



Grand Lodge Bulletin

Editor: SAM HARRIS, P.G.M.

Are All Present Master Masons?

This is a question which always intrigues one because one wonders if the answer would be yes if all the tests were made. Having written two articles which dealt with the philosophy of the Entered Apprentice Degree and the Fellowcraft Degree respectively and, while the Master Mason Degree is somewhat of an evolution from the previous two, yet there is a soul stirring portrayal of immortality in the Master Masons Degree which effectually illustrates what is meant in the first two degrees regarding the Brotherhood of Man and the Fatherhood of God. Immortality is natural through God being our Father. Recently we have been once more thrilled by the Anniversary of one of God's illustrations of immortality in sending his Son to be a living example as is shown in His resurrection and one is impressed by the almost parallel dramatization in the M.M. Degree. An apparent sacrifice for fidelity to a sacred trust to the Brotherhood of Man (representing the temptations of Satan and his apparent devilish success) until the forces of goodness overcome the fiendish attempt. Surely this is meant to remind us of our own vulnerable position in being beset by so many temptations not to follow the teachings of the Craft and to forget that which we have promised to do before the Altar which supports the Great Light which leads us to all truth, directs our steps in the paths of happiness and points out to us the whole duty of Man. We need a continual reminder and there is wisdom in the advice given to us to make a daily advance in Masonic knowledge, which is surely needed to fortify us, to stimulate us and make us resolute against neglect of our duties.

Like our Grand Chaplain, who was impressed by the Altar, I have been impressed of late by the lovely teachings in the Ceremony of Installation of Officers wherein we are reminded that Freemasonry has, throughout all ages, in all its vicissitudes, been the steady unvarying friend of man, the constant messenger of peace and love, never wearying, never forgetful of its holy mission, but patiently ministering to want and sorrow, spreading with unsparing hand blessings and benefits to all around; it comforts the mourner, speaks

peace and consolation to the troubled spirit, carries relief and gladness to the habitations of want and destitution, it dries the tears of the widow and the orphan, it opens the sources of knowledge, widens the sphere of human happiness, it even seeks to light up the darkness and gloom of the grave by pointing the hopes and promises of a better life to come. Here again it seems to me that we need a daily reminder of these beautiful virtues and to ask ourselves what contributions we have made to enhance the reputation of the Brotherhood.

In various messages which I have given to the Craft it has been my endeavour to impress them with the idea that Freemasons are set apart to be in a different way of life, dedicated to a noble cause and that in the degrees up to that of a Master Mason there is enough philosophy to keep a Mason fully occupied for the rest of his life; but it needs that daily reminder and self examination in order to battle against the wiles of Satan.

There is no room in a Master Mason's life for meanness, petty cavilling, questionable stories and short cuts at the expense of the Constitution and Regulations for ones own convenience or stubbornness, forgetting the dignity and high importance of the Brotherhood. Nor is there any room for unkind remarks or actions when conversing with or dealing with another Master Mason.

There appear to be feelings of resentment among officers of lodges from time to time against what seem to be restrictions on their freedom of action and at what occurs to them to savor of regimentation; whereas a little patience and tolerance would lead them to a realization that such regulations are the work of Master Masons like ourselves, aimed at the preservation of the Brotherhood having in mind the ancient usages and landmarks, which are the very warp and woof of our honourable institution. One item which is the cause of unnecessary umbrage is the matter of regalia and whether there is some fringe here or some tinsel there and we hear of brethren who have pledged themselves to uphold and maintain the Constitution of Grand Lodge, even practicing

deception in order to acquire some form of regalia which is different from that which is specifically laid down in such Constitution. Now my brethren are such practices in keeping with the beautiful philosophy of our Degrees? It is pointed out in such degrees that it is the internal qualifications of a man which Freemasonry regards; not the decorations.

Freemasonry seems to honour the man who quietly and modestly moves in the sphere of his life, who performs without blemish his duty as a man a subject, a husband, and a father, who is pious without hypocrisy, benevolent without ostentation, who cares for his fellow man without self-interest, whose heart beats warm for friendship and whose serene mind is open for licensed pleasures, who in vicissitudes does not despair, who in fortune will not be presumptuous and who will be resolute in the hour of danger.

