



Grand Lodge Bulletin

Editor: SAM HARRIS, P.G.M.

THE FREEMASON'S TASK

The Golden Jubilee for Freemasonry in Alberta has been well and truly observed. Fifty years in the life of Freemasonry is not really a very great period of time, in fact we have many members in Alberta who have belonged to the order many years over the half century. We have been given numerous wishes for the welfare of our next fifty years, and it has occurred to me that this is the golden opportunity to point out to our Craft at large one of the essential factors for our growth and well being.

We have been informed in our lectures that Freemasonry teaches us how to live and how to die. I am more interested in the teachings of how to live. I seek what Freemasonry has to teach me that will assist me in the greater duties of a Masonic brother in the world of reality.

In my opinion the greatest gem of the many of Freemasonry is the love of brother for brother. This is our strength and support, the reason of our being. The only detracting factor is our failure to carry this great teaching to our neighbors outside the lodge.

There is in every good man the natural desire to be of service to his fellow man. It is a desire to do something that will live after him, something that will be acknowledged as a boon to the human race, and live forever. This cannot be done without love for the fellow man. The greater the brotherly love, the greater the opportunity for service, and the more outstanding will be that service. That this natural instinct is present in mankind is shown by the desire for better conditions of his children, family and community. Some philosophers have said this shows the divine origin of mankind. However, I am sure we Freemasons in Alberta have this natural instinct, and we must recognize our responsibility to develop and most of all, to use it. Freemasons must be intensely practical people, and apply their ideas to the service of mankind.

It was this purpose for which Speculative Freemasonry was founded upon the old operative Freemasonry in the early 18th century, and by which it has made such spectacular progress and holds its high position in the affairs of mankind.

We have enrolled great numbers of good citizens under the proud title of Freemasonry; this is even true in our young province. However, this may be an advantage for us at this time. We may not be bound so much by tradition — we may be more free to more boldly proclaim our teachings to our members and to make our influence felt in promoting the accepted way of life. It will be our duty to inform our members of the great tenets of our Order, many of them over hundreds of years old, that they may be imbued with these ideals and that they may live accordingly.

The knowledge of mankind is not the result of any one man, nation, or period, but is the sum total of the contribution of all men of all ages. So with Freemasonry it is not just of one period nor a few men, but is the garnered wisdom of all men of all nations, of all ages. Whatsoever was deemed good and true of past civilization was gathered together by our founders, and passed on to us. This presupposes a wise choice on the part of our forefathers, the great wisdom to choose well. They taught the individuals for the welfare of the human race. We rightly honor the past, but we should not and do not live by the past alone. We most earnestly try to assimilate the past to prepare us to live and apply ourselves to the present and future. Our greatest weakness is our inability to be Freemasons with our neighbors as well as our brethren in daily life.

It is not possible to change this state of affairs through our lodges, or our Grand Lodge. It must come through the individual. We look to the individual member to be so enthused with the great teachings of Brotherly Love that he spreads it wide among his circle of friends, thus being happy himself, and communicating that happiness to others.

We can all agree that the principles of Freemasonry, if followed, would make our lives worthy and most helpful to our community. In spite of our knowledge of these tenets and our sacred obligations, we even violate the laws of friendship, not to mention brotherly love. We plot against one another, and trample brotherly love beneath our feet in our daily life outside the lodge. We forget that mankind is one human family in which each

member owes certain and definite obligations to all the others. We Freemasons, who have inherited so much from the past and are encouraged by our order to work for the happiness of the human race, should be in the forefront of all forces that are working for the freedoms of a righteous life.

It appears that our tenets and teachings have been known for ages and ages, and are world wide. They are expressed in various manners by the great leaders and teachers of the world. Christ enumerated our tenets in the period of his teachings, Mohammed and Confucious also had the same for their followers. All the philosophies of the ancients aimed to improve the lot of the common man of their time.

Benjamin Franklin, 250 years ago, being a renowned Mason proposed for the benefit of the world the daily practice of the great teaching of Brotherly Love. He even endeavored to use it in the diplomatic life of the nations of that period.

