



Authorized Second-Class Mail

Post Office Department, Ottawa

Grand Lodge Bulletin

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THE TRANSCENDENCE OF THE INNER LIFE

An Address by

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The Philippines

I should like to begin with a story told by a writer—of a Buddhist Master who was to lecture his monks. Just before he was to speak, a bird started singing on a bough outside the monastery walls. The Master kept quiet and everyone listened to the song in attentive silence. As soon as the bird finished, the Master announced that the sermon was completed, and departed.

My Brethren and friends, after hearing the vigorous and illuminating remarks of our Worshipful Master and again after listening to the exquisite piece — 'Meditation'—as interpreted by our violinist, I am not sure that I should not follow the example of the Buddhist Master and announce forthwith and promptly that my speech is ended. And why not? After all, Masonry is not glib talk but earnest thought; it is not mere elocution but deep meditation.

As I say it is meditation of the type that seeks to give an aura of charm to our concept of conscience and a wealth of meaning to the ideal of the equality and dignity of man. Indeed, by teaching us to eschew high pretensions, fierce passions, and the debilitating corruptions of the day, Masonry presents us with a picture of goodness and excellence and virtue such as probably we have not seen or had before. And by instilling in us the truth that we are all creatures of one Supreme and Ineffable Being, recipients of all the bounties encompassed in the spiritual heritage of mankind, it invites us to walk on exalted heights, as it were, with heads unbowed and hearts undaunted, free to look any man straight in the eye, supremely proud of our finite being. Thus we are sooner able to see through the superfluities and hypocracies, the prejudices and bigotries, the unkindnesses and cruelties that so often foul the atmosphere we breathe. And what is more, we become the better prepared to grapple with them, if not actually to control and tame them to our governance.

I do not mean to give my rose any poetic quality. And I do not intend to be profound. But this is precisely how I feel about Masonry—and I suppose it is also how many others among my brethren feel. It is, let me restate, in its ability to arouse our generous impulses, in its power to awaken us to a vibrant inner life, that the creed of Masonry finds its greatest influence and utility. For by outward tokens, I must admit, we of the Fraternity are not mighty. We are not, for instance, a raging current in the channels of trade, we are not a compelling force in the affairs of state. But we do have Faith, Hope and Charity—these are at once yardsticks and means for us. By them we try to measure our daily acts, and with them,

pursuing the quiet even tenor of our ways, we endeavour to lead our families and friends to a better tomorrow.

As Masons we may err now and then. Who is the individual who doesn't? But always we have a set of values—the values that our membership in this universal society has instilled in us to fall back upon. We may even commit a grievous offence. Would that be strange, limited in nature but endless in desires that we are—as the French poet Lamartine would put it? But always again, we come soon enough by the realization that, although by body man is of kin to the beasts, by spirit he is of kin to God. And with that realization we forthrightly essay to rise to the degree and dimensions of our avowed or professed character.

It was the great German philosopher Goethe who said that one cannot always be a hero, but that one can always be a man. And he can be a man according as he has developed an inner life which, more than anything else, can give substance and strength and integrity to his outward existence. Remarkable and many are the ideals of our Fraternity, far-reaching and numerous are its teachings, but I believe that in the ultimate analysis they all resolve to the need for such inner life as I have described, the pursuit or acquirement of which is, in itself, an enriching, an ennobling, an achieving experience. With such inner life we can rise above many an adverse circumstance in our midst and thereby, perhaps, prove ourselves bigger than our environmental context. Of a greater benefit that could come to us than this, I frankly cannot imagine.

I still wish I had followed the example of the Buddhist Master and ended my speech before I had started it. But if I have not done so, I feel that I have at least helped bring you into some sort of similar communion with nature—this time with the nature of our inner selves, of our intrinsic beings, to which we shall look for the spirit to sustain us when everything of worldly value to ourselves has been lost and aught else has been forgotten. To pass on this thought that should animate all of us, has been my purpose, and in the consciousness—nay in the pride—that I have somehow put you in a frame of mind for a deeper appreciation of it, and in the hope that I can round up such theme, so to speak, I paraphrase Carlyle, the brilliant essayist and historian.

We are of the earth, but our thoughts are with the stars, mean and pretty our wants and desires, yet they serve a soul exalted with grand, glorious aims—with immortal longings—with thoughts that sweep the heavens, and wander through eternity. Pigmy standing on the outward crest of this small planet, our far-reaching spirit stretches outward to the infinite, and there alone finds reason and harmony and perfection.

