



Grand Lodge Bulletin

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

RANDOM THOUGHTS OF A NEWLY MADE MASON

By BRO. ERNEST G. RILEY
Foothills Lodge No. 174, Calgary

It is a privilege for me to have been given the opportunity to set down the 'random thoughts of a newly made Mason' and I doubt very much that anything I shall have to say has not often been said before. Being a brother who is young in Masonry, it is with considerable diffidence that I approach my task. Should what I do have to say prove to be incoherent, disjointed, confused or even misguided then I shall hope that some learned brother, with a wealth of knowledge of matters Masonic, will correct me and guide my future thoughts as I, like so many others, am desirous of learning as much as possible about the delightful science of Freemasonry and the proper attitude of its adherents to it.

We hear a good deal regarding Masonic Research and the subject to my mind might be termed as similar to our universe, understandable to the scientist, rather frightening and very awesome, but, at the same time, rather wonderful to the layman, hardly knowing where to start any discussion of a subject so deep and intricate. It seems to me that the proper place to start would be in my own heart and immediately there comes into my mind the age old and intriguing question that doubtless at times faces all newly-made Masons . . . 'why does a man wish to become a Mason? . . .

To me, this is one of the most confusing questions that one man could ask another, and it can be even more difficult to find the elusive answer when a man asks himself the question. We have an answer according to our Ritual which every Mason knows, but what prior to initiation as an E.A., what inspiration or guiding force exists which prompts a man, of his own free will and accord, to take the final step towards the goal of Masonic membership, that ultimate objective which, to the uninitiated, is but an outline of an image, perhaps, created in his own mind by the fact that some of his friends or associates are Masons. The signs, words and rituals of Masonry are closely guarded secrets, the work done outside the Lodge is done quietly, unassumingly and without advertisement or heraldry.

What then, creates that initial impulse which prompts a man to say, 'I would like to become a Mason.' He has, naturally, little or no prior knowledge or information of the philosophy of

Freemasonry, except that which may be fostered by his imagination; he can certainly know nothing at all definite regarding Masonry. What is it then, that prompts him to seek Masonic knowledge and association? Is it merely because his friend is a Mason, because his father, his brothers or relatives appear to enjoy the affiliation? Is it a religious belief, a desire for social status, wealth, or authority that the uninitiated may imagine to come through an association with Masonry? Perhaps, to certain minds, any one of these might be deemed a sufficient reason to seek admission to Masonry, but an applicant for admission knows nothing of Masonry and Masonry, being what it is, he does not come to know anything of its actual meaning until he has become duly and truly prepared, worthy and well qualified and if, after he has seen the points of the compass bared and its meaning explained to him, if, after he has knelt at the altar of Freemasonry he sees Masonry only with his eyes, then Masonry, to this man, will never be anything but an empty shell, a tree that will bear no fruit.

There are, in Masonry, tremendous qualities of emblematical and deep significance, theoretical and practical definitions in Masonry which the applicant cannot know and, indeed, will never know unless he can take all of the meaning and beauty of the science into his heart, unless he can see and feel the solemnity and beauty of the story of Freemasonry as it is unfolded for him as he takes his part in the various degrees. It is a beautiful story and the wonder of it has never been lost despite its constant repetition. After ages of testing it still has the ability to hold enthralled the interest of good and true Masons the world over.

But to return to the question of why a man desires to become a Mason; what of the applicant, he who is not yet an E.A. He is completely ignorant of Masonry, totally blind as to its meaning. Is there some explanation that he is not also totally deaf to its call? How can we explain the conscious impulse that urges him to seek membership in Masonry? I trust that I may not be considered blasphemous, but is it not something like trying to explain God? Many Masons who, when asked . . . 'why did you become a Mason?' . . . will probably answer quoting some of the reasons I have already given, but we may wonder if they

(Continued on Page 2, Column 2)

EDITORIAL

If this editorial were to be given a title it would be, perhaps, "WHAT OF THE SUSPENDED MASON" for it is my belief that there are many instances where the member whom it has been found necessary, under the constitution, to suspend is a somewhat 'forgotten man' and may well be entitled to some very serious thought on the part of our Lodges. To merely mark the record, 'Suspended N.P.D.' and to then promptly proceed to forget the individual concerned is most definitely contrary to all that we recognize as the meaning of the Brotherhood of Freemasonry.

Doubtless there are cases where suspension for cause is an essential proceeding if we are to maintain the discipline that is so necessary to proper administration, but there are, on the other hand, cases where members have been suspended for the simple reason that they did not, for reasons known only to themselves, remit their annual dues to the Lodge in accordance with the requirements of membership.

