



# Grand Lodge Bulletin

Editor: SAM HARRIS, P.G.M.

## OUR DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Our lodges could be made far more useful than they are at present if used as a place of instruction for members in the great and high principles which are the foundation of the Craft. The Brethren would be better able to understand the duties they owe to the Craft in general and their individual lodge in particular and there would be a great deal more interest on the part of all Brethren, we would not find that members were absenting themselves from regular meetings and there would be no difficulty in selecting experienced and well skilled Brethren to fill the various offices in the lodge.

Every intelligent man must have his own ideas on all subjects and no doubt every Mason is entitled to his own views on all matters, but I believe that a very large number of Freemasons, even those who have achieved very high positions, who are most useful men in society and who are regarded as our leaders have never realized the genuine objects for which our society was founded, and what is its true mission.

We have a magnificent ritual, in which we are taught the leading features of a grand system of morality, and I am prepared to grant that if our code were faithfully lived up to there would be little or nothing to desire. I somewhat fear that our ceremonies have come to be regarded as a mere form, and that after his first introduction our novitiate often loses any good impression that he may have received at his entrance. It very naturally appears to him that he knew perfectly well before he saw the light in a Masonic lodge all the teachings laid down before him during the ceremony and as familiarity breeds contempt, he soon comes to look upon the whole thing as a wearisome repetition of words.

I am inclined to think that if the Brethren could be made to realize the obligations they assume when they range themselves under our banners, if they would take the trouble to thoroughly understand and honestly carry out those duties which devolve upon every Mason during his Lodge career, the Order would assume a new meaning. We would no longer be faced with empty seats at our lodge meetings but we would be able to see a falling away of the idle unworthy Brethren and a corresponding increase in the attendance of those who genuinely appreciate the privilege of membership. Our lodges would become, in fact, what

they were intended to be — level floors upon which could meet educated and enquiring men of all classes. These Brethren would be able to exchange sentiments, elevate one another's tastes, gain one another's esteem and realize that whatever conflict there may be in religious or political opinion, there are greater things than dogmas of sects or fad theories. They would realize that the great brotherhood of human-kind is God-born and that the highest duty of every member of it is to try to live a God-like life and to cherish God-like sentiments.

Let us consider then the case of a Candidate of intelligence and education, and all Candidates whatever their rank in life should have these qualities, who is about to pass through the ceremony of initiation, what is the duty of the proposer towards him? I have observed with regret that on many occasions there is a frivolous approach to this solemn occasion so that the Candidate is not in a proper frame of mind to assimilate the lessons unfolding before him. The solemnities of the ritual are lost to the Candidate's anticipation of the supposed events to come. I think it is the duty of every Mason to check any unseemly and irreverent conduct he may observe, especially on the occasion of an initiation. It is most important that the new initiate should have a proper appreciation of the dignity of the Craft, all members should keep this thought constantly before them and sponsors should feel it a particular duty. Need I add that on the night of initiation the Candidate is likely to more or less make up his mind as to whether he will be an interested, active member or just another name on the books.

In spite of the many drawbacks that are apt to occur it is usually sufficiently evident that the candidates are greatly impressed by their first introduction into a lodge, and this fact alone should add weight to our anxieties that such impressions should not be rubbed off or injured in any degree. But I fear that occasionally the moulding of opinion that has been cast during the ceremony is torn or disturbed during the subsequent proceedings of the evening.

The type of entertainment and tone of the speeches and informal remarks during the period of refreshment have a most important bearing on

the life of a lodge and the members, to say nothing of the impression a visitor and new initiate will receive. It is always well to have this portion of the evening well organized and to arrange for short talks that will maintain the high standard set in the lodge room, the Junior Warden should not lose sight of the fact that many Brethren will wish to chat informally, and the members of the lodge will have the opportunity of welcoming the new initiate into the lodge ranks.

When a Brother has passed through his three degrees and is invested with the distinguishing badge of a Master Mason, what are his duties? I take it that they are amply laid down in general form in the charge in the Entered Apprentice Degree, and in the investment ceremonies. There are points of duty that may be emphasized more particularly and which are worth some comment and attention. I think that one important idea to be kept before the mind of every Brother who hopes to succeed in Masonry and to win the affection of his Brethren, is that he is only one of a body, and that objects of a lodge are not selfish but the general pleasure and happiness of the whole fraternity combined with the success and prosperity of the lodge itself.

