



# Grand Lodge Bulletin

Editor: SAM HARRIS, P.G.M.

## Freemasonry — Benefactor of Mankind

The story is told of a country lad who went to town to see his first circus. It seemed that on circus day the boy's father had given him a silver dollar and had bidden him ride his pony nine miles to the county seat town to see the big show. It was just about noon when the boy arrived, and the streets were crowded with hilarious people. Excitement filled the air. The lad tied the pony to a hitching post and ran to the main streets where something wonderful was taking place. Pushing his way through the crowd, he found himself staring at a spectacle unheard of in his experience. There before him, down the street, came the circus. Such sights he had never seen—camels, horses, ponies, elephants, zebras and acrobats, brass bands and wagon after wagon of wild animals. The boy's eyes filled with wonder and amazement. At last he was actually seeing the circus—so he thought.

As the lad stood there, he saw five or six clowns walking at the rear of the procession. One of them, with his hand held out to the crowd, seemed to be coming toward him. And as the big clown passed by, the little lad reached into his overall pocket for the silver dollar and, quick as a flash, dropped it into the waiting hand of the clown. The big fellow bowed in regal splendor and walked on. Minutes later, after the crowd had melted away, the lad went back to his pony and rode home. But it was not till some time afterward that the boy discovered that he had not seen the circus at all. He had seen only the parade. He had missed the real thing. He had confused the parade with the big show itself.

Does this story illustrate the experience of some Initiates, at the time of their introduction to the Rites and Ceremonies of Freemasonry? Do they think that they have acquired all that is to be learned about Freemasonry, simply by seeing the "parade"? Is it possible that some of us have seen only the "procession" of masonry—its outward forms, and never have gone on to more light in masonry, by finding out, and exploring the hidden treasures that have come down to us from the distant past?

In the past, truth has been hidden under Symbols and often under a series of Allegories, where

the meaning of something has been conveyed symbolically. Veil after veil which concealed the true light had to be penetrated in order to let the light shine through.

The object of initiation is, or should be "to search for Wisdom." Therefore the initiate must be instructed to seek beyond symbol and allegory, which are means to an end—a spiritual end. The Ritual is such in itself, to impress upon the mind of the initiate "the desire to begin" a most interesting study. All too few of us go beyond the beginner's stage, and why? Perhaps our masonic teaching is not, as presented, enough in arousing a desire within us to look beyond the procession to the real.

The Sacred Law, exhorts us "to Seek and ye shall find, to Knock and it shall be opened unto you." It reminds us of the "true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." The human light is but an imperfect reflection of a ray of the Infinite and Divine. Perfect truth is not attainable anywhere, yet we are not to relax in our pursuit for it. It is our duty always to press forward in search for more light in masonry.

Divine revelation is progressive, it unfolds itself in the wanderings of the people. It was one thing in the days of the Patriarchs, another in the days of the Kings, and still another as the old philosophical and religious systems were drawing toward each other. All this was brought about through the intermingling of different nations and thought. Likewise, the history, tradition and philosophy of Masonry cannot be laid hold upon, without much time and study. It gradually unfolds its truth to the devotee. To apprehend it, requires a life time of masonic education.

During the Christmas season there came to hand a book on "Symbols" which I found interesting. At the present time there is a renewed interest in the subject of symbols. Protestants have been slow to use them, because of the fear they might become objects of worship. Their chief function is to keep alive the historical representation of the great signs of the Christian Faith.

For our purpose we shall define symbol as a visible representation of truth in masonry. A

devotee of the Craft can discover the secrets of Freemasonry by reflection upon its symbols. These symbols are "Landmarks" to show us the way, and give the mind a train of thought which will lead it to hidden treasures. The lessons of the three degrees have come to us from an age when symbols were used, not "to reveal but to conceal," when the commonest learning was confined to the few.

Now, the true mason ever an ardent seeker after knowledge knows that the symbols of masonry are but vessels which came down to us, laden with "the intellectual riches of the past." These shed light on the history of masonry and proves its claim to be acknowledged the "Benefactor of Mankind." He who would be an accomplished mason must not be content merely to hear or even to understand the lectures of the three degrees. He must, aided by them, and they, as it were having marked out the way for him, study, interpret, and develop these symbols for himself.

