



Grand Lodge Bulletin

Editor: SAM HARRIS, P.G.M.

MASONIC REFLECTION ON TRUTH

"What is Truth?" said jesting Pilate and would not stay for an answer.
(Bacon)

The answer is not so simple. From the earliest times, thinking men have sought diligently for Truth and have tried to comprehend its nature. But it is so difficult of definition that the Encyclopedia Britannica attempts no article on the word. However, although the philosophers concede that the quality of Truth is desirable and valuable in human relationships. Such virtues as honesty, sincerity, uprightness, good faith and justice are usually recognized as components of and necessary to Truth.

Socrates, the great philosopher of ancient Greece, believed in the existence of an Absolute Truth above and beyond the influence or scope of humanity and our world. Such supreme or perfect Truth is a value beyond our comprehension. We cannot hope to know Truth as ultimate or unchanging but can only see it in relation to us and our world. (But by striving towards perfection in our thinking and by keeping close to Truth as we see it, we may hope to progress further toward an understanding of Absolute Truth.)

That truth which we can discover and know, "human truth", has been described as conformity to facts or reality. It is possible, then, for a human mind to conceive of something as being the truth because it conforms to reality as he knows it then, and to all known facts. To that mind, at the instant of conceiving it, that is Truth. But this Truth is subject to change upon further reflection, or in the light of new knowledge. For a long period in history men believed the world to be flat. This belief conforming to all known facts, was Truth to those men in that age. Increased knowledge proved this false, in the fullness of time. An old Chinese proverb says, "Truth is the daughter of time."

Just as the conception of reality or Truth by an individual may vary from one time to another, so it may vary at any given time between individuals and nations. This is readily understood if we bring to mind the great variety of

religious beliefs in the world, each one accepted by its many followers as embodying Truth. So it appears that Truth is that which the thinker really believes is fact at that time. Aristotle has said "Truth is that which is, in so far as it is."

It then becomes the responsibility of each individual to discover his own Truth (that is, what he finds to be reality after conscientious examination of all knowledge he can bring to light.) Difficulties and confusion may arise when the individual tries to arrive at Truth, for so often the facts or reality on which his belief must be based are in opposition to what he desires to believe. The desire to believe something is true can be so powerful as to make the individual feel that it must be true. This might be called a "truth of the heart" as opposed to "truth of the reason".

"When my love swears that she is made of Truth I do believe her -- though I know she lies."

Similarly, fear of the consequences of not believing in a given theory or ideology may influence the thinking of an individual in his search for Truth. An example of this is the struggle of a mind to know what to believe in regard to evolution if there is great compulsion to accept the Old Testament literally.

A man's philosophy is formulated from his ideas of reality and the meaning of life, and his picture of the nature of the world he lives in. These ideas, which form the basis of his philosophy, are gained from knowledge acquired in past experiences and truth-seeking excursions into the realms of thought and reflection. They will represent the wisdom of a mind which has tried to think through and comprehend the mass of human knowledge. But the idea of Truth thus attained will be constantly subject to change and modification as it faces the test of experience and new facts. It would seem, therefore, that what a man knows as Truth today may not be what he believed was Truth yesterday, nor yet what will be his Truth tomorrow. Such philosophy can never be final,

for as the sum of human knowledge increases, the work of philosophy has to be done afresh. The sentence has been used by Protagoras, "Man is the measure of all things", meaning that a man's idea of Truth is relative and not absolute, and that which each man holds to be true, that is Truth to him.

All Freemasons have certain fundamentals of belief, or common truths and it is upon this foundation that Masonry attempts to have each member erect his own philosophy. In its teachings, Masonry lays great stress on Truth, both directly and by symbolism. In the degree work the approach is both open and veiled and Masonry inculcates the conceptions of Truth of morality, of the sciences and of the Divine Truths.

For many ages fidelity, Justice, veracity and virtue have been accepted as synonyms for moral Truth. Virtue has been defined as a particular moral excellence and Emerson points to it as "The Golden Key Which opens the palace of Eternity."