Every Brother should look with special reverence towards his mother lodge, in which he first saw the light, and his constant wish should be to aid its advancement and reputation. Depend upon it, if Masonry is to be elevated, if we are to save ourselves from falling into disrepute or sinking into a mere friendly society of members who do and say nothing, we must exercise in ourselves as well as enforce upon others the more diligent observance of our Lodge Duties.

R.W. Bro. DAVID LITTLE,  
Junior Grand Warden, Alberta.

**A SPECIAL COMMUNICATION** of Grand Lodge was held in the City of Calgary, Alberta, on Friday, September 14th, 1956, for the purpose of Constituting and Consecrating Jubilee Lodge No. 173. This lodge received its charter at the last annual Communication of Grand Lodge. We welcome this lodge into our ranks and wish them a happy future.

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."

Who never wins can rarely lose,  
Who never climbs as rarely falls.

—Whittier.

Tolerance in religion, freedom of thought, social justice, brotherhood, purity, education, reverence for God and love for humanity were taught us as essential to a Masonic life.

### WHY COMPASSES ARE OPENED AT SIXTY-DEGREE ANGLE

But few of our lodge officers have any definite idea as to why the compasses are opened upon the Volume of the Sacred Law at an angle of 60 degrees.

The explanation may be found in the fact that the equilateral triangle has always been sacred.

The sum of all angles of any triangle is equal to two right angles or 180 degrees. Each of the equal angles of any equilateral triangle is equal to one-third of two right angles (180 divided by 3 equals 60) which is 60 degrees. The compasses thus set at 60 allude to the equilateral triangle and, if the two points were united by a straight line, would form one. Our ancient Brethren placed the equilateral triangle itself on the altar. The compasses opened at 60 degrees have been substituted.

Furthermore, if a circle of any size be drawn a chord of 60 degrees of that circle will be equal to its radius and the compasses so set will divide the circle into six equal parts. The points thus made, with the one in the center, constitute the mystic number 7.

The six external points, if joined by six straight lines, will form the hexagon within the circle, one of the perfect figures. Or, if we unite these six points in another way, we have union with the point within the circle. This was the most sacred emblem of Pythagoras, known in all ages as the Seal of Solomon by which he bound fast the genii that rebelled against God. If the whole seven points be pointed by straight lines, we get a perfect sphere. The cube was sacred in all ages.

Courtesy Masonic News.

### THE FUNCTIONS OF A LODGE

The fundamental function of a Masonic lodge should be the training of its members in an understanding of the underlying truths and ethical values of fellowship. Each ceremony performed emphasizes the importance of inculcating the social virtues and benevolence, leading to an indelible imprint upon the hearts and minds of the members of their duty to propagate the ideals of the craft.

The success of a lodge cannot therefore be gauged by the measuring stick of its membership roll, or even by the size of its funds, and the chief concern should be the development of the welfare and happiness of its members and the activation of these high principles of human virtue that result in a fellowship so closely entwined together and so firmly dedicated to making alive the beauties of the ritual and the fundamental virtues that are exemplified.

The most important function of a lodge is therefore, to train its members and to keep them informed regarding the history, philosophy and symbolism of masonry.

Courtesy The Masonic Record

### CORRECTION

The amount expended the Board of Benevolence last year was \$9,180.07 and not \$9,180,107.

### THE MARCH OF MASONRY

There is no such thing as static Masonry. Forever Masonry is the Mason learning, thinking, loving, praying, and achieving, step by step, day by day. Every success opens the door to another opportunity for greater learning, for further progress, for steady improvement. We strive and fail, and find the truth that all success is created from the broken pieces of failure. Even as we grope in darkness and feel a sense of futility, we are in the process of growing, and Light comes to lead us into greater darkness, and out again into More Light.

What do we mean when we refer to Masonic Failure? There is no failure in Masonry except that which comes when we lose sight of the real goal of achievement, the attainment of the Master's Chair. All of our efforts are wasted unless we forever keep in mind that Masonic education, Masonic training, Masonic study, must be directed toward the final triumph, which is being at one with the G.A.O.T.U.