In the Encyclopedia Britannica there is an article on Freemasonry in which we are told that the aim and object of the order is the rather ethereal idea of promoting brotherly love. However, since that article was written, Freemasonry has increased its numbers and its influence. I submit that the object of our order is most worthy and highly practicable, and that, if we have made only a little impression on our members and the world at large, it is not because of the weakness of our purpose but rather the lack of purpose and enthusiasm of our members.

Our Christian religion, based on the laws of Moses, is over 4000 years old, and the teachings of Christ over 1900 years old; and the writings of Mohammed expressed in the Koran, 1250 years old, as well as many other great teachers in various lands. Because these teachings have not been accepted widely in their own lands, and unless universally accepted, does not lessen their value to the world, but rather points to our inability to make the most use of them. I trust this does not show a universal lack of appreciation for the right and the good.

The same applies to Freemasonry. We have over 5,000,000 members, and exercise a great influence in world affairs, an influence that I believe to be for the good of our world. That our influence could be increased is also recognized. I do not think that it is due to a lack of enthusiasm or maybe of serious application of our tenets in daily affairs.

It is the responsibility of every Freemason to make his own interpretation of the symbols and teachings of our Craft. He must translate into daily life the principles of the Golden Rule through his knowledge of Brotherly Love. The lodge is the source or fountain head of wisdom and inspiration to which we return regularly to strengthen ourselves and increase our enthusiasm by association with our fellow Freemasons; men of high ideals, moral men, honest men, men who are the leaders of men and who believe in Brotherly Love.

That Freemasonry is a powerful force no one

will deny, but it is no stronger than the individual Freemason. "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in Heaven."

This is a plea that our numerous Masonic brethren all united by the bonds of Brotherly Love, live and act by the plumb, level and square, out of the lodge as well as within.

M. W. Bro. W. A. Henry, M.D.,
Past Grand Master, Alberta

THE PLACE TO START

A great deal is said about the necessity for really making Masons of our candidates. Perhaps such a problem will always exist, but do we appreciate it from the logical standpoint? When you and I become Masons, and all of us traveled the same journey, was there any special effort extended us in the direction for having us attend Lodge regularly, or in making us feel more at home for a few meetings until we could really become a part of the Lodge and the activities?

The answer, I think, is no.

We received the degrees; we were impressed with the beauty of Masonry and the great lessons of the degrees to the extent that we wanted to become an integral part of the whole. It is not suggested that we do not owe our new Masons certain courtesies, instructions in procedures, which he does not learn when he is taking the degrees; and the proper consideration in all matters that is due the less experienced by the older Masons.

But there are two points involved. Every effort should be made to confer the degrees in a manner that is dignified and serious so that the candidate will eagerly seek further light in Masonry. But there is also the necessity for careful selection of candidates so that the heart and mind will behold the beauty of Freemasonry.

Our first obligation is to understand the serious undertaking in making a Master Mason. A candidate who is told: "Before proceeding further it becomes my duty to inform you that the ceremonies in which you are about to engage are by no means of a light or trifling character, but are of great importance and deep solemnity," and then is the victim of frivolity and humiliation, perhaps will never look further for the beauty in Masonry.

Let us by all means show the proper courtesies to our candidates, but let's begin at the right place—when we confer the degrees.

Masonic Messenger, Georgia.

The Fifty-first Annual Communication of Grand Lodge will be held in the Masonic Temple, in the City of Edmonton on Wednesday, June 13th, 1956.

MASONRY MEANS "WORK"; DUTIES IMPOSED ON ALL

The candidate for Freemasonry, whatever may have been his idea before he petitioned a Lodge, is informed in a great many ways that what he is to engage in is WORK.

Very early in his Masonic career he learns that when the Lodge meets it is at labor — that the charter of a Lodge empowers it to do Masonic work — that he must be proficient in the work of each degree before he assumes the responsibility of the next. His obligations impose duties upon him. He must earn his wages. He is to use Working Tools. In short, every implication in precept and symbolism is work. Now work is the expenditure of energy, physical, mental and spiritual.