We should at all times remember that Freemasonry is far greater than any of its brethren and yet each one of us is expected to bear himself honourably so as to uphold, pure and unsullied, the genuine tenets and principles of the craft.

In a beautiful legend it is held that the site for the Holy Temple of King Solomon was selected in the Judean Hills on account of the neighbourliness of two farmers, one of whom was married and had a large family and was well blessed with a goodly crop; one night when he was in meditation counting his many blessings, he thought of his neighbour who was a lonely bachelor with not much help and not as much land; he conceived the idea of carrying some sheaves of grain across the path which divided their properties thinking his bachelor neighbour would be happy to find that his crop was greater than he expected. By a strange coincidence the bachelor farmer also had kindly thoughts about his neighbour who he knew had many mouths to feed and bodies to clothe; He said to himself I have enough and to spare for my meagre wants, so I will carry some of my sheaves over the pathway and this will make my neighbour happy with a more bounteous crop. This went on for several dark nights with no moon but one night the moon broke through in all her splendour and lo' the neighbours met each other carrying sheaves; this was thought to be a unique occasion where God and Man met on one common level and the location was deemed to be an appropriate site for the Holy Temple to be erected. This might be what is meant by the phrase "let kindness and brotherly love characterize your conduct as men and Masons."

It is said that the gratitude of the widow and the orphan are the Freemason's most acceptable offering to GOD and the effect of such kindnesses is unpredictable and sometimes unique. I have in mind a case where a Master Mason met the widow of a brother of his lodge who had passed on about thirty years previously. The widow had been living away from the city and had returned to see her sister, who was ill, and it was at the sister's house that they met. In the course of conversation the widow asked the Mason if he

remembered a visit he made to her on the night her husband died and upon admission of this she asked him if he remembered what he had told her. He did not and she told him because she said she could never forget and this is what she remembered "Our Lodge wants you to feel that if there is anything that its brethren can do for you they will be happy to do so." She was happy that she had not needed any assistance but she always had a feeling of protection, and she never would forget. It is a strange thing when a widow with a family says to you on your visit with a Christmas hamper, "Mr. . . . you must be an answer to Prayer." She was having a problem with her children and he was able to be of assistance over several years and earned the widow's undying gratitude. Notice he did not **send** the hamper but **took** it to her. Truly God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform. Also more things are wrought by Prayer than this world dreams of.

My brethren there are many ways in which a Freemason can work and none of it is done by compulsion or coercive means but on the principle of friendship and brotherly love. Our Lodges are havens of peace, harmony and brotherly love in which we have time to study and hear the lessons so beautifully inculcated and then, when we mix again with the outer world we should not forget these lessons and should be diligent, prudent, temperate and discreet and remember that we have promised to befriend and relieve every brother who shall need our assistance, to remind him in the most tender manner of all his failings, to aid his reformation, and to vindicate his character when wrongly traduced; we should let the world see how Freemasons love one another and be aware that every human being has a claim on our kind offices and we should be good unto all men and remember always the household of the faithful.

When I started this article I stated that the question in the title intrigues me and I hope that the next time you hear it asked it will intrigue you, especially if you ask yourself as I do myself, "When is a man a Master Mason?"

M.W. Bro. HARRY E. HOWARD,
Past Grand Master, Alberta.

THE PATTERN OF LIFE

Life is a school. The world is neither prison nor penitentiary, nor a palace of ease, nor an amphitheatre for games and spectacles, but a place of instruction and discipline. Life is given for moral and spiritual training, and the entire course of the great school of life is an education for virtue, happiness and future existence. The periods of life are its terms; all human conditions, its forms; all human employments, its lessons. Families are the primary departments of this moral education; the very circles of society, its advanced stages; kingdoms and republics, its universities.