**Masonry has been described as "the realization of God by the practice of Brotherhood."**

In those few words are revealed clearly the sole purpose of our Institution. Why is Brotherhood a slow evolutionary movement instead of a natural and spontaneous condition? Why are there wars and why does man seek to destroy man and even the very earth, God's beautiful gift to man? Because Brotherhood must be established upon a sharing of spiritual qualities. In all countries where Masonry is firmly established, there you will find the natural union of hearts and minds and—peace. Let the sceptical and the enemies of Masonry ponder over this fact.

Masonry, let us remember, is "the realization of God" not through the theory, but "by the practice of Brotherhood."

Courtesy Masonic Messenger.

### THE MEANING OF INITIATION

The whole meaning of initiation is, of course, an analogy of the birth, awakening and growth of the soul; its discovery of the purpose of life, and the nature of the world and conditions in which it is to be lived. The lodge is meant to represent the world as it was thought to be in ancient times, with its square, flat surface and canopy of sky, its dark North and radiant East, its centre, an Altar of obligation and prayer.

Our initiation also symbolizes our progress from the darkness of ignorance to the light of moral truth and spiritual faith. From the lonely isolation suffered by so many, it opens the gate to a new world of friendship and happiness; and on those who will earn them, it bestows favors and privileges unprocurable elsewhere.

Courtesy The Philaethes

He who helps a child helps humanity with an immediateness which no other help given to human creature in any other stage of human life can possibly give again.

—Phillips Brooks.

### THE STEPS IN MASONRY

From time immemorial, more arguments and thought have been expended on the manner of worship than on the spirit of worship itself.

At one time there arose a great controversy in Babylon that lasted for fifteen hundred years, and divided the empire into two bigoted sects. One sect maintained that the Temple of Mithras should never be entered except with the left foot foremost; the other held that this practice was an abomination, and only the right foot should first be used. The rival sects waited impatiently for the day on which the feast of the holy fire would be held, for it was certain that Zadig would decide the matter. When the great master arrived, all had their eyes fixed on his two feet, rather than on his manner of reverence, and the whole city was in agitation and suspense.

Zadig, the legend says, leaped into the temple with both feet together, and afterwards proved in an eloquent discourse that the God of heaven and earth attaches no importance to a foot's priority over its mate, but holds important what lies in a man's heart as he approaches the altar.

Many such legends could be cited to prove that we often disregard the essence, while devoting too much thought to the substance in our rituals.

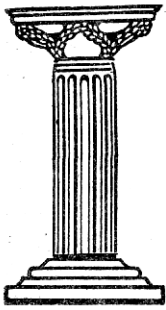
While the step can hardly be called a mode of recognition, it holds an important place in the ritual of Freemasonry. It can be traced back as far as the latter part of the seventeenth century. The custom of advancing in a peculiar manner and form, to some sacred place has been preserved in the customs of all countries. Some orientalist resort even to prostrations of the body when approaching the throne of a sovereign or the holy part of an edifice.

The Steps of Freemasonry are symbolic of respect and veneration of the altar, whence Masonic light is to emanate. In former times a bier or coffin was placed in front of the altar, as a well-known symbol, and in passing over this to reach the altar, those various positions of the feet were necessarily taken which constitute the proper mode of advancing. Respect was thus necessarily paid to a worthy artist as well as to the holy altar.

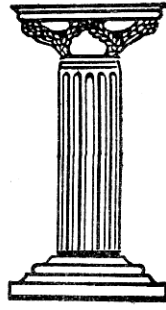
It must be evident to every Master Mason, without further explanations, that the three steps are taken from the place of darkness to the place of light, either figuratively or really over a coffin the symbol of death to reach, symbolically, the passage from the darkness and ignorance of life, through death to the light and knowledge of eternal life. From the earliest times this was the true symbolism of the Masonic step.

Masonic World

Masonry, when properly expounded, is at once the interpretation of the great books of nature, the recital of physical and astronomical phenomena, the purest philosophy, and the place of deposit, where, as in a treasury, are kept in safety all the great truths of the primitive revelation, that form the basis of all religions.