The object of this work is comprehensive. It includes every conceivable department of human endeavor. It embraces the whole of a man's life, private, social, political and economic. Because this is true, it too frequently follows that there is slight attention given to any phase, and his life as a Mason is, to say the least ineffective.

May we not well say that Masonry is too big for most of us Masons? We become so awed by the beauty of Masonry that we seldom do more than stand spellbound before it, speak of it in superlatives, become emotional when it touches our souls, and are content to experience the occasional thrill. There is always sentiment when human souls associate together intimately, but the sentiment is only the pleasant by-product.

There is satisfaction of belonging to the oldest and noblest institution known to man, but the satisfaction is only again the pleasant by-product. Masonry in short is not a series of pleasantries and satisfactions, it is work and action.

The objective of all work is to create, build, improve, perpetuate. The individual must have this objective with respect to himself. The first Working Tools presented to the Mason are to be used upon himself, to apportion his time, and to prepare his mind.

R. W. Bro. Clarence A. Kopp,
Grand Orator, G. L. Oregon.

THE MASTER BUILDER SPEAKS

A prince of the house of Pharaoh often gazed with covetous eyes on the great pyramid of Giza. Little did he understand the meaning of that fabric, and believed it to be a memorial for one of his ancestors. In his youthful ambition he had a vision of his future reign, one of magificence of word and deed that would not be lost to the world. He called in the master architect of all Egypt and thus he spoke:

"To you in my royal command. You will build for me in my name a lasting monument that future

generations shall not forget the greatness of my reign. It should last forever."

The master builder bowed his head in obedience and prayer. And then these words from the architect who was skilled in the cunning and science of that time: "Oh, prince! Look at yonder pyramid; see it is but stone. Even now time and the elements have started disintegration. A material monument I can build, but in time it will be levelled. Only you can do the impossible thing you demand. Build your monument in the hearts of men. Your name may be lost in time, but the effects of your good deeds, like the ripple on a shoreless sea, will go on forever."

Courtesy—"New Age."

MASONIC SYMBOLISM

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and others and no man can escape that responsibility.

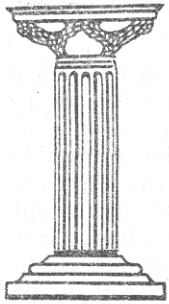
A Mason is a Mason everywhere, and no matter what rock may have changed the channel of his voyage, he yet is a worker for good wherever his lot may be cast. No man has ever, even in life, escaped the evil he did, and men generally die as they have lived. "For as a man's thoughts are, so is he."

It is not, however, only as a symbol of good and evil that the mosaic pavement is used in Masonry, for that is but one of its applications. It is also a symbol of all the vicissitudes of life for its squares of opposite colours symbolize the contrasts, the opposites of life. Death threatens the moment we begin to live, and though our life may be long and joyous, the sword of death is continually over our heads and any moment may turn our joy into sadness. The cradle and the grave are at best not far apart, comparatively no farther than the space between the white and black stones of the mosaic pavement. The darkness of night scarcely vanishes at the light of day ere the night cometh and darkness again engulfs us, but another day will surely dawn and darkness will again flee with the coming of the sun.

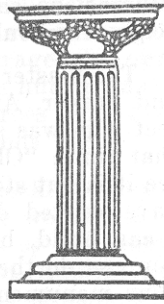
The mosaic pavement beneath our feet teaches us that though we cannot pass through life without meeting joy and sorrow, yet shall we triumph over all and even the king of terrors shall we trample under foot.

—The Ashlar, Queensland.

Live not a useless, an impious, or an injurious life, for bound up with that life is the immutable principle of an endless retribution, and elements of God's creating, which will never spend their force, but continue ever to unfold with the ages of eternity. Be not deceived! God has formed thy nature thus to answer to the future. His law can never be abrogated, nor His justice eluded; and forever and ever it will be true, that "whatsoever a man soweth, that also he shall reap."



