



# Grand Lodge Bulletin

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

## WHAT CAN I TELL MY NON-MASONIC FRIENDS?

By Alphonse Cerza

Masons as a rule are very circumspect when it comes to discussing the Craft with non-Masons. Some members are so careful that they are afraid to even mention the things that everyone knows about the organization. This is probably because they believe that Freemasonry is a "secret society" and that members are forbidden to talk about the association with non-members. This is a mistaken idea and there are many things that Masons can tell their non-Masonic friends. Let us consider a few of these.

The first question that is usually asked by a non-Mason is "What is Freemasonry?" There are many definitions of the word but none are complete because the organization embraces a wide scope of activity. But a short definition is: Freemasonry is a fraternal organization, religious in character, based on the principle of the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of man, which does charitable work in the community and among its members, and through its teachings and ceremonies seeks to make good men better and thereby make the world a better place to live in.

Freemasonry is a "voluntary" association in that no one is invited to become a member. You can tell your non-Masonic friends that unlike college fraternities and other organizations Masonry never has membership drives and never solicits anyone to become a member. As a matter of fact, you should make it clear that it is a violation of Masonic law for any member to invite anyone to join the Craft. You should emphasize that the prospective member must truly come of his own free will and accord, and that he usually seeks membership because of the high opinion he has of the Craft as a result of the upright conduct of Masons.

You can make it clear that Freemasonry is not a religion. Sometimes outsiders claim that the Craft is a religion. You can explain to your non-Masonic friends that Masons do not look upon their organization as a religion or as a church, and that most Masons belong to an established church. Masons do not go to lodge to worship God; they do this on Sunday when each Mason

goes to his own church. It is religious in that one cannot become a Mason unless he believes in God; but there is no religious test applied to the prospective member; nor is he required or asked to subscribe to any religious tenet or dogma. You can explain that it is forbidden to discuss religion or politics in lodge.

You can explain that Freemasonry is not a "secret society." A secret society is one that keeps its existence a secret and whose members do not make known their affiliation with the group. Freemasonry is not a secret society because it does not hide its existence, members do not hide their membership, but on the contrary the organization meets in buildings located on public streets, announces its meetings in newspapers and magazines, engraves the words "Masonic Temple" on many of its buildings, publishes periodicals, and has homes for orphans and the aged. Like most organizations it has some "secrets" but it is not a "secret society."

You cannot, of course, discuss the ritual, the passwords, and other matters of confidential nature. But you can tell them the things printed in our monitor. You can go so far as to tell them that the three degrees of Masonry consist of a ceremony of a strictly serious nature, without horseplay, which teaches basic moral truths in an impressive and solemn manner. You can tell them that the ritual contains a philosophy of life which provides the new member with something on which to build a hope that is eternal.

Sometimes a non-Mason wants to know about the ceremony of initiation. He may ask specific questions. You can tell them, in general terms, that each candidate takes part in a ceremony of initiation, is then advanced to the second degree, and later promoted to the third degree. You can tell him that promotion from one degree to the other depends on his proficiency in learning certain things relating to Freemasonry, its ethics, and its philosophy. Certainly you can tell him that no man ever took the degrees without becoming a better man. You can tell him that the basic ethical principles exemplified in the ceremonies of the degrees are such as are accepted by all good men; they are lessons based on the golden rule, tolerance towards all men, respect for one's family, charity towards all, and being true

(Continued on Page 34)

## EDITORIAL

From time to time we hear discussion in connection with the conduct of Masonic funeral services; it would appear that one school of thought favors the discontinuance of such services entirely, while another feels that such services are entirely in order and should be permitted wherever and whenever a demand for such services exist.

It will be recalled by older members of the Craft that the so-called Masonic burial service was carefully scrutinized a few years ago by a committee of Grand Lodge named for the purpose; on recommendation, the service was very considerably shortened.

On more than one occasion widows of deceased Brethren have expressed marked appreciation of what the service has meant to them by way of offering comfort following the committal of the earthly remains of a loved one to the grave and older Masons have been heard to remark that membership was being continued in the Order to insure the attendance of Brethren at the last rites following demise.

Doubtless officers in some of our lodges recall with deep regret occasions when it has been necessary to withhold the Masonic service due to the fact that, through one cause or another, membership had been allowed to lapse and entitlement to such service thereby surrendered, all unknown to the survivors of the deceased Brother.

It would appear that the time has come when very serious consideration should be given to the continuance or otherwise of the Masonic burial service and that, if it is eventually decided to permit lodges to render this service to those who desire it, the service itself should be the subject of revision, so that beauty and impressiveness might become the keystones to the value of what has for generations been recognized as the right of the member, on his request or that of the family.

Might it be suggested that each District Meeting of the coming year be given an opportunity to discuss the subject and, following discussion, to present resolutions or recommendations for the guidance of Grand Lodge. In this way a rather "touchy" subject might receive the benefit of considered opinion, making it possible for the incoming Grand Master and his officers to reach a wise and helpful decision.

City lodges appear to have some difficulty in organizing adequate groups to attend such services, while this difficulty is probably not so noticeable in rural areas. It would seem that services might well be permitted where desired and that every effort should be made to re-vamp the present service so as to make it as effective as possible in meeting the needs of sorrowing relatives and, at the same time, impressing the absolute sincerity of past esteem and favorable expectation in the minds of all who hear the service.

