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Post Office Department, Ottawa

Grand Lodge Bulletin

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

WELCOME, RIGHT WORSHIPFUL SIR . . .

At the annual communication of Grand Lodge, held in the City of Lethbridge in mid June, the representatives of Constituent Lodges chose, from a field of strong candidates, William Loyd McPhee, to occupy the office of Junior Grand Warden and, in the normal course of events, this worthy Brother should proceed through succeeding offices to become Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Alberta.

We have the honour to present, to the Brethren in Alberta, William Lloyd McPhee, a member of Perfection Lodge No. 9 of the City of Calgary, and a Charter Member of Foothills Lodge No. 174, which has extended the value of Freemasonry in the Southern City. We do not hesitate to express the opinion that R.W. Bro. McPhee, in the important position to which he has been elected, will add lustre to the already impressive 'line' of officers charged with the responsibility of directing the fortunes of our Grand Lodge.

R.W. Bro. McPhee was born at Long Creek, Prince Edward Island, on January 5th, 1902, is married to the former Doris A. Tenant, R.N., and they have four children. R.W. Bro. McPhee was initiated into Masonry in Bow Island Lodge No. 64 in February, 1924. Moving to Calgary in 1925, he affiliated with Perfection Lodge soon after, becoming the Worshipful Master of this Lodge in 1949 and District Deputy Grand Master of District No. 1 in 1955. This connection gave him an interest in Grand Lodge which has ever since been maintained.

Bro. McPhee is a P.T.P.G.M. of Calgary Lodge of Perfection, a member of Delta Chapter, Rose Croix, of which bodies he is treasurer, a member of both the Alberta and Southalta Consistories, of which latter group he is the 2nd Lieutenant Commander.

In private life Bro. McPhee is Treasurer of the Canadian Western Natural Gas Company, is on the Board of Stewards of Wesley United Church, a member of the Board of Governors of Mount Royal College, Treasurer of the Calgary Wing, Air Cadet League of Canada, a member of the Glencoe Club and the Calgary Petroleum Club, a member of Noma and the Society of Industrial Accountants, holding a degree of R.I.A. in this latter organization.

From this resumé of the life and associations of the newly-elected Junior Grand Warden it



R.W. BRO. WILLIAM LLOYD MCPHEE

is not difficult to assume that he brings to this important office talents which will not only redound to his credit, but which will be of the greatest assistance to the Most Worshipful, the Grand Master and his associate officers as they undertake the demanding duty of directing a keen and alert membership of some twenty thousand members of the Craft, scattered throughout the length and breadth of our vast Province.

Members of the Fraternity in the Grand Jurisdiction of Alberta must enjoy feelings of the deepest satisfaction as they peruse the list of Grand Lodge Officers who have accepted the grave responsibility of leadership for the coming year. Most Worshipful Brother David Little will be ably assisted by R.W. Bro. W. H. Harper, Deputy Grand Master; R.W. Bro. Morley Merner, Senior Grand Warden; R.W. Bro. William Lloyd McPhee and R.W. Bro. E. H. Rivers, Grand Secretary.

With direct representation in the various districts of the Province in the persons of the carefully selected and doubtless dedicated District Deputy Grand Masters, the cause of Freemasonry should, and doubtless will, advance firmly into a future in which there is every cause for worthwhile progress.

EDITORIAL

From time to time we hear discussions among our membership with respect to the advisability or otherwise, of giving any measure of instruction to candidates for Masonic degrees before they are actually admitted to any degree.

Such discussions are known to have caused strained relations between members; surely a question of this kind should be open to logical consideration without any unhappy feelings resulting.

The Grand Lodge of Alberta, some years ago, published a pamphlet outlining the then supported views in the matter; other Grand Lodges, including the Grand Lodge of Canada in the Province of Ontario, print and distribute material aimed at the enlightenment of candidates as they approach and continue through the three degrees of Masonry. Certainly there can be little quarrel with any directive placed in the hands of the initiate and designed to broaden his understanding of the ritual as it is presented to him and to prepare, to as great an extent as possible, the mind that must necessarily be somewhat overcome by a substantial amount of material given in a comparatively short time.