Long ago Plato chose and named justice, temperance, prudence and fortitude as the four Cardinal Virtues. In the first degree and initiate soon becomes familiar with these words and their Masonic significance.

In the second degree, the exactness of the Truths of the sciences is taught, with especial reference to architecture and geometry: here the beauty and necessity of harmony and symmetry in any building, whether it be architecture or character, is emphasized. The poet Keats says in his reflections on the discovery and study of an ancient urn, "Beauty is Truth — Truth Beauty."

In the third degree the symbolic search for Divine Truth is made. Remembering the nature of Truth, how fitting it is that the search should not be entirely successful and the whole truth not be found. To offset the lack of fulfilment of the candidate's expectations, he is given the necessary knowledge to better fit him to continue his search throughout life's great adventures and even unto its end.

Masonry attempts to teach every Entered Apprentice, every Fellowcraft and every Master Mason to find his own Truth, to build his own philosophy and live it. The Masonic architect must discern and avoid the pitfalls of that which masquerades as Truth, and remember full well that expediency plays no part in the demands of Justice and Truth.

"Preach, Pray and Practice your Truth in your daily life."

Masonry is a brotherhood of imagination, courage and faith, with ideals which should make an incalculable impact on the blurred map of civilization. The beneficent principles of Freemasonry can influence the culture, the happiness, and in the end, the peace of the

world. Not now. Perhaps not soon. But in the end.

"An idea is the greatest force in the world at its time." (Victor Hugo)

So that our Order may realize its potential for the good of mankind, it is necessary that every Mason build purposefully on a firm foundation of Truth. Mindful of the words of Jean Paul Richter, "Only Deeds give strength to Life. . .", let us follow the admonition of Queen Elizabeth II, "Forward with an unwavering faith, a high courage and a quiet heart."

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

MOZART, THE MASON

The greatest living musician and composer is a Mason, — Jan Sibelius of Finland. He has written the incidental music for the three Masonic Degrees, first produced before an American audience at a programme planned by the American Lodge of Research in 1935 in New York.

But this year, we celebrate the 200th Anniversary of the birth of one of the greatest of inspired musicians, — Wolfgang Amade Mozart. He was born at Salzburg in Austria on January 27th, 1756.

At the age of three, his little chubby hands would reach to the keys of the clavier and when harmony resulted he would coo and laugh, but when a discord was created, he would bury his head in his hands and weep. His father, a musician, gave him music lessons at the age of four. When he was five, he could play a violin duet with his father, while the little lad played the first violin. Then when he was six years old, he played in the palace of the Empress Maria Theresa and met Marie Antoinette who was then seven years of age. What a sad and tragic life lay before her! A concert tour through Europe brought to him applause and fame. One writer describes him, — "God placed in Wolfgang Mozart what is probably the purest sheerest genius ever born in man."

Unfortunately his life was full of pain and sorrow and disappointment. He fell in love with Aloysia Weber, a beautiful talented girl with a glorious voice, but she jilted him, and his soul was filled with grief and despair. He then married the younger sister, Constance, who was an artless musician and a worse cook. She was a miserable housekeeper and lived extravagantly. Both of them were careless with money and were bad financial managers. They were always in debt and frequently were forced to pawn their trinkets to keep the creditors from the door. Six children were born to them in quick succession of whom four died in infancy. Mozart himself was never physically strong and the many worries and frustrations at times brought him to the verge of utter despair.

But a great change came into his life in the year 1785; he became a Freemason. A new idealism filled his life and he saw as never be-

fore a vision of man's brotherhood and he was filled with a fervour and a mystic love for humanity. Indeed, it was a soul's awakening! His father with whom he never enjoyed much comradeship, visited him in Vienna and Mozart won his father to the Craft and under the son's sponsorship Leopold also became a Mason. From that time an evolving spirit of true brotherhood grew into the hearts of father and son and expanded into mutual confidence.

