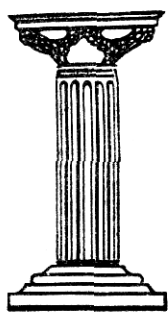
The "why" of a man's coming to Masonry should first be wholly and entirely personal. He should earnestly desire the light which will explain the reason for his being, making clear his relationship to his Creator and his duties under that relationship. From this understanding will grow comprehension of all his other obligations—to his family, his neighbors and his country, all of which leads to a spiritual understanding of the brotherhood of man. If these solemn truths were made plain to the petitioner we might have fewer candidates but we would have more real Masons.

Bro. M. A. Stillwauger,
In the Masonic Chronicle, Wisconsin.

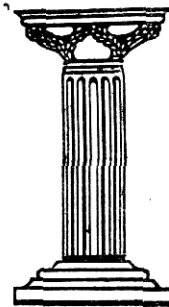
AFTER THE LODGE IS CLOSED

Masonry teaches us how to live, how to die, and our duty towards our fellowmen. Do we all realize the significance of the word "fellowmen?" It means more than fellow-Masons. We naturally have a special tendency to safeguard our Brethren of the Mystic Tie, but actually our duty lies beyond the fold as well. In these difficult times when the kindly courtesies of bygone days seem to be fading away in the struggle for existence, the Mason often finds himself presented with opportunities for rendering kindly help. Not necessarily the giving of alms, that of friendly counsel, loving sympathy, and a willingness at all times to render aid when properly called upon. The giving of a kindly hand of help to a mother with young children on an escalator, the call at a neighbor's when serious illness has occurred, and other small acts of courtesy and kindness in daily life, are factors which should distinguish the Mason from others. Let thought for others be the motive in daily life, and then the Mason reflects the teachings and tenets of his Craft.

Masonic Record, London, England.



Between the Pillars



“The Masonic Apron --- Its Symbolism

The origin of the Masonic Apron dates back a long way and no doubt it was taken from the Operative Mason's apron of very early days. The early Operative Mason's apron was made of leather, broad and long to protect their clothing.

The apron worn today by the Speculative Masons of this Grand Jurisdiction possess two distinct characteristics — material and colour. The material is lambskin and the colour is white for these two combined are a constant reminder of that purity of life which should characterize every Freemason.

No part of the make-up in the design of the apron is haphazard or formed at random, every part has a definite meaning. Firstly, we have in our Lodges three distinct aprons, one for each degree. The Brethren will bear in mind at all times that I am referring to the Canadian Work which varies somewhat from other rituals in regards to the apron, particularly as to how it is worn.

The plain white lambskin is the first tangible thing a candidate receives in Masonry. He is then admonished to preserve that purity of heart and conduct which will enable him to remain unstained by vice and unspotted by sin. It is believed Eumolpus of Thrace, who was the High Priest of the mysteries of Ceres in 1350 B.C., instituted the lambskin as a symbol of peace and goodwill. Hence we wear it only when love and harmony prevail.

We add two rosettes to the E.A. apron to form that of the F.C. The third rosette is needed to form a triangle. This incompleteness indicates that the F.C. is not yet a complete Freemason and thus corresponds to the position of the compasses when taking the O. of this degree.

The M.M.'s apron is composed of many parts, each of which has its own meaning. The present form of the apron was fixed soon after 1813 when we had the Union of Ancients and Moderns in England.

The light blue of the Craft apron as compared with the darker colour used by Grand Lodge represents the passive aspect and points out to the M.M. that it is his duty to obey and not to command. The rosettes and the flap from two triangles.

The first, or that formed by the three rosettes, is the triangle of fire and is the symbol of the Divine Spark. The other, formed by the flap, is the triangle of water and thus represents the soul.

Both of these triangles are within a square, the emblem of matter and therefore of the body. Thus the M.M.'s apron represents the three-fold nature of man, body, soul and spirit.

Ancient aprons were fastened around the body by a string to the ends of which were attached tassels, the same as are many of the aprons worn today. When the belt replaced the string these tassels were placed on the front of the apron, eventually becoming merely strips of ribbon, to ends of which were attached seven chains. The number seven was chosen deliberately. Three represents the spirit and four represents matter, therefore these chains represent God and man. They also refer to the seven liberal arts and sciences. It is also probable that the strips of ribbon allude to the two pillars, which were often depicted on many aprons worn by our ancient Brethren.

Even the snake that is used to fasten some aprons has a symbolic meaning. The snake is a deadly and fearful enemy of man, but it is also regarded as the wisest of all creatures and thus represents the Divine Wisdom.

Thus, my Brothers, you should wear your apron with pride and dignity, for it not only points out your rank to other Brethren, but it is also a visible reminder of the O. you have sworn to maintain.

W. Bro. D. A. Bogle,
Victory Lodge No. 84, G.R.B.C.

MAN'S UNITY

Masonry has that broad basis of principle upon which men of every race, country, sect and opinion may unite. What we have as Freemasons, the world has been trying to secure for centuries. Basic in our teachings—that which holds us together in the most tenuous yet the strongest bond between men—is mutual respect and faith in each other.

—The Masonic Record, London, Eng.

STUDY

“Masonry follows the ancient manner of teaching. Her symbols are the instructions she gives; and the lectures are but often partial and insufficient one-sided endeavours to interpret those symbols. He who would become an accomplished Mason must not be content merely to hear or even to understand the lecturer, but must, aided by them, and they having as it were marked out the way for him, study, interpret and develop symbols for himself.”

—Albert Pike.

The Grand Secretary advises he has a limited number of sets of six of J. S. M. Ward's Masonic Handbook Series. Price per set \$4.25. Single copies 75 cents. Please contact the Grand Secretary direct.