The Grand Lodge of New Brunswick places a letter in the hands of the prospective candidate before he actually completes and presents an application for membership and this step must necessarily, I think, be advantageous, not only to the candidate, but to the Lodge he seeks to join.

The directive points out to the individual seeking membership the fact that Masonry has in all ages required that men should come to its doors entirely of their own free-will and not as the result of importunity, nor from a sense of curiosity, but, rather from a favourable opinion of the institution, a desire for knowledge and a sincere wish to be serviceable to their fellowmen.

It further states that Masonry is a system of morality, based on the belief of the existence of God, the immortality of the soul and the brotherhood of man and points to the duty every man owes to God, his country, to his family, to his neighbor and himself. It is made clear that Masonry interferes with no man's religion, striving only after truth, endeavoring to bring out the highest and noblest qualities of man.

It is made clear that no candidate should seek admission to Masonry with a view to personal gain or advancement, but, rather, in the hope that he may be able to make a contribution of value to those with whom he associates.

Singing the praises of charity, it is made clear that the Fraternity is not in any sense a 'benefit' society but is designed to cultivate a brotherly feeling among men, and to help the distressed and afflicted to the extent that it is possible to do so as occasion demands.

Loyalty to one's country is shown as an essential qualification of Freemasonry and membership in the Craft is designed to appeal to the man of upright heart and mind. The candidate is requested to give firm consideration to these and other essential points and to then, if he feels

sincerely inclined, complete the application. There would appear to be much to recommend the approach and I venture to suggest that an informed candidate is much more likely to become an ardent and sincere Mason than one who seeks entry to the ranks of the Order under a misapprehension as to its qualities and objectives.

S. C. H.

WITHIN THE CRAFT IN ALBERTA

Freemasonry within the Province has been further extended by the Consecration of two new Lodges, both of which appear to have excellent direction and to be possessed of the enthusiasm necessary to successful operation. Members of the Craft throughout the Province will welcome the addition of the new lodges.

HINTON LODGE No. 178

On July 29th, 1959, Grand Lodge assembled in Hinton to Constitute and Consecrate HINTON LODGE No. 178. This Lodge was Instituted on January 25th, 1958, by the D.D.G.M. of District No. 3, R.W. Bro. M. G. Merner, with 33 members present at that time and at the time of Constitution there were 43 members. The prospects for this Lodge at the site of a large pulp wood industry are excellent.

M.W. Bro. David Little was accompanied by many of his Grand Lodge Officers and the meeting was honoured by the presence of M.W. Bro. David Rothstein, P.G.M. of Manitoba. Following the ceremony of Constitution and Consecration, W. Bro. R. E. Fuller was installed as Worshipful Master by the M.W. the Grand Master and other officers were invested by Officers of the Grand Lodge.

R.W. Bro. David Penman of Patricia Lodge No. 91, Edmonton, took this occasion to present the M.W. The Grand Master with a Gavel, Square, Level and Plumb to be used in future similar ceremonies and was heartily thanked by the Grand Master.

ASTRA LODGE No. 179

On August 1st, 1959, Grand Lodge assembled at Cold Lake, Alberta, for the purpose of Constituting and Consecrating Astra Lodge No. 179. Most Worshipful Bro. David Little presided and was supported by many of his Officers. The ceremony was held in the fine auditorium of the school on the RCAF base and there were some 125 in attendance. M.W. Bro. Morris Herman, Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Saskatchewan honoured the meeting with his presence.

Astra Lodge was Instituted on July 26th, 1958, by M.W. Bro. D. D. McQueen with 34 Charter Members present and at the time of Constitution there were 53 members. This Lodge gives evidence of substantial progress, despite the naturally expected interruptions which attend normal life in the Services.

Following the ceremony, the M.W. The Grand Master installed W. Bro. J. C. Bigelow as Worshipful Master and the other Officers were invested by Grand Lodge Officers.