Between the Pillars



Masonic Symbolism

Ornaments of a Lodge

"The Ornaments of a Lodge," says the monitor, "are the Mozaic Pavement, the Indented Tessel and the Blazing Star."

In the 1860 edition of his "Lexicon," Mackey said: "The term, Mosaic, is supposed to have been derived from the fact that Moses thus constructed the floor of the tabernacle. Mosaic or tessellated pavements were very common among the ancients."

This was a common opinion of that time and even to-day there are some Masons who have the same idea, but it is an error which Mackey later acknowledged in his writings.

The term, Mosaic, as used in English," says Hunt, "is derived from two different languages with corresponding difference in meaning. When we speak of the mosaic law, the mosaic religion, the mosaic symbolism, etc., we refer to the law, religion, etc., associated with the Jewish law-giver, Moses; but when we refer to Mosaics, of which the mosaic pavement is an illustration, we use a term coming to us from the Greek 'musa,' through the Latin 'mosaicus,' the original meaning of which was 'something artistic,' relating to the Muses."

As thus derived, the term is applied to inlaid work, which was a branch of the fine arts very prominent during the Middle Ages, though we also find traces of it in nations of great antiquity as well as in modern times. It has been used on walls, ceilings, and furniture, but its principle use is on floors.

Masonic tradition has it that the ground floor of King Solomon's Temple was decorated with a mosaic pavement of small square stones alternately black and white in colour. This tradition is based on a few Biblical verses, though there is no historical verification for its application to King Solomon's Temple other than the fact of its being commonly used in his time.

When Moses went up on to the mountain to receive instructions for the building of the Tabernacle, he "saw the God of Israel, and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of sapphire stone, and as it were the very heaven of clearness." (Ex. 24:10). "And Jehovah spake unto Moses say-

ing, according to all that I show thee the pattern of the tabernacle—even so shall ye make it." (Ex. 25:1, 9).

These passages of Scripture have been quoted as evidence that there was a mosaic pavement in King Solomon's Temple. It is said that the pavement which Moses saw on the mount, was part of the pattern he was to follow in building the Tabernacle, and that the pavement which Pilate used as a judgment seat proves that there was such a pavement in the Temple of his day, since the Greek word translated "the pavement" was the word Pliny used for "mosaic pavement."

It may be that there was such a pavement in King Solomon's Temple when a structure of stone replaced the tent, but we do not have to prove that to be a historical fact to validate our Masonic symbolism. Those who believe it to be a fact may support that belief by saying that there is no historical evidence to prove the contrary, and in the absence of such proof the assertion of the Talmud that there was such a pavement in the Temple should be given some weight.

Be that as it may, the symbolism of the mosaic pavement has an important place in Masonry. It is an old symbol of the Order and is found in our earliest rituals. Its alternate black and white stones make a fitting symbol of human life, which as our Monitor says, is checkered with good and evil.

Bro. George Frank Gouley once said: The spirit of GOOD is in a continual warfare with the spirit of EVIL, and it is a warfare that will not end till humanity shall cease to exist and the heart of man shall no longer afford a battleground for the contest of passion. This small earth of ours is but one of the myriad planets which revolve in the illimitable fields of space, and, for aught we know, may contain the fewest inhabitants of them all. Man, therefore, as we know him, in his best estate, is but an infinitesimal atom of the universe; but one of the sands on the boundless shore of life. More helpless in infancy, than all created beings, and his years, in the great average of mortality, do not reach beyond childhood. At his prime he is but a child in the iron hand of circumstances, and is compelled to work out his destiny on the checkered floor, equally set with good and evil. What then, is man? In the true sense of his nature he is the only earthly emblem of immortality. Everything else ceases at death — man alone survives the wreck of dissolution and passes into the realms of eternal thought and action; he alone is capable of doing deeds that shall leave their impress upon the coming ages. What a solemn thought! What a vast field for the reflecting mind!

We are the warriors of TRUTH or the slaves of ERROR. We are planting the seeds of GOODNESS or saving the tares of evil. No man lives or dies unto himself; the faintest thought expressed or word uttered has its influence upon ourselves

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