We need no longer expect to rebuild the Temple at Jerusalem. To us it has become a symbol. The G.A.O.U. has made man his Temple. In every upright heart he has established a new law and reign of love, peace, charity, toleration and brotherhood. Masonry is now engaged in building and erecting such a temple. Since it is not necessary to rebuild the Temple at Jerusalem, a mason must erect his own temple, that of a "Humble and contrite heart" and worship the G.A.O.U. with devout gratitude, and with works of charity and benevolence to his fellowmen. In doing these things he builds again the new Jerusalem.

Indirectly, Freemasonry says that every devotee shall have his own temple. Freemasonry is not a church, nor has it attempted to offer spiritual salvation, it has never professed to take the place of the Christian Church.

The other day I received a phone call from a brother mason, inviting me to come to his lodge and address the brethren, on some of the Landmarks of Freemasonry. It seems that there is in that part of the Province, a section of the Christian Church that makes its opposition to the Masonic Order one of its fundamental objectives. At present it is done by distributing so-called Biblical literature, which attempts to disprove the truth of Freemasonry. While this is disturbing to the officers of the lodge, and has a tendency to disrupt the harmony within a lodge, and within a member's family, the best way to refute such fallacious propaganda is by precept and example, as befitting one who is a member of the Craft.

Freemasonry exalts the Holy Bible and looks upon it as the "Great Light." It does not lay stress so much upon those theological teachings of the Scripture that divide men, as it does upon those things that unite them. It emphasizes the Ethical and Symbolical truths of the Bible upon which all men agree.

While the first masonic duty is that of appreciating the infinite goodness and greatness of the G.A.O.U., the second is that men created for the good of one another should mutually do good, one to another. Freemasonry teaches that man has high duties to perform and a high destiny to fulfill, of these he must be concerned.

Standing high above all other great teachers of life and goodness, Freemasonry regards with respect and affection the character of the Great Teacher who gave his life for mankind. We all admit that if the world were filled with such Beings, the ills of society would be eliminated, and

"That man to man, the world o'er,  
shall brithers be for a' that."

To be faithful to Freemasonry, is to be faithful to the best interests of mankind. By precept and example, elevate the best standards of Masonic character, thus you will enlarge its place of influence, and the world will come to know it to be the "Benefactor of mankind."

—M.W. Bro. Rev. Peter Dawson,  
Past Grand Master, Alberta.

## MASONRY'S WORK

—(The Builder)

For Freemasons the question comes back to the familiar "What came ye here to do?" To answer that question is not as difficult as might first appear. The work of Freemasonry in the world is already defined for it by its own history, its ritual, its philosophy, its constitutions and its landmarks. It cannot cease to be itself in order to become something else. Will it not be disastrous to introduce controversies into the life of our lodges, especially if they are of a political or religious nature? Long ago our Masonic forefathers learned a bitter lesson over again. If bigotry, passion and prejudice are turned loose, who can foretell what direction they will take. It sometimes happens that a man who sets fire to his neighbor's fields has his own burned over before the fire dies down.

—Selected.

There are ten good things for which no one has ever been sorry: For doing good to all; for speaking evil to no one; for hearing before judging; for thinking before speaking; for holding an angry tongue; for being kind to the distressed; for asking pardon for all wrongs; for being patient toward everybody; for stopping the ear to the tale bearer; for disbelieving the most of the evil reports.

—Chicago Scottish Rite Magazine.

Moral courage is obeying one's conscience and doing what one believes to be right, in face of a hostile majority. Moral cowardice is stifling one's conscience, and doing what is less than right in order to win other people's favor.

Dr. John Watson.

## SOLICITATION

Occasionally we hear the expression that our beloved Craft should adopt the plan of soliciting members, as do many other clubs and societies. But the most absurd statement coming to our ears recently was to the effect that solicitation was necessary to "save the fraternity."