EDITORIAL

The Annual Communications of the Grand Lodge of Alberta have been held for some years, alternatively between Northern and Southern locations in the Province, the plan having been designed to make it possible for elected officers and others of our Constituent Lodges to conveniently attend Grand Lodge at least once in every two year period without too great a demand upon the time of delegates or the financial resources of Lodges throughout Alberta.

It is always a matter for the deepest regret to note that certain Lodges fail to have representation at the annual communication of the Provincial sessions and it is hoped that a special effort may be made in the current year to have EVERY Lodge accredited, if not by an elected officer, then at least by a proxy, for which provision has been made in our constitution, a proceeding which requires little effort on the part of the Lodge and the simplest details of which may be readily obtained from the office of the Grand Secretary.

The sessions of Grand Lodge are held with quite distinct purposes in mind and not merely for the purposes of an annual get-together for social purposes, although this feature is one which should not be overlooked. The Grand Master, his chief executive officer, the Grand Secretary, the District Deputy Grand Masters and the Chairmen of the various committees named to conduct special functions of Grand Lodge are expected to give a report of their stewardship at the annual general meeting. The condition of Masonry within the Jurisdiction and its relations with other Grand Lodges are subject to review and open to the fullest and most comprehensive debate.

Not the least important opportunity is that given to the representatives of Constituent Lodges to question any phase of the operation of the Grand Lodge and, as well, to introduce any question deemed of importance to the well being of the Grand Lodge or its member Lodges.

In the opinion of this writer, our Grand Master, Most Worshipful Brother David Little, the first native born officer to fill this highly important office, has made a contribution that is deserving of the highest praise, has made an impact upon the Craft in Alberta and elsewhere that entitles him to the most generous support from every Lodge in this Province and inasmuch as the 1959 Grand Lodge sessions are to be held in M.W. Brother Little's home city and the capital of our Province, there is given a most fitting opportunity to pay well deserved tribute to our leader for his painstaking and valuable contribution during the year soon to come to a close. Let us have every single Lodge represented in Edmonton on June 8th and 9th, 1960.

S.C.H.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE INDIVIDUAL

By V. M. Burrows

Texas Grand Lodge Magazine

We need to find some way of arousing interest of the individual Mason in teaching himself, after he has gone through the process of listening to what we have to tell him by means of the Ritual.

Masonry may serve to make a man over, if he will listen attentively to the teachings and apply them to his thinking. It is really a laboratory in the fine art of human relationships for adult men.

A diamond in the rough is a cold, hard substance, without a definite shape, whose beauty is only potential. The beauty is made real by a process of cutting and polishing which results in a gem whose every facet has a distinct shape and forms a precise angle with those adjacent to it. Not until the diamond is altered in this manner can it reflect the fire of life and beauty.

So it is with Masonry. Unless we apply ourselves to the task of interpreting our Masonic teachings to the fullest, so that each phase has definite value and relation to the other, our Masonry can be duly a lifeless and a dull thing.

The history of Masonry is interesting and quite important, but it is really secondary to the prime purpose of personality development of the individual.

The never-ending primary job of life is to learn how best to live. Masonry abounds with instruction to show a better way of life, but it is needful for the individual to open his mind to the influence of the instruction. It is increasingly needful for the member to continue his interest in the teachings of Masonry and to seek diligently for the unfolding interpretations of Masonic philosophy.

The greatest need in the world is individual moral development. The greatest good Masonry can accomplish is through the medium of individual desire for personal improvement.

Masonry provides opportunity for the individual but he must do his own thinking. The violinist who aspires to play in a symphony orchestra does not expect the conductor to teach him how to play his instrument. The man who aspires to enjoy the personal value of Masonry must give his time and attention to interpretation of Masonic symbolism as it affects his individual development.

Freemasonry is the custodian of moral secrets which are as old as mankind. The teachings are eminently practical. Our modern speculative Freemasonry teaches those truths which have been wrought out by meditations of the studious and stamped as sterling by the psychological reactions which they find in every uncorrupted mind.

Masonry is fundamentally an educational organization. It has for its purpose the teaching to men of the elements of life that are worthwhile, and the relationship in which men should stand to one another.