Riches and poverty, gaieties and sorrows, marriages and funerals, the ties of life bound or broken,

fit and fortunate or untoward and painful, are all the lessons. Events are not blindly and carelessly flung together. Providence does not school one man and screen another man from the fiery trial of its lessons. It has neither rich favourites nor poor victims. One event happeneth to all. One end and one design concern and urge all men.

ALBERT PIKE.

MASONRY IN IRELAND

Nowhere is Freemasonry more consolidated and all branches bound up in a single package than it is in Ireland. Freemason's Hall in Dublin is the center of Masonic activities for the Emerald Isle, not only that part comprising the Republic of Ireland, but also those six northern counties of Ulster which are still under British government. The Republic of Ireland has some 2,948,000 people and Northern Ireland has a population of 1,370,000.

The Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Ireland was founded in 1725 and now has some one thousand lodges on its roster, of which seventy-six are outside Ireland. Seventy-six lodges are in the city of Dublin, which is a city of 500,000 persons, of which 85 percent are Roman Catholic, but Freemasonry is exceptionally strong, nevertheless.

Freemason's Hall is the headquarters of the Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Ireland, the Grand Council of Knight Masons, the Great Priory of Knights Templar and the Supreme Council of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite.

As in England and Scotland, the Scottish Rite is a rather exclusive organization and not the popular institution it is in the United States. This is evidenced by the fact that there are but nine members in all Ireland who have attained the 33rd degree, and these are all active, there are no honorary thirty-thirds. In addition to these nine, there are only 16 members who have the 32nd degree; in addition to these there are only 21 who have the 31st degree; in addition to these, there are only 30 who have received the 30th degree. The 28th degree is limited to 35 members. There are 18 chapters of Rose Croix in Ireland having a total of about 600 members of the 18th degree, which is the only degree conferred. Only those who have been elected to preside over a chapter of the Rose Croix may receive additional degrees.

The Grand Council of Knight Masons is a body between the Grand Royal Arch Chapter and the Great Priory of Knights Templar and the Grand Council confers three degrees: Knight of the East, Knight of the West, and Knight of the Sword. A candidate progresses through all the degrees in sequence, from the Blue Lodge, through the Royal Arch, the Knight Masons, the Knights Templar and then the Scottish Rite.

Courtesy The Beauseant, Kentucky.

Two men look through the same bars:
One sees the mud, and one the stars.

—F. Langbridge.

THE QUEST

I sought Him in the morning
When the purple daylight break
I sought Him at the noon tide
On land, in woods, by lakes.
I sought Him in the evening
As the sun had gone to rest,
And then I sought Him in the stars,
To satisfy my quest.

The day was done, my quest seemed vain,
I sank down on the sod,
But as I knelt I heard a voice
It was the voice of God.
He spoke to me in accents clear,
My son do not despair
For I was with you all the day
Though you knew not I was there.

I smiled upon you in the morn,
And gave you warmth and light,
At noon I fed and nourished you,
And kept you free from blight.
Then in the dusk of eventide
As I saw you on your knees
I sent my messenger to you
In the whispering of the trees.
To tell you I was with you,
In morning, noon and night
And that your quest was not in vain
Though I was out of sight.

V.W. Bro. W. A. ACKLAND,
Grand Lodge of Alberta.

HOPE

When the night is darkest, the ever-burning lamp of hope shines all the brighter. A hopeless human is as worthless as an exploded boiler and as useless as three tails. A present unfavorable condition is but a temporary situation when one firmly holds to hope.

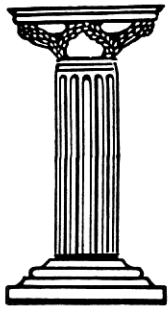
When failure confronts, when disappointment faces, when disaster threatens, the only hope a person has is hope. Hope can make one an enthusiastic dreamer, often makes one an enthusiastic doer and this is the kind of hope you should harbor.

Hope animates one to do one's utmost. It perpetually prods us into position. It is the last light we see before entering enduring eternity, and the one star by night, and the steady sun by day, that throws a light on our trail.