First of all, we are most unwilling to agree that Masonry needs anything to save it, nor are we aware from what it is necessary for it to be "saved." Year after year, the Craft maintains a steady growth, and is found consistently working for those things conducive to a better way of life for all mankind.

Some may assume that every worthy man is eligible for Masonry, but such an idea is in error. True, there are many men of good character, whose value as citizens cannot be doubted, but it doesn't follow that they are ready for Masonry, and it is a certainty that those who are not ready would do no good to themselves or to the fraternity by the gesture of going through the degrees.

The theory upon which Masonry was founded and continues to operate, is that it is the custodian of a system of morals, ethics, philosophy, and spiritual conceptions peculiarly its own; designed for the development of men who have been led from the heart to seek those things. There is a difference between a man who is personally "good enough" for certain things and one who is "ready" for them. We who have been inducted into the mysteries of Masonry know full well where the preparation for such an entry must begin.

According to our way of thinking, solicitation for membership would be the surest possible way to totally wreck Masonry. If such a method were sanctioned and popularized, within a very short period of time we would see thousands of borderline characters—and some even below that level—rushed into membership; to such an extent that but a minimum of men who should be in Masonry would actually petition our lodges for admission. Brethren who think seriously about Masonry, and are deeply concerned as to its welfare, noting the results from such a deviation from the age-old customs, would be most reluctant about asking men to join our ranks.

On the other hand, those who like to see the rolls increase rapidly, and the material income swell to great proportions, would more than likely bestir themselves mightily, and even go beyond asking and urging; it is not difficult to visualize them practically hawking Masonry throughout the streets.

We believe solicitation would cause the quickest possible inflation, and later would inevitably bring about a greater deflation and terrific loss of membership. Worse still, it would be the loss of prestige and spiritual function, such as Masonry in its long and honored history has never seen.

—M.W. Bro. C. F. Carlson,  
Grand Master, The Philippines.

## EASTERTIDE

The Easter season is one of Light to Freemasons. Following Lent with its gloom of Maundy Thursday and Good Friday, the hearts of all Christian peoples welcome Easter Day, quite in a different manner to that of any other Christian festival.

We humans, these days, have a tendency to constant searching for newness and change. One of United States bishops recently likened this to Ponce de Leon's search for fountain of youth, who failed to find it where he thought he would. The real factor is the human heart with its attitude toward life. That a wrong attitude causes one to grow spiritually old and mentally warped.

Lent summons us to self examination and discipline which could have similar effect upon our Masonic Life, as training is to an athlete. Lent is not so much concerned with the outward things—pleasures, food, etc., as with our inner attitudes, moods and emotions. Having done this we welcome Easter and its eternal promise of newness of life.

To very many people, Easter with its relaxing serenity, is about the most wonderful season of the whole year.

I believe we become more conscious of the nearness of the G.A. of U. and the reality of the Fatherhood of God.

Albert Schweitzer, the great medical missionary, says, as we respond, God is revealed to us in our toils, conflicts, sufferings and pleasures.

A well known American educator says he has two guiding stars. (1) The Christian Religion, which regards everyone as a child of God. (2) Democracy, which regards the individual as worthy of dignity. That the second is less important because it is the outcome of the first.

Father Damien, who gave his life to the leper colony, said he always looked forward to Easter, because he celebrated it with God.

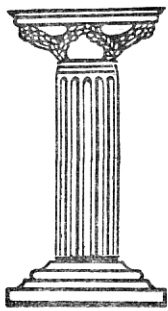
When Abraham Lincoln was leaving home to assume the burden of government, he remarked to a friend—without God's help I shall not succeed, with it I cannot fail.

Such are some thoughts and quotations occurring to a Freemason at Easter, in a world of disputes, selfishness and lack of faith. We are familiar with the tenets of our beloved Craft. To practice its teachings, in our daily round of common task, will be a worth while contribution towards true and better living.

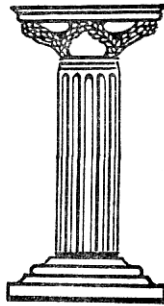
One more quotation is Thomas Elwood's seventeenth century prayer:

*O that mine eyes might closed be  
To what concerns me not to see;  
That deafness might possess mine ear  
To what concerns me not to hear;  
That truth my tongue might always tie  
From ever speaking foolishly;  
That no vain thought might ever rest  
Or be conceived within my breast;  
That by each deed and word and thought  
Glory may to my God be brought.*

—R.W. F. F. W. Lowle,  
Past Grand Registrar, Alberta.