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WITHIN THESE PEACEFUL WALLS

From the Ashlar

(United Grand Lodge of Queensland)

What an amount of optimistic thought lies behind the words: "Within these peaceful walls." It is nothing short of a great hope that the Creator, in His infinite wisdom, will be pleased to bestow peace on Freemasonry and Freemasons for all time. For centuries past man has been craving for peace, for the V.O.T.S.L. says, "Blessed are the peacemakers," and it appears as the world is today, that this craving may still want centuries to bring a permanent peace to a world which looks as though it may be destroyed in one way or another.

The above sanguine expression would make one feel that Freemasons were in a world of security, and that safety prevailed. Freemasonry, like any other philanthropic objective in life, must be inspired with the fullest measure of feeling and action, if it is to live.

To a great part of the human race, there still are many blessings which open the way, giving Freemasons the opportunity to persevere with Masonic principles, which are good and true, and such opportunity must not be lost sight of, for the forces opposed to Freemasonry are always at work, looking for their opportunity to crush all opposed to their ideas of life. Although such opposition is strong and cannot be overlooked, Freemasonry still manifests its influence among men, and will continue to do so, uniting as it does, peoples of all countries, creeds and beliefs, to one great brotherhood, who, firm in uprightness, fair play, impartiality and principles, loyalty with which, when put into action, must rise superior to all opposition.

The antagonism and undercurrent working against a peace-loving humanity can only be sobered by justness and uprightness, and those who are treading the path justly and uprightly may at times feel they are playing a losing game. No battle has ever been won except by continued effort and perseverance, which Freemasonry must put forward by spreading the light of wisdom, supporting and contributing to the strength of reason, illustrating and expounding the beauty and refinement of virtue, and to that most deserving of all, lessening the length and breadth of human misery and vice.

The odds are so great against a peaceful world, that from a Masonic view, every brother who is worthy of the name—a Freemason—must remain firm and steadfast in the performance of his Masonic duty. Whatever a brother pledges himself to do, he will honour, so that Freemasonry will flourish throughout the human race. When that desire is fulfilled, Freemasonry, aye, and even the world can shout with joy at the result of their labours.

This should not be classed as a dream, but an act to be put into operation, the final result of which may not come in our day. But this great structure for peace must be so erected that, like a Freemason, it must be perfect in all its parts

and honourable to the builder. Shakespeare gives encouragement to one and all when he says—"There's a divinity that shapes our ends, rough hew them though we may." History plainly shows that many human undertakings quickly or slowly have their day when evil rules the way. The truth and wisdom of the ancient philosophers still lives, so Freemasonry will live, if all its tenets are held fast and acted upon by square conduct and the highest standards of manhood. Only by such acts if Freemasons are earnest, can our successful destiny be assured, when every race may unite, one with another.

What a crowning accomplishment for Freemasonry in due time to achieve.

This is glimpse between the lines of that masterly address to the brethren at installation: it is worthy of reflection, and can only conclude with: "May the Great Architect of the Universe preside in Our Temples."

THE MASS PRODUCTION AGE

Jas. W. Kerr, Grand Master (Tennessee)

We have fallen in step with the times and have been making Lodge members on the assembly line. We have been developing excellent ritualists to the extent that about all we have to do is press a button and have degree work flow forth in perfect harmony. After a period of time the ritualist grows tired and decides Masonry is just a social order, all because his Masonic education has been neglected, and he does not actually understand the ritual he once recited so well. When are we going to begin giving our candidates a better interpretation of the ritual? A desire for self-improvement in ourselves will constitute the first step. We must rebuild our own evaluation of the principles of Freemasonry if we are to interpret it to others. We must learn that our ritual is applicable to practical living.

Have we been exerting all our energy in getting more members, holding more and more meetings, building new and better temples? Are we following and attempting to lead our initiates in the footsteps of the Master, or are we following and leading our brethren in the footsteps of the masses? Are we continuing to erect in our own lives a temple for the indwelling of the Living God, or have we discarded the working tools of the Master Building and taken up the sounding brass and tinkling cymbals of this fast moving age?

Shall we continue to make lodge members on the assembly line, or shall we endeavor more seriously to make true Master Masons of our initiates?