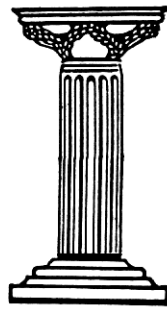
When the mutability of human affairs changes our course, when discouraging situations develop, hope steps in, lends new courage, soon the situation changes, and the encouraging events follow. The always hopeful heart transforms its troubles into triumphs.

CHARLES EDWARD CASWELL.

Rare indeed is the person who never has committed the folly of talking before thinking.



Between the Pillars



Every Initiate Is A Sacred Trust

A man may enter Freemasonry of his own free will, and may leave it of his own accord, but once he enters and places his confidence in the Craft, he is a sacred trust, not only to his proposer and seconder, not only to the Lodge in which he is now a member, but to the whole of the Craft with whom he has now become a brother.

The word initiate is taken from the Latin and to Freemasonry means the birth, the beginning, the dawn of masonic life. Thus every initiate has his dawn, his birth into the Craft, and that dawn should be as beautiful to the initiate, and as full of meaning as the great dawn of day, which, breaking through the darkness, catches the eye, mind, and soul of all who witness its magnificence and splendour. Thus should the initiate be made to see and understand during his initiation the beauty and splendour of Freemasonry, and the brethren by their life and actions show sincerity in their work and behaviour, both in the ceremonial and away from it. The initiate will thus feel and know that he has done right in trusting those with whom he has formed a favourable opinion, and his faith in Freemasonry thus assured, that faith of his must never be allowed to waver.

It does not take an initiate very long to detect the sincerity of those around him, their personality and straightforwardness, and whether or not the work is from the heart or mere gabble. He is mentally taking stock of those taking part in his initiation, and weighing them up to his satisfaction or otherwise.

Thus initiation is the period in every masonic life when the foundation that is being laid will mean everything to the building of the future masonic human structure.

How the initiate will learn to know himself, realize his course of action and conduct, will depend upon the action and conduct, not only by the brethren of the Lodge in which he has become a member, but of freemasons as a whole, for as one faulty stone can upset a whole structure, so one faulty member in the Craft can ruin a brother

and cause a blot on the good name of a Lodge and Freemasonry.

Great care should be taken when the initiate pays a visit. He wears the apron of an initiate which at once marks him as such, and every brother with whom he comes in contact should recognize this fact, and extend to him the brotherly respect he is entitled to receive. He should be made to see and feel that Freemasonry is a way of life, and the spirit of the brethren should be such as to show that that way of life is carried out.

"Life is good," says Renan, "when good use is made of it." So is Freemasonry good when good use is made of it.

In setting a high standard of life for the initiate, the responsibility rests upon every brother to be just and upright. Freemasonry calls upon her craftsmen to be just, upright and free men, of sound judgment, and strict morals, in other words, Freemasonry looks to the perfection of manhood, and the sooner freemasons realize that fact the better for us all, for we yet have a long way to go to reach that masonic goal.

It is not the perfect working lodge that will win the initiate; it's the brother perfect in all his parts and honourable to the builder.

The working tools have been placed in our hands, and as freemasons we are the Craftsmen who must build this great service of brotherhood that it shall live on. ~~With these working tools and the old charges to inspire, pleasure can be given to the initiate, with profit to him and the Craft.~~

In every initiation, the brethren must realize that their thoughts, words, and actions will put into life the making of a new man, for that is what Freemasonry calls upon them to do.

A new man—and there is your Sacred Trust. It is your lot as a brother, it is also your lot to turn your masonic work to good account.

Courtesy The Ashlar,

Grand Lodge of Queensland.

A TRUE MASON

"We shall pass this way but once," said the poet of old, and his words call this thought to mind: If we can show some kindness to one in need, or comfort some fellow being, let us do it now, that he may have the opportunity of enjoying the roses that may be scattered in the pathway of his life. By so doing we will experience the happiness and satisfaction which proceed from deeds of kindness unselfishly performed. If we do this we may indeed be worthy to wear the white lambskin apron and stand before the world as upright Masons.

Selected.

The greatest fault is to be conscious of none.