



Wishing Everyone a Merry Christmas



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Grand Lodge Bulletin

Editor: S. CARL HECKBERT, P.G.M.

THE DIGNITY OF OFFICE

By R. W. BRO. DAVE LITTLE,
Senior Grand Warden

The Masonic year draws to a close for those Lodges which install their officers on the anniversary of St. John the Evangelist. Each Lodge, according to old-established custom, must elect from among those Brethren who have served in the office of Warden, an expert Craftsman to preside over them in the capacity of Worshipful Master. A candidate for this important office should be one held in high esteem, and who, since accepting an earlier invitation to occupy the chair of a junior officer, has now advanced through the various offices, giving generously of his time and attention to the duties required through his occupancy of the chair.

It is not given to every man to succeed, and many have no ambition to fill an office, but when a competent Brother accepts the invitation to take office in a Lodge it behooves him to fully prove his capabilities. It should be his first care to render himself as nearly perfect as possible for whatever office it may have pleased the Worshipful Master to allocate him. Some men make the serious mistake of neglecting their duties while occupying the junior offices. Nothing succeeds like success, and if it is noticed that an officer is perfect in his work, even if the office be signified by no collar other than that of the Inner Guard or Junior Steward, his chances for promotion will be largely increased. Not only the Worshipful Master, but all members of the Craft who have a deep interest in Masonry, like to see the work done in an efficient and dignified manner. The officers who are most punctual and diligent are certainly the most likely to receive advancement in the future.

Of the subordinate officers of a Lodge, the Wardens and Secretary occupy extremely important positions, because the two former should be the right and left hands of the Worshipful Master, and the latter, if a fully qualified Brother is, to a large extent, the pivot about which the Lodge moves. The Wardens, in view of their near-succession to the senior office, should especially perfect themselves in the details of ceremonial

and impress upon their Brethren the necessity for punctuality and attention.

It is by the exhibition of energy, zeal, promptitude and care in the Warden's chair that a Brother has opportunities of proving to the members of his Lodge that he is well qualified to preside over them, and the Brother who does not fully realize this, and does not act accordingly, cannot expect to rule his Lodge successfully. It is the absolute duty of every Brother, before he takes the Worshipful Master's gavel in his right hand, to master the Book of Constitution and to make himself fully acquainted with the laws and regulations which govern our society.

It is not only from a sense of duty that he should do this, but because of the feeling of security and comfort that such knowledge will impart to him while in the execution of the duties of his important trust. Nothing is more derogatory to the position and influence of a Worshipful Master than an exhibition of ignorance of Masonic law or the spectacle of a Worshipful Master who is compelled, on every trifling point, to appeal for support and guidance to his Past Masters.

Let us run through the characteristics that we are told should belong to every ruler, and then let us ask ourselves: "In how many cases does the Master-elect measure up to the high standard set?"

He should be of good report, true and trusty, and held in high esteem by his Brethren and fellows; well skilled in the noble art, exemplary in conduct, courteous in manner, and well versed in the ancient landmarks and constitutions of our Order. How many Worshipful Masters of the hundreds annually installed come up to this level? You may feel that it would be impossible to find a succession of men answering to such a description and that if all of these qualifications were rigidly insisted upon, there might well be a serious dislocation of our system. I grant that very few men who are placed, year after year, among our rulers fully answer to the pattern laid down. However, if we cannot find perfection in this world, we can at any rate strive to come as near to it as we possibly can, and even if the amicable and loveable Brother elected to the chair does not

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EDITORIAL

Members of the Masonic fraternity in Alberta will be pleased to know that progress is being made towards the provision of scholarships for the sons and daughters of Masons in the Province. Grand Lodge, having accepted in principle the suggestion of M.W. Bro. Sheppard, as made at the 1957 communication, has moved to achieve the desired objective, and Lodges are to be given the opportunity of studying the proposals and to voice their opinions.

In these days of strenuous competitive life, it is imperative that young people be more adequately trained than ever before, and it is encouraging to know that substantial financial assistance may be made available to the children of members of the Order or the children of members who have passed to the great beyond.