WITHIN THE CRAFT IN ALBERTA

FIRST BOWNESS LODGE FOR MASONIC ORDER

The first Lodge of the Masonic Order in the thriving Bowness Community was recently instituted by Most Worshipful Brother David Little, Grand Master, assisted by a number of Grand Lodge officers.

The event marks a milestone in the development and progress of Freemasonry in this area, giving members of both Bowness and Montgomery an opportunity to broaden their activities and the new Lodge is strongly supported by the various Calgary Lodges.

Newly named officers of the Lodge are David A. Dunlop, W.M.; W. Hartrick, I.P.M.; John F. Brocklesby, S.W.; Harvey E. Morgensen, J.W.; A. N. Kerry, Secretary-Treasurer; John E. Warwick, Chaplain; E. C. Hey, S.D.; W. Jacquith, J.D.; J. Breen, S.S.; S. G. Poulter, J.S.; Peter Fox, D. of C.; H. Severn, I.G.; H. Austrum, Tyler. More than twenty other members signed the Charter and it is anticipated that the membership of the new Lodge will increase rapidly.

Following the ceremony of Institution refreshments were served and a social hour enjoyed; toastmaster was John Mackintosh, formerly mayor of Bowness from 1952 to 1958. The date of the meeting coincided with the 70th birthday of the toastmaster who was in happy mood and carried off the social gathering effectively.

PAST GRAND MASTER MARKS 50TH ANNIVERSARY

During the month of January, M.W. Bro. A. D. Cumming, Past Grand Master and his wife marked the Fiftieth Anniversary of their marriage; a number of Masonic friends joined together to present this delightful couple with a gold bowl to mark the occasion. M.W. Bro. Cumming is well known to Masons throughout the Province and elsewhere, having for many years been largely responsible for the financial advancement of the Fraternity as Chairman of the Finance Committee. The many friends of the Cummings will join with the Bulletin in extending the most sincere congratulations and best wishes for many more years of health and happiness.

Alberta Brethren residing in the sister Province of British Columbia will be interested in the work of the Vancouver Masonic Service Bureau, whose office at 535 West Georgia Street, Vancouver 2, is presided over by Bro. J. T. Freeman, Secretary Treasurer. Sojourning Masons, desiring information, advice or assistance may find it to their advantage to contact the Bureau whose desire is to be of service to members of the Fraternity. Similar service bureaux are said to be in prospect in Alberta and the fine work of the Vancouver office will doubtless provide inspiration to those accepting responsibility within our own borders.

ANOTHER ALBERTAN ATTAINS SIXTY YEARS MEMBERSHIP



R. W. Bro. Walter Frantzen

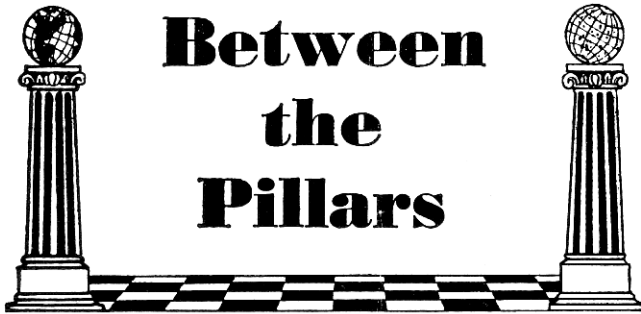
R.W. Bro. Walter Frantzen was born in Denmark on October 22, 1886, and was initiated into Masonry in Clearwater Lodge No. 28 of the Grand Lodge of Minnesota on November 19, 1898. He affiliated with Nanton Lodge No. 17 in December, 1909. After being a member and serving in various offices for some ten years he was elected as Worshipful Master of this Lodge and made a valuable contribution to its work.

R.W. Bro. Frantzen served as District Deputy Grand Master of District No. 6 in 1920 and was again elected to this post in 1948.

Nanton Lodge recently presented this distinguished Brother with a sixty year bar to his fifty year jewel. It is interesting to note that R.W. Bro. Frantzen is still active in the Lodge and attended the 1959 District Meeting. He has travelled widely and despite his advancing years his stories of his world travels and experiences are most interesting. Our congratulations and good wishes go to Bro. Frantzen at this time.

During the ceremony of presentation of the sixty year bar, Nanton Lodge took occasion to present W. Bro. C. H. Wheeler with his Fifty Year Jewel, he having joined Masonry in January, 1910.