It is accepted that no Masonic Lodge worthy of the name seeks to increase its membership by even the least degree of solicitation among uninitiated persons; it is equally true that Lodges are most desirous of maintaining their membership numerically strong and it may therefore be seriously open to question as to whether sufficient effort is made to stop the loss of membership which occurs through suspension for the non payment of annual dues.

Let our minds revert for a moment to that portion of a lecture which says, 'In a society so widely extended as that of ours, it cannot be denied that we have many members of rank and affluence; neither can it be concealed that, among the many thousands who range themselves under its banners, there are those who are daily sinking into the sere and yellow leaf of old age; and others who, perhaps, from circumstances of unforeseen misfortune and calamity, are being reduced to the lowest depths of poverty and distress!

The initiate is exhorted to frame his mind toward a charity which we are pleased to believe is a part of Masonry and it would be disastrous indeed if that charity were not to be invoked in every single case where a member found, through no fault of his own that he could not maintain his annual dues, without injury to those nearest and dearest to him.

It is easy enough to say, when too little thought is given, that a member who has not paid his dues should not continue to enjoy the rights and privileges of Masonry and that he cannot expect to be carried on the membership roll. It is most probable, to, that the member who cannot maintain his dues for the time being would not wish to be dependent upon his fellows and therefore accepts suspension with good grace, despite a natural, and doubtless in many cases, a heart-breaking reluctance.

The most searching investigation should be made before any casual notation — 'Suspended N.P.D.' is appended to the name of any member.

S. C. H.

(Continued from Page One)

would be the real answers, truthful answers. It may be that the reply would be considered as honest and true and sufficient to cover the question without further searching into the innermost recesses of the mind and heart.

If the reply were to indicate that my father is a Mason and has been for years, it would seem on the surface, that such an answer would be a sufficient reason, because it would be implied that what has been good for the father would be equally good for the son, but a little thought of this aspect reveals the fact that this would not always be necessarily true. Experience has shown that a good father does not always engender a good son and, even should their Masonic objectives be the same, they might well deviate from the same path. Man, being the imperfect creature that he is, this will be even so. I do not think that any man, when asked outside his Lodge . . . 'why did you wish to become a Mason?' can do anything but admit that he does not really know. Perhaps it is because, somewhere along the line he has realized that his friends, relatives or associates are men who, being Masons, possess an infinite love for their fellowmen, that they are men of their word, honest and upright before God, respected in their community and welcomed throughout their sphere.

This, I feel sure, is all they can know of Masons and Masonry prior to initiation; they can know nothing of the duties and obligations which they will freely and willingly accept. Being blind to the Light of Masonry on admission, they do not know what they may achieve by becoming Freemasons. How then, can a man know for certain just why he does wish to become a Mason? One thing of which he may be certain, if he can successfully encompass Masonry into his heart he will never regret having taken that first step which will carry him into a world of brotherly love and a nearness to God which he has probably never before experienced.

It is altogether possible that some of my readers may feel 'here is a mind that is floundering and well nigh drowning in deep water' and I would be the last to question such a conclusion for while I ask myself questions on one side, up come thoughts of what I have learned, on the other . . . and what have I learned? I have learned what it feels like to be taken by the hand and welcomed into a brotherhood of men who consider me sufficiently worthy as to have bestowed upon me the name of Master Mason, to have given me the privilege of wearing the apron of Masonry, although I must confess that I do not as yet consider myself a Mason, but I look forward to the day when I shall have gained more knowledge and thus, perhaps, be in a position to help others to understand that knowledge and to apply the great principles of Freemasonry effectively to my daily life. Meanwhile I shall continue to value my association with my brethren in Masonry.

As Shakespeare so aptly conveys the feeling of being made welcome:

"The friends thou hast and by adoption tried
Grapple them to thy soul with bands of steel."

WITHIN THE CRAFT IN ALBERTA

MASONIC BURSARIES AWARDED

The Committee of Grand Lodge on the award of educational bursaries has been faced with the difficult task of selecting students for awards for the current scholastic year and we are now pleased to announce the result of their deliberations. The successful students are shown with the Lodge sponsoring their respective applications. The first three named are continued from 1958.

John Godfrey Clarke, now of Sedgewick, Westlock Lodge No. 114.

Bro. Geo. L. Douchet, Commercial Lodge No. 81, Edmonton.

Norman L. Tozer, Red Deer Lodge No. 12.

C. E. Cunningham, Vermilion Lodge No. 24.

John Jeffs McMullen, Medicine Hat Lodge No. 2.

Miss Sharon Anne Chrystal, Blairmore, Rocky Mountain Lodge No. 86.

Miss Sharleen M. Saunders, Killam Tuscan Lodge No. 43.

The progress of the youthful students will be watched with interest by the membership at large.