## Between the Pillars



### MASONIC ADVANCEMENT THE JEWELS OF THE LODGE

People have always prized their jewelry. The savage likes his gaudy ornaments, you and I are pleased by the sparkle of our trinkets, and the monarch worships his glittering crown. All these things amuse us for a little while, sparkling and dazzling to the eye. It is not only their intrinsic value, for jewels are often a symbol of honor and achievement.

Masons have established a collection of jewels in their lodges. Three of these cannot be taken out. They are always at their stations, standing as guide posts for all who would enter. What jewel could be better than the Square, shedding its lessons of morality, or what could be more useful than the Level and Plumb, teaching equality and rectitude of conduct?

The other three jewels are not set in a permanent position but can be moved about and made to fit into various places. The Rough Ashlar is one of these. It represents you and me at some stage of our lives. That rude and imperfect stone, seemingly unfit for the Temple, may be a diamond in the rough, a jewel with great possibilities. The highways and byways of earth are filled with Rough Ashlars, waiting to be shaped and squared for the builder's use. And how readily many of them can be perfected in the hands of the Master workman! It is to be regretted that so many are never brought out into the light of day, never squared and polished, but too often are thrown onto the rubbish heap of neglect. It is your opportunity and mine to discover the Rough Ashlars and shape them for the Living Temple. What jewels they may become under right leadership! It is our privilege to prepare them and send them forth, movable jewels, to shed their lustre on all who would look.

And the Perfect Ashlar is another jewel, fitted to travel among men. Hewn from its crude state, it stands resplendent in beauty and usefulness. A shining example it can always be, brightening the pathway before and after, and benefiting mankind everywhere. But let us remember! Blemishes are quickly noticed on a finished piece of work. Crudities and imperfections are partly excusable in the rough, but the world demands the genuine in the finished product. Masons who have arrived at that state of preparation and perfection where they can travel and represent the Perfect Ashlar must expect to be more closely scrutinized. They are more responsible for their actions than those

in the Rough Ashlar stage, just uncovered in the quarry.

The third movable jewel is the Trestle Board built for the Master to draw his designs upon. And this can travel, too. The plans of the Master are not confined to the lodge room. The designs upon his Trestle Board reach out to the various activities of life, to beds of sickness, to the marts of trade, and on down to the East Gate. And Masons are privileged to be builders in this broad plan of uplift and universal brotherhood.

And so there we have it. The three immovable jewels remain in the lodge, standards of conduct for us all. We may return at any time and right ourselves by the unfailing principles of the Square, Level and Plumb. And then out about our vocations again, representing the fraternity as movable jewels. It is our privilege to outgrow the Rough Ashlar stage, to stand four-square as a Perfect Ashlar, to read and understand the designs on the Trestle Board, and even to draw the designs.

Every Mason a jewel—that is a part of the plan laid down on the Trestle Board by the Supreme Architect of the Universe.

M.W. Bro. ROBERT W. TARBELL

### TRUTH

"Truth is a Divine attribute, and the foundation of every virtue." What is Truth? If we could know all the secrets of the universe. The search for light—more light—further light is the Masonic symbol for this eternal quest for a knowledge of greater truth. Each of us receives just that portion to which our efforts entitle us. There is no royal road to knowledge of ourselves, the universe and God. It grows as we develop our love of all Creation.

—Exchange.

### THE QUALITY OF LIFE

Let us see to it that our lives, like jewels of great price, be noteworthy not because of their width, but because of their weight. Let us measure them by their performance, not by their duration. We should, therefore, praise and number in the company of the blest that man who has invested well the portion of time, however little, that has been allotted to him for such a one has seen the true light. He has not only lived, but flourished. Sometimes he enjoys fair skies; sometimes as often happens, it was only through the clouds that there flashed to him the radiance of the mighty star. Why do you ask: "How long did he live?" He still lives! At one bound he has passed over into posterity and has consigned himself to the guardianship of memory.

—Seneca.

Each of us has in his heart a little try square, called a conscience, by which to test each thought and word and deed, and determine whether it is true or false. By as much as a man honestly applies that test to his own heart, and his relations with his fellows, by so much will his life be happy, stable and true.

—Masonic Historiology.