It has been pointed out that financial need alone will not form the basis for the granting of a scholarship, but that ability to assimilate training, as well as favourable personal attitude of those to be considered, will have an important bearing on the allocation of awards. Sponsorship of candidates will require the most careful thought on the part of Lodges throughout the Grand Jurisdiction, for to them will fall the responsibility of making the necessary recommendations.

It will be apparent to members of families of Masons that our Grand Lodge has a vital interest in their welfare and those who might otherwise be denied the opportunity of embarking upon University grade education must view with pleasure the added opportunity now in prospect.

One has only to review the programme of educational advantage offered to veterans of the Second World War by the Government of Canada to realize the tremendous impact that education can have upon the future of our country; it is not upon the recipients of scholarships alone that benefits fall, for a nation of highly-educated young people can surely advance, not only their own personal interests in life, but make a decided impression upon the entire community and national life.

With financial assistance now virtually assured for a limited number, and with a strong Grand Lodge Scholarship Committee in prospect, it will be the hope of our members that competent and sincere young people will take full advantage of the splendid opportunities available. It remains for our membership to evince the keenest interest in a plan which will doubtless redound to the credit of our Grand Lodge and to the benefit of our young folk in the years to come.—S.C.H.

Man is no bubble upon the sea of his fortunes, helpless and irresponsible upon the tide of events. Out of the same circumstances, different men bring totally different results.

THE DIGNITY OF OFFICE

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possess all the virtues named, he may possess sufficient qualifications to permit him to fill the office with dignity and aplomb.

The amount of real and genuine interest taken in Freemasonry by any Worshipful Master may be gauged by the attention he pays to his Lodge after his term of office has expired and he leaves the chair. The man who simply accepts office to secure the privilege of placing the letters P.M. after his name will seldom be seen in the Lodge except at banquets or special events. Point out to me the Past Master to whom the Brethren refer in times of difficulty, who is constantly seen in his place on the dais and who is ardent in his interest in the Lodge and I will show you a genuine Brother whose Masonry has not been of a selfish nature, but who has done, and will do again, honour to his Lodge.

Worshipful Masters and Past Masters alike have two main objects to keep in view—the happiness of the Brethren and the prosperity of the Lodge. If a Lodge is prosperous its members will be proud to belong to it. The real worth of a Lodge depends, in major degree, upon the firmness and discretion of the Worshipful Master and those who have preceded him in the chief office.

My Prayer

*"I ask for strength to stand erect
And face my fellowman;
I ask for power to sow the seed
Of joy, where'er I can;
I ask for faith that I may fight
The battles of each day,
And view such triumphs as I win
In meek and modest way.
I ask for light that I may see
With vision bright and clear,
The regal splendours of my Lord
As daily they appear
In sea and sky and flower and tree,
In brook and song of bird,
In valley or on mountain top
Where'er His voice is heard.
I ask for health that I may toil
To earn my daily bread
And meet the needs of every hour
With neither fear nor dread.
I ask for help, I turn to Thee
When'er my earthly race is run . . .
And humbly say, with trembling heart,
My Lord, Thy will be done."
—Odenna P. Oldham*

WHAT IS MASONRY?

An Address by W. Bro. James E. Hall

(Conclusion)

Why, then, expect the college of Freemasonry to sponsor projects or embark upon adventures outside the scope of its organization or beyond the design of its particular system? Why should its glory, as an institution, dedicated to the teaching of moral principles, be tarnished by the influence of petty rivalries among contending claimants for its sponsorship of their particular projects, whether political, civil or religious?

As the university student carries his skill into the world of commerce and industry, so the Masonic "graduate" carries his skill and the honour of the ancient Craft into the world of thought and ideas of life and conduct, where men may see his good works and be inspired by his example. Thus, Masonic ideas and principles overflow into the life of the community in which we live. If our community and material life does not reflect that quality of higher idealisms, then our task is to improve our Masonry, rather than to dissipate our energies by following a temporary scheme or project.