Later two of his Masonic brothers died and Mozart was asked to write some memorial music and thus was given to the world his *Maurerische Trauermusik* which was followed by other deep and beautiful Masonic compositions.

In his ever deepening financial troubles, he needed a friend. He turned to a Masonic brother Michael Puchberg, and not in vain. Few men have ever manifested such a generous spirit and brotherly love as this Masonic friend. Again and again, he gave or loaned Mozart the money he needed. When Mozart had to leave to keep an engagement, Michael and his wife cared for the ailing Constance in their own home. Mozart always addressed him as "Honorable Ordensbruder," and as such he remained.

The last Opera which Mozart wrote was "The Magic Flute," and it was written and composed in co-operation with Emmanuel Schikaneder, a theatrical manager and librettist, — and he was a Mason. In this great musical composition, Mozart unfolds his own personality and his own troublous earthly wanderings along with Masonic philosophy and expression. Herein is the search for wisdom, the tests of faith and trials of courage in ascending steps and unfolding truths, until at last virtue triumphs over Fear and Doubt and radiant Light puts to flight the powers of Darkness.

He died at the age of 35 years, hearing the glorious music of the immortal Requiem, which he composed for another but, at last he realized that it was for himself. He was buried in a pauper's grave, unknown and unidentified, — our brother Mason.

Now he belongs to the ages!

Bro. Rt. Rev. A. H. Sovereign, D.D.
Peace River Lodge No. 89, Alberta

ATTENTION Masters, Wardens and all members of Grand Lodge. The Fifty-first Annual Communication of Grand Lodge will be held in the Masonic Temple, 100th Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta on Wednesday, June 13th at the hour of 9 o'clock a.m. All are requested to attend.

This Grand Lodge Bulletin completes our Twenty-first year of issue.

S.H.

AT REST

We regret to record the passing of our Dean of Past Grand Masters, M.W. Brother W. M. Connacher who passed away in a Calgary Hospital on Thursday, April 12th, 1956, and was buried in Calgary on Saturday, April 14th, 1956.

M. W. Brother Connacher was Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Alberta in 1917 - 1918. Until recent years he was a pillar of strength and very active in the affairs of Grand Lodge, being for several years Chairman of the Finance Committee and Custodian of the York Rite Work.

Another old friend and stalwart has passed to his great reward, he will be sadly missed by all who had the pleasure of knowing him. He was a man of determined but friendly character and through the years, Grand Lodge owes him a great debt of thanks and gratitude for his efficient leadership. Our sincerest sympathy is extended to his widow and family.

"A simple wreath, Acacia sprigs will do;
And mingled with the green, a rose or two.
We do not stop to think that when we die
The undiscovered country may not lie
So far away."

S.H.

MASONRY

Masonry is a code of morality, teaching men the right of living and can harm no one but will abundantly bless all who live up to its precepts.

In Masonry we are taught to search for a philosophy that will aid us in gaining the most in the short time allotted to us here by contributing the most to our fellowmen.

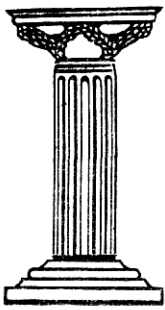
Masonry shuns the white-hot light of publicity and public notice and pursues its quiet course with a sincere friendliness and warmth for all men who are thoughtful and far-seeing. Thus it commands the respect and admiration of those who seek the betterment of the human race.

Its influence works upon the individual, binding men together as brothers seeking truth and mutual happiness. It enlists the efforts and hopes of a host of common men who are seeking to improve themselves rather than make a personal gain.

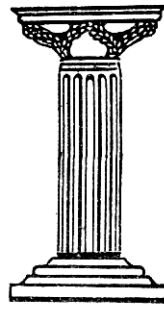
What is it that a candidate seeks? He wants a way of life, a meaning, an association which elevates self and enriches others and he wants a better understanding of himself.

To learn in Masonry is to read the present in the light of the past; to re-discover the genuine, and to form habits of kindness and love which will distinguish the Mason among the citizens of his community.