S. C. H.

## CONCERNING MY CREED

Carlyle said that the chief fact concerning man is religion. Not necessarily the particular creed to which he will subscribe or to which he will give assent; often not that at all. For often we see men of worth and worthlessness subscribing to all kinds of creeds. The religion of man is what he practically believes, acts upon and lays to his heart. These thoughts prompted the following lines which, deep in my heart, I believe:

*Ten thousand paths may lead to God,  
What right is mine to say  
That he who fails to walk with me  
Has missed the only way?  
What right of mine to abrogate?  
Such grasp of finite mind  
And boast, while others vainly seek  
The God I seek, and find?  
How could the God I love and trust  
Point out to only me  
The way which travel, all men must  
Or die eternally?  
I'm not so wise that He denies  
The light to all save me,  
While other hearts as true as mine  
He loves with less degree.  
So, if the path we tread should lead  
Where bright cathedrals rise,  
Or weathered church, or rustic shrine  
Point upward to the skies;  
Each sincere traveller will arrive  
Where lights of welcome shine,  
And myriads will be there who walked  
A different path than mine.*

Tom Q. Ellis in "The Cabletow", Manilla.

(Continued from Page 33)

to God for his manifold blessings. We should be proud to proclaim to the world that we are a serious organization of mature men—an organization that instills a love of God, teaches charity and its broadest sense and shows each member how to live a better life.

You can tell him that Masons take the simple tools of an operative Mason and use them in symbols to teach basic moral truths.

Non-Masons sometimes wonder at the close bond that exists between Masons. There is a simple explanation: Masons are bound together by the deep and abiding knowledge that each of them, during the ceremonies of the degrees, has accepted certain high ethical standards of conduct. These standards insure a bond of faith and confidence between Masons.

You need not be afraid to discuss Freemasonry with the non-Mason. Thousands of books have been published on the subject. The matters discussed in this paper are just a few of the things that you can tell your non-Masonic friends, but they are enough to show him that Freemasonry is one of the great organizations of the world and a steadying influence in a faltering world.

Reprinted from Service Letter  
COMMITTEE ON MASONIC INFORMATION  
Chicago.

## Within The Craft in Alberta

### PAST GRAND MASTER HONOURED

Sentinel Lodge No. 26, Hillcrest, Alberta, took advantage of an occasion on the evening of March 9th, 1961, when M.W. Bro. G. E. Cruickshank who served as Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Alberta in 1927, was presented with a jewel marking fifty years of Masonic service.

M.W. Bro. Cruickshank was born at Java, Ontario, on March 13th, 1877 and soon after coming to Alberta was initiated into Masonry in Sentinel Lodge on May 10th, 1911; becoming Worshipful Master of this Lodge in 1914, he won the approval of his Brethren and was elected as D.D.G.M. of District No. 8 in 1919, and advanced to Grand Lodge office in due course. This stalwart Mason has made a most worthy contribution to the Craft and is beloved by all with whom he has come in contact.

R.W. Bro. H. A. Gunn, a member of Spitzie Lodge, Pincher Creek, and one of the oldest Masons in the area made the presentation of the jewel and fittingly reviewed the magnificent contribution of M.W. Bro. Cruickshank who responded feelingly. Indicative of the interest in this pleasing event, the meeting was largely attended and was marked by the presence of nine P.D.D.G.M.'s, the present District Deputy Grand Master, R.W. Bro. F. J. Lote and R.W. Bro. Ryerson Christie of Chief Mountain Lodge No. 58, Cardston.

The historic meeting was further enlightened by the conferring of the Sublime Degree of a Master Mason on Bro. J. Hansen, whose father is a Past Master and present Secretary of Temiskaming Lodge No. 93, Quebec.

Members throughout the Province will join in extending the most sincere congratulations to M.W. Bro. Cruickshank.

### OVERSEAS LODGE EXTENDS INVITATION

Canada Lodge of London, England, will mark its Fiftieth Anniversary on June 27th, 1961, and a most cordial invitation is extended to Alberta Masons visiting in the Mother country at that time to attend the meeting.

Those desiring to attend should contact Bro. Willis C. Cooper of Gillette Corner, Great West Road, Isleworth, Middlesex, who will be pleased to provide necessary details in connection with this festive gathering.

### GRAND LODGE SESSIONS NEXT MONTH

Formal announcement with respect to the annual general meeting of our Grand Lodge indicates that the sessions will be held at the Jubilee Auditorium, Calgary, on June 14th and 15th. It

is anticipated that a large representation of constituent lodges will be in attendance and it is hoped that every single lodge in Alberta will be represented by one or more of its officers who are reminded that they are under no small amount of obligation to be present.

Prominent among the items of business will be the naming of the officers who will guide the destiny of Masonry in Alberta for the coming year. Officers already elected by acclamation are R.W. Bro. Morley G. Merner, Grand Master; R.W. Bro. Lloyd McPhee, Deputy Grand Master, R.W. Bro. Samuel H. Hardin, Senior Grand Warden.

Offering themselves as candidates for the office of Junior Grand Warden are R.W. Bro. F. Sydney Bird, Calgary; R.W. Bro. Ryerson M. Christie, Cardston; R.W. Bro. W. John Collett, Calgary; R.W. Bro. A. James G. Lauder, Edmonton, and W. Bro. Hector R. MacLean, Edmonton.

Election to the office of Junior Warden virtually assures the advancement of the successful candidate to the office of Grand Master and it is imperative that the most serious consideration be given to the selection of an incumbent for this important office. The candidates are Masons of prominence and ability and we should be grateful to them for offering their future valuable services to the Craft.