## Between the Pillars



### THOUGHTS, WORDS AND ACTIONS

An important aspect of masonic teaching which is impressed on a brother, something that is of infinite good for the individual in particular and the effect it has upon the whole of mankind in general, is that of placing a careful guard over his mind so that no unworthy thought may be allowed to set in motion any unworthy words and actions, thereby enabling him to preserve a conscience void of offence against God and his fellow men.

From the time of his admission as a member, his mind is enlightened to the duties which he owes to God, to his fellow creatures, and to himself, duties, which if carefully observed, will be expressed by him in a devout reverence for the Almighty Creator: a fervent desire to contribute to the welfare of his fellow men irrespective of their creed, colour, or class, together with a proper regard for his own self respect in a worthy endeavour to live respectably, useful to mankind, and true to the tenets and principles of the society of which he is a member.

To fulfil these requirements, a careful and regular self-discipline is the best course that can be taken in order to cultivate and develop all the finest personal attributes to a high degree, self-discipline of both mind and body, for the combination of a healthy mind and a healthy body is a sure foundation upon which to build a character possessed of all those human qualities which are necessary for the fulfilment of the purpose of living a worthy life.

The cultivation of right-thinking is an effort that should be made by every man who wishes to develop a healthy mind. All the promptings of the mind should be carefully examined to find whether or not they are in keeping with morality and a clean conscience, in regard to what is right or wrong, and every thought that is not in tune with goodness and truth should be immediately banished from the mind, only those thoughts which inspire the best in human nature, the spirit of brotherly love, relief and truth to be considered worthy of retention.

The importance of right-thinking and right-living manifests itself in all that we encounter today. Thinking on wrong lines creates wrongs when these thoughts become transferred into actions, wrongs from the effect of which almost

everyone has suffered sometime or another. A wrong action often begets another wrong action, and may even cause thoughts of revenge to arise in the mind of the injured party and so extend the evil. Right-thinking will prevent the possibility of wrong words and wrong actions and by so doing, bring to mankind that wisdom and understanding, the influence of which will enable men to live happily together in a common bond of brotherhood seeking only to do what is right, one to the other.

Thoughts, words and actions are co-related. Words and actions follow the thoughts, and so, by excluding every unworthy thought from our minds, the unworthy word and the unworthy action will be eliminated too.

The guide to the cultivation of right-thinking is the V.S.L. Therein are to be found our duties to God, to our neighbors, and to ourselves. By obedience thereto, and by measuring our thoughts, words, and actions in keeping with the Moral Law we can do much in our own lifetime to bring about that much desired state in the affairs of men, mutual trust, faith and understanding, one with the other.

When mankind, the world over, is eventually made to realize the necessity for the cultivation of right-thinking, then we may hope for a fulfilment of the purpose of Freemasonry, the realization of peace and goodwill among men through right thoughts, words, and actions by the spirit of brotherly love, relief, and truth.

—West Australian Craftsman.

### HAPPINESS

The only thing you can control in this universe is yourself. Devote some time every day to setting-up exercises in happiness. Think thirty minutes every morning after breakfast of things which have made you glad. Sit this half-hour out in a sun bath of cheer. Shut out all thoughts that hurt, from bad liver to false friends. Get in the way of turning everything so that you see its bright side. Happiness is entirely a spiritual product and is developed inside of you and cannot be put into you from the outside.

—Exchange.

### GOODWILL

The most precious thing anyone can have is the goodwill of others. It is something as fragile as an orchid, and as beautiful. It is more precious than a gold nugget, and as hard to find. It is as powerful as a great turbine, and as hard to build. It is as wonderful as youth, and as hard to keep. It is an intangible something, this goodwill of others, yet more to be desired than much gold. It is the measure of a man's success and determines his usefulness in this life.

—Exchange.