W. Bro. C. L. Edwards, Immediate Past Master of Cyprus Lodge No. 113 at Three Hills leaves next month for England for six months' study of agriculture. He was selected for the course under the provisions of the Nuffield Foundation extension plan and is to be congratulated on his selection for this important work.



SOLOMON'S CHOICE OF WISDOM

By WOR. BRO. A. W. WILSON
in *The Masonic Record*

Soon after Solomon was anointed king in succession to his father, David, God appeared to him, saying: "Ask what I shall give thee." Realizing the great responsibility placed upon him, he asked for "a wise and understanding heart."

To such a man as Solomon, who was about to undertake by command of the Great Architect of the Universe the building of the Great Temple, what better choice could be made than that of Wisdom?

Doubtless the final charge delivered to him by his father was having its due weight. That choice of Solomon strikes the keynote of his future; that of personal character.

Amongst the many voices we hear day by day, there is one to which we are so often deaf—the still, small voice of conscience. It says to you and me, "You have a character, you have an immortal soul."

Far more important than being wealthy, popular, good looking, or clever, is that you maintain a good character. Remember that in God's appointed time when all distinctions shall cease, the good and virtuous character shall not pass away. The question is: what do we mean by character? Is it merely having sufficient morals to enable us to get on in the world, or the impression we create on other people, or perhaps the outward dress of life? No! Character is man's innermost being, what he is when stripped of all show and pretence. We inherit certain characteristics from our parents, and it is a responsibility that we should develop those characteristics to the good of all mankind.

How are we setting about the work? Are we building with the proper stone? There are various kinds of stone to be found in different quarries—each species of stone may be used in the building, some being best for foundations, some are better for walls, others more suitable for inside purposes, pillars, arches and ornamentation. But each stone must be fashioned for its place in the structure. It is the Mason's work to prepare those stones and for this purpose he uses different tools, so that each stone may be squared, levelled and tested for truth of line. The stone must first be roughly shaped, then smoothed, sometimes by heavy hard knocks and continuous

blows; sometimes by a gentle touch and light handling, according to the species of stone and the detail or ornamentation.

So we are living stones with our varied gifts and capabilities have each our place in the Great Architect's plan and purpose. It is His intention that each one shall fit his allotted place and, for that purpose, must be prepared.

Doubtless the work of building will be delayed by difficulties and dangers, sickness and pain, sorrow and loss, which help to shape us, to smooth and prepare us that we may be able to fill our own place in the Universe. Love, joy, laughter, happiness and many other blessings have their place in the formation of character and may be likened to the lighter touches of the Mason's hand; just as sorrows and trials are like the heavier blows. Every stroke has its purpose. Conduct is life; in the long run happiness and prosperity depend upon it. External circumstances are of comparatively little importance. It does not matter so much what surrounds us as what we are.

Habit is second nature; sow and act and you reap a habit. Sow a habit and you reap a character. Sow a character and you reap a destiny. We all grow a little every day, either for better or for worse and occasionally it would be well for us to ask ourselves which? When we go through a mill or a workshop we observe the intimate knowledge possessed by the operators of complex machinery, and yet our inner nature is far more wonderful—the power of choice, conscience, the capacity for conceiving God by virtue of that Divine Nature He has given us. To have character is to have Wisdom and Strength, thereby enabling us to behold the Beauty which adorns the Temple of the Most High. When King Solomon was building the Temple he made a curious but fitting rule. Every stone had to be cut, squared and tested away in the quarries, then brought and fitted silently into its place. In the quarry there was much noise and confusion; on Mount Zion the Temple rose in perfect stillness and peace. Just as King Solomon built that great Temple to the glory of God, so must we remember that life is a structure, and we are all builders in the hands of the Great Master Builder who will prove and test our lives, placing His mark upon them.

For, after all, what is this world but the ante-room of the Grand Lodge above where our Grand Master and Brethren await us with shouts of joy and transports of delight?

W. Bro. E. Cameron, Mosaic Lodge No. 176 Calgary, accompanied by his Wardens recently called at the home of Bro. Lew Reasoner of Athens Lodge, Battle Creek, Michigan, now residing in Calgary, and presented him with a Sixty Year Award of his Grand Lodge. Bro. Reasoner has reached the age of eighty eight years and while not particularly active, hopes he may again visit Mosaic Lodge when weather conditions permit.