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Prior to the close of the meeting M.W. Bro. S. Carl Heckbert presented a Fifty-Year Jewel to V.W. Bro. F. W. Laing, a Past Master of St. John's Lodge No. 25 at Vegreville. V.W. Bro. Laing was initiated in Camrose Lodge No. 37 on March 11th, 1908, and has been an ardent Mason for just over half a century.



Between the Pillars

GETTING DOWN TO BASIC MASONIC FACTS

By *John Black Vrooman*
The Minnesota Mason

Freemasonry has been so glamorized that we have lost sight of many of the fundamental features which characterize it. The time has come to get down to basic facts and see things as they are.

What is Freemasonry? Avoiding the commonplace definition, can we not say that it is a beautiful way of life, practiced and exemplified by those men who are anxious to live good lives, help one another and make their communities and nation better places in which to live.

The trouble with most of us is that we are so unfamiliar with Freemasonry that we give it a connotation it does not deserve. We are in a strange and unfamiliar atmosphere, and we don't know how to adjust ourselves to it.

Remembering your removal to a new home in your youth, do you not also remember the care with which you went from room to room at night, that you might avoid hitting the newly-placed furniture and barking your shins?

What was your answer to this unknown area? To turn on the light, of course. To make familiar the unknown, and to have everything where it could be recognized.

UNFAMILIAR GROUND

We, too, in Freemasonry, are stumbling over unfamiliar ground, and not until we turn on the light of knowledge can we know the answers to our questions.

It takes time to find out these things, and it also takes the guidance of someone who has had experience and contact with Freemasonry to lead us along the path to Masonic understanding.

First of all, I think, it is necessary to remember that Freemasonry is not just another club. It does not function like any other organization in the world. It seeks no new members, it does not engage in commercial activities, nor does it parade before the public to make a record of activity.

Freemasonry is one of the most exclusive groups in the world. It must be petitioned for by those who have the desire to become members, and its traditional work is not for ostentation or display.

Man has always been deeply influenced by the mystic, by the dramatic. Witness the "Miracle Plays" of the Middle Ages, and the pageantry of

Egyptian, Greek and Roman initiation into the "Mysteries." Freemasonry was once a physical activity, a very busy art of building. Gradually it became something of an honorary title, in which men were admitted into its body for their prestige and station in life.

BUILDING OF CHARACTER

The building now done by the Craft is that of character, the creation of mind and spirit which makes men heed their moral duty. The lessons of physical building serve only to be transmitted to the ability of Freemasons to serve themselves, their country and their God.

The ceremonial activity of Freemasonry is built around the love of human beings for play. In our childhood we "played soldier," "played fireman," etc., imagining ourselves to be that which we wished to be in another stage of life.

In Freemasonry the lessons of the Craft are such that only he who is dull of mind and obtuse of spirit can fail to find a parallel in the dramatization of the things for which Freemasonry has stood for so many centuries, and which, in fact, are even now the tenets and principles by which it is known.

The troubadours of Europe in the Middle Ages, were said to have conveyed many truths to their listeners in the whimsies they sang. They could not actually make clear their messages for fear of the barons and ruling class who held them with an iron hand, but through metaphor and legend, gave their message.

So in Freemasonry, through our ritual, in the explanation of our symbols and in many other ways, we revert to symbolism, to illustration by simile or by contrast, and we teach by means of those things with which a candidate or member is most familiar.

RESEARCH AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE SEEKS IDEAS

The Research and Education Committee of this Grand Jurisdiction invites members to send, through the Secretary of the Lodge, any question which may be in their minds with respect to Freemasonry. Regardless of what the question might be, the Committee will make an earnest effort to supply a proper answer.

The reason for requesting that the question be forwarded through the Lodge Secretary is to insure that both the question and the reply may be read in open Lodge and the maximum benefit to all thus obtained.

Questions should be sent, through the Secretary, to:

W. E. BRIGGS, Chairman
13008 - 121 Street
Edmonton - Alberta

I do the very best I know how, the very best I can; and I mean to keep doing so until the end. If the end brings me out alright, what is said against me won't amount to anything. If the end brings me out wrong, ten angels swearing I was right would make no difference.—Abraham Lincoln.