Institutions which are organized for service activities owe much of their success to the presence in their ranks of men who received their training in Masonic Lodges and adopt this method of putting these ideals into practice. There is no direct competition between service clubs and Freemasonry. The late King George VI, himself a Freemason, summarized it when he said: "Freemasonry has behind it the experience of nearly 2½ centuries of steadfast adherence to fundamental principles, and I believe that a determination to maintain the values which have been the rock upon which the Masonic structure has stood firm against the storms of the past, is the only policy that should be pursued in the future."

Another question that is often asked is this: "If Freemasonry is a way of life are we not duplicating the work of the church?" I believe this can best be answered by saying, the Lodge is not duplicating, but, rather, extending the work of the church. Freemasonry is a fraternal organization dedicated to a way of life that exemplifies the moral laws of God and man. It is a meeting place of good fellowship, where men of every denomination can get together under the tenets of happiness and brotherly love. I believe it can be safely said that no other organization has as high a percentage of church-going members as has Freemasonry. This, in itself, indicates much that is good.

Having discussed briefly what Freemasonry is and how it works, let us look for a few moments at some aspects of our present-day living, which may have affected the practical application of Freemasonry in the community. In the olden days, before the advent of the clock, the watch and the chimes, man was dependent on

the hour glass for the measuring of time. In ages past the hermit could return to his forest hut, his mountain cave, or an island retreat, get a simple living from the generousities of nature, and muse, the while, about the destinies of man. He drank deep of the homely philosophy of the race; hurry was unknown, noise and turmoil troubled him not, and life was one long existence filled with awe and wonder.

In this twentieth century of rush and roar in the air and under the sea, we cannot sit idly by to turn the hour glass when it runs empty. Today, we bicker over details, make issues of insignificant things, and too often fix our gaze upon the inconsequential things of the world, to the exclusion of fundamental verities. We rush in breathless fashion through our several occupations, measure success by selfish standards and worship an artificial programme. How much better would it be for us all if we apportioned our day to its proper proportions as did our forefathers. If we had time to contemplate and reflect, it is undeniable that more of the high principles learned in Freemasonry would be exemplified in our day-to-day living and be felt in the community and the world at large. Time to contemplate the wondrous works of God should be made part of each Mason's everyday living. Contemplation should strengthen the moral purpose within us and clarify our vision for the duties that lie before us.

Another problem facing the true Mason is a tendency towards the acceptance of Masonry as an adjunct of life, rather than as a governing way of life. It is not contended that Masonry should function as a militant, organized force designed to control and direct the thinking and actions of its members. The thinking of members may be as diverse as the individuals themselves. Masonry asks only that each shall arrive at decisions governed by his concepts of the eternal basic truths revealed to him through Masonic instruction. Confusion and complexity are the offspring of selfishness. Simplicity and justice are the fruits of truth and honour.

Life is a great river made up from the rivulets rising in our souls and surging on into the vast unknown ocean of time. Rivers always will be exactly what small streams bring to them; some bring precious gold, others good soil to impoverish areas, while others bring worthless mud and sand. When all are mixed we have a mighty river called human life. Today, we find it far from being the peaceful, useful river it should be. Too often it is a raging torrent, bursting all bounds and flooding the land with devastating ruthlessness. Too long have we tried to halt the floods by controlling the river and neglected the streams, whence comes all water. If each of these were kept in due bounds we would have little trouble with the river. That is to say, man is too concerned in trying to control the ways of the world instead of trying to control his own life and habits. Freemasonry makes no attempt to subdue the angry river of life, but it does teach man how to rule the single stream for which he is responsible.

To my mind, the foregoing two suggestions can do much to help the world. Let every man take time to contemplate his own destiny, get a clear vision of what lies ahead, and then act according to the principles of a good way of life, and, at the same time, let him start worrying about his own way of life. If he can control his own life, then, automatically, the great river of life will improve.