RED DEER LODGE No. 12 MARKS 60th ANNIVERSARY

A well-organized celebration of the founding of Red Deer Lodge No. 12 was held on Sept. 2nd, 1959; the afternoon meeting in the fine Masonic Temple was presided over by the Worshipful Master, W. Bro. Allan Smith in a most efficient manner. A Service of Thanksgiving was conducted by the Grand Chaplain, R.W. Bro. W. J. Collett, with the Grand Organist V.W. Bro. R. C. Hugh presiding at the organ.

The M.W. the Grand Master, M.W. Bro. David Little was officially received, being accompanied by R.W. Bro. W. H. Harper, D.G.M.; R.W. Bro. W. J. Fisher, D.D.G.M.; R.W. Bro. M. G. Merner, S.G.W.; R.W. Bro. W. L. McPhee, J.G.W.; R.W. Bro. E. H. Rivers, Grand Secretary; R.W. Bro. W. J. Collett, G.C.; V.W. Bro. J. Hunter, S.G.D.; V.W. Bro. R. W. Austin, J.G.D.; V.W. Bro. C. E. Pinnell, G.D. of C.; and V.W. Bro. R. C. Hugh, G.O. It is interesting to note that six Past Grand Masters were present, in the persons of M.W. Bros. Botterill, Hartman, Ireland, Henry, Howard and Jackson as well as twelve Past District Deputy Grand Masters.

A highlight of the afternoon ceremony was the presentation of a Sixty Year Bar to a Fifty Year Jewel to Bro. Norman Stewart, the presentation being made by R.W. Bro. W. J. Stephenson. Bro. Stewart was initiated in Red Deer Lodge on November 14th, 1899, being one of the earliest candidates in Red Deer Lodge, at that time No. 73 on the Grand Lodge register of Manitoba. Bro. Stewart acknowledged the honour in a few well chosen and enthusiastically received remarks.

Commemorating the occasion Red Deer Lodge conferred Honorary Life Memberships on Past Grand Masters of District No. 4; M.W. Bro. W. J. Botterill, Senior P.G.M.; M.W. Bro. (Dr.) C. C.

Hartman; M.W. Bro. F. P. Galbraith, who was unavoidably absent, M.W. Bro. (Dr.) W. A. Henry and M.W. Bro. W. H. Jackson.

Marking the important occasion, R.W. Bro. D. D. Penman, master craftsman of Edmonton, presented the principal officers with rosewood gavels, the insignia of the respective offices being inlaid in rosewood.

The pleasing event was brought to a close with a banquet, the Toastmaster being W. Bro. T. G. Towers; the address was given by W. Bro. P. L. Bachus, M.D., C.M., D.P.M., Worshipful Master of Canada Lodge No. 3527 of London, England, and also a member of Red Deer Lodge No. 12. His address on his work in London was much appreciated.

THE BANFF CONFERENCE

The 19th Interprovincial Conference of the officers of the four Western Masonic Jurisdictions was held at Banff during September and was attended by the principal officers of the Grand Lodges of British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and Alberta, as well as a number of distinguished visitors from the Grand Lodges of Minnesota, North Dakota, Montana and Wyoming.

The opening address on Thursday, Sept. 10th by M.W. Bro. H. B. Donnelly, P.G.M. and Grand Librarian of Manitoba, entitled, 'What's It For!' was an excellent keynote for the Conference and will shortly be published in the Bulletin for the information of the membership in general.

The following papers were presented:

Collar Jewels of Elective Officers.

What Does Modern Freemasonry Teach?

How to Make Your Lodge Effective and its Meetings Inspirational.

The Importance of Lodge Histories.

Considerable discussion followed each of the papers and in the near future this material will be available to the Constituent Lodges of the various Grand Jurisdictions when it is hoped that they will be utilized as a guide to Masonic study.

It was unanimously decided to continue the Conference for the coming year and the following Officers were elected to direct the work of this important Masonic adjunct.

President—M.W. Bro. Dr. M. Herman, Davidson, Sask.

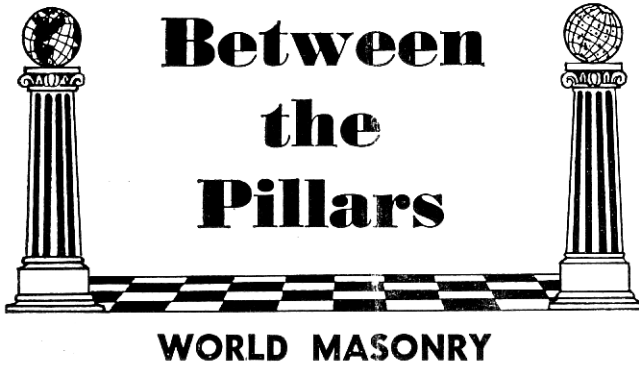
Vice President — R.W. Bro. W. H. Harper, D.G.M., Alberta.