—Masonic Quarterly



Between the Pillars



THE MASTER

Hear now the history of a word as it has come down to us from days of old. In the ancient Guilds of artizans, the skilled metalsmiths of the Middle Ages, an Apprentice toiled for seven years at his tasks. When at last his hand was trained, and he had wrought some beautiful thing, perhaps in beaten silver, he brought it to the Master of the Guild and said, "Behold my experience!" Having worked for seven long years, the sum of all his impassioned patience and aspiration was in that tiny bit of shining metal; it was a symbol of his character which, as the word tells us, is something carved.

Like every man who achieves a delicate and difficult task, he had made many mistakes, had spoiled many a piece of metal, had dulled the edge of many a tool. He had spent painful days and nights in labor, and his Masterpiece, his Experience, was the sum and reward of all his Experiments. He had given himself to his task with enthusiasm; he had obeyed his Master; his faith had made him faithful—and the whole was in that tiny bit of Silver. He might now take his kit of tools and go out as a journeyman, a Master of the Craft.

Which story is a parable of how a man becomes a Master Mason, not by receiving a Degree, but by the attainment of a habitual mastery of his appetites and passions by the Reason and the Moral Sense; a habitual mastery, as Pike reminds us, not a never-failing mastery—for that is a trophy which few mortals win in this world. The task of every man is to take the raw material of his life, with whatever of glowing passion or hard heredity it may hold; take it as it is and by patience in spite of blunders, by perseverance in face of failures, by loyalty to an Ideal and fidelity to a noble-Life-plan, shape it into a constant beauty and enduring worth.

No man who has tried it needs to be told that this is no easy task, albeit for some it is easier than for others—it was easier for Emerson than for Burns, who tried so hard and failed so

much. By the same token, since every man fights a hard fight, no one can boast over his fellow; and if, by reason of rare power or a sweeter ancestry he is unhampered by the failure of his fathers, it is the more reason why he should be an inspiration and aid to his fellow men. No man wins this victory all at once, or once for all.

If one would be a Master Mason in very truth, and not in name only or the wearing of a pin, he will find that it asks for all that he has of wisdom and of wit, the while he divides his time into labor, rest, and the service of his kind. More and more, as we grow older, and learn the perils of the road, and remember how often we have failed and how far we have wandered, the words of Goethe come to mind:

"If during our lifetime we see that performed by others to which we ourselves felt an earlier call, but had been obliged to give up, with much besides, then the beautiful feeling enters the mind, that only mankind together is the true man, and that the individual can only be joyous and happy when he has the courage to feel himself in the whole."

Here is the great Fraternity in whose heroic and inspiring fellowship we live, and by whose inspiration we may win victory—man in God, and God in Man willing the God to be! Yet in each soul there is something unique, something not to be found anywhere else, a beauty peculiar, particular, precious, as no two leaves on a tree are alike, and no two sunsets the same. Each man must take Research to find that Pearl of Eternity within his own soul; that star which shines for him alone—"My Star," as Browning called it; and having found it, let him follow it and he will find himself, his Brother, and his God. Even so, each of us, by mastery of himself, may add a pearl of great price to the common wealth; each may set a new star in that sky which arches over our human world.

What though a man win wealth and the applause of fame, and have not Charity; it is nothing; what though he sway the world with his eloquence and miss the high prize of "Self-knowledge, self-reverence and self-control," even if men erect an obelisk of gold above his grave it is a monument to failure. He only is wise who lives a simple, sincere, faithful life building on the Square by the Plumb, toiling in the light of Eternity.

—Joseph Fort Newton

Our congratulations and a welcome into our midst is extended to Jubilee Lodge U.D. which was Instituted in Calgary, Alberta, on Friday, April 13th, 1956, by the Grand Master, M.W. Brother S. Carl Heckbert assisted by the District Deputy Grand Master, R.W. Brother W. Lloyd McPhee and other Grand Lodge Officers. We bespeak for this new lodge a happy and prosperous future.

S.H.