In my own humble way and by the use of gems gleaned from writings, I have tried to outline what Freemasonry is to me, and how it can affect our everyday life. Let us reflect once again on the great principle of Freemasonry, taking time to contemplate the wondrous works of God.

Sincerity is the very foundation-stone of true friendliness; it is a human trait that is hard to counterfeit, as the sincere, friendly impulses come from the soul of man and not from the calculating mind. Think kind and friendly thoughts; bring them into use in your daily life—strengthen your faith in men—and bear in mind that:

“He has not served who gathers only gold
Nor has he served whose life is told
By selfish battles he has won,
Or deeds of skill that he has done;
But he has served who, now and then,
Has helped along his fellowmen.”

NEW LODGES CONSECRATED

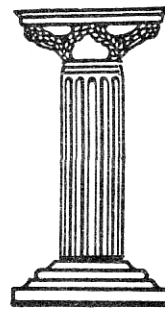
During the month of October, Exemplar Lodge No. 175 in Edmonton and Foothills Lodge No. 174 in Calgary were constituted and consecrated by M.W. Bro. Bannan, assisted by Grand Lodge officers. The officers of the Lodges were installed by R.W. Bro. Dave Little and R.W. Bro. E. H. Rivers, respectively, and the ceremonies proved most enjoyable to large assemblies of members of the Craft.

The addition to the numbers of Lodges operating in our major cities is a most welcome one, and those responsible for the institution of the new groups are to be congratulated on their forethought and enterprise. There can be no question but that Freemasonry in Alberta will receive considerable impetus through the inclusion of the new membership involved and that the Lodges will form a valuable adjunct to a steadily growing membership.

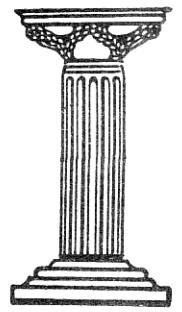
MASONRY'S OPPORTUNITIES

Every Masonic body ought to be identified in some way with the interest of the community wherein it exists. It is not enough for a lodge merely to hold meetings and place the stamp of Freemasonry upon candidates. There is a higher mission for the fraternity to perform, and it is believed that this mission is being sensed at the present time and we may reasonably expect something of a definite character in the way of practical work in the near future.

—London Freemason.



Between the Pillars



“I AM A FREEMASON”

Two thousand years ago the proudest words on human lips were the boast “Civus Romanus sum”—“I am a Roman citizen”—and those who had not the privilege by birth sometimes purchased it at great price. It was a high privilege, but it carried with it a great obligation. I ask you whether the same cannot be said of the great boast that is on your lips and mine so frequently: “I am a Freemason”. A proud boast, yes, but, too, a real responsibility and an ever-present challenge. Surely to be a Freemason means something more than membership in a Lodge or the privilege of wearing a Square and Compass emblem on your coat lapel.

Brethren, if you were called upon to place your finger on the weakest point in Freemasonry, as you and I know it, I wonder where your finger would stop. Personally, I would have no hesitation, for it seems to me that the weakest point in our system, the chink in our armour, is the fact that so many of our Brethren do not really believe in the actual reality of Freemasonry, with the result, that because we fail to demonstrate Freemasonry in our everyday lives, we, therefore, fail to propagate our institution and we stultify the very thing of which we are proudest.

Let us remember that if fellowship is the basis of membership in a Freemasons' Lodge, individual character is the basis of fellowship, for the worth of any institution depends upon the personal qualifications of the men who compose it. Even Christianity itself begins with the regeneration of the individual, and it has no belief in the regeneration of society apart from that. It is so with Freemasonry.

Freemasonry can develop a saving modicum, a leaven of public opinion, which, if we are true to our training, will examine all the questions that trouble the world so much today. With minds broad-based upon the only successful theory of life that has emerged from the long travail of humanity, that God is good, that He is our Father, that true happiness comes from obedience to His will and dependence upon His love, and that in all our relations with our fellowmen we are to regard them as Brethren. This is the only cure for the ills of the world.

(From an Address by M.W. Bro. Frank A. Copus, Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Canada in Ontario)