Secretary — R.W. Bro. E. H. Rivers, Grand Secretary, Alberta.

The sessions this year were under the direction of M.W. Bro. W. A. Prugh, P.G.M., Manitoba and were productive of much of value to all in attendance.

M.W. Bros. A. D. Cumming and L. W. Bond of Calgary attended to take care of the entertainment of the ladies and to assist in many other ways.

The measure of a man's life is the well-spending of it, and not the length. *Plutarch.*



Freemasonry's army of 5,500,000 members scattered throughout the world faces the dangers of the atomic ages—and its promises—with courage and faith, says a writer in "Temple Topics" (U.S.A.). When one considers there are 4,000,000 Brothers in the United States and 550,000 in England, a scant million represents the rest of the globe.

How fares the Craft in other countries? Freemasons in Latin America are pressed in many cases under two heavy feet—the national dictator and the dominant church. In Columbia Lascism (priesthood and laity) has reverted back to medieval prosecution. In other South American countries Masons risk family, livelihood, home—even life—for their principles.

In historically tolerant Netherlands the Craft has made gains. Resumption of Masonic labours in Germany continues to grow after decimation by Hitler and the Gestapo (membership dropped from some 70,000 in 1933 to 10,000 in 1950). About 5,000 Brethren in the Soviet East Zone of Germany are completely cut off from all contact with their Brothers in the Western Zone.

Masonry in Austria still suffers from the death blow delivered by Emperor Joseph back in 1785.

The news from Greece is good and many Lodges are being revived after World War II ravages.

Little Finland, which gave Masonry the great composer Jean Sibelius, has only seven Lodges left with a mere 325 members. In poor Hungary the Government has taken over Masonic properties and padlocked the Lodges. Italian Masons have their problems, particularly with Church and Communist oppression.

Bits of information leaking through the Red Curtain say the Communists have not directly assailed the Chinese Grand Lodge or its six subordinates. Chinese Brethren have been given a broad hint that the regime in power regards the Craft as a quasi-religious organization, not subversive to their rule and thus ignored. In Hong Kong, English, Scottish and Irish Lodges operate.

On Formosa, where Nationalists hold fast, leading officers of the American Military Group are Masons. Chiang Kai-shek is a Mason, as are many high officers in the Nationalist movement. A quick round-up of Masonry around the globe: the Craft is growing under the fertile protection of free nations—reeling, holding on, sometimes going under where the dictator and the Church hold sway.

The Masonic Record.

THE SCIENCE OF RIGHT LIVING

Probably there is no better name for Freemasonry than the Science of Right Living. Like every other science, moral and physical, in order to be rightly estimated, it must be studied in its history and philosophy.

It has been well said that history does not furnish its parallel. Its traces are to be found in the remotest ages and in the most varied conditions of the human family. It exists where other worthy orders have not successfully penetrated. It has withstood the upheaval of revolution, the devastation of war, the frenzied attacks of fanaticism and the intensity of persecutions.

Splendid as its historic glory, it is only, however, when we enter the inmost shrine and catch the spirit rather than the letter of Freemasonry that the compelling power of its merits is fully realized. The external—beautiful and impressive as are the rights and ceremonies, the symbolism is never without great objective value in attracting the senses through which the approach to the soul has to be made—is insignificant as compared with the internal. It is the difference between the temporal and the eternal, the material and spiritual.

Freemasonry justifies its existence not by antiquity, but by principle, which, doubtless, accounts for its antiquity. Its supreme object is to develop character—character strong in spiritual elements—and to bind men together in the everlasting and immutable principles of truth, virtue and love, with a hold that is as strong as right itself and as enduring as humanity; to recognize man only as a man; to teach that true men the world over should unite and contend for the supremacy of good over evil; to teach, not politics, but morals; to foster no partizanship, but the recognition of real merit wherever found; to have no narrower limits in which to work for the elevation of man than the outlines of the world. With such inspiration the outcome could not be less than the embodiment of what is truest and best and noblest in life.

It is not surprising then that wherever Freemasonry has been allowed to exercise its influence, it has been a power in developing a high type of manhood. The most ancient, the most universal, the most moral of all purely human institutions, it appeals resistlessly to the highest sentiments of man and compels his admiration, confidence, support and reverence.

M.W. Bro. Donald A. Stewart.

I have three precious things, which I hold fast and prize. The first is gentleness; the second is frugality; the third is humility, which keeps me from putting myself before others. Be gentle, and you can be bold; be frugal, and you can be liberal; avoid putting yourself before others, and you can become a leader among men.—*Lao-Tze.*

There is a courtesy of the heart; it is allied to love. From it springs the purest courtesy in outward behaviour.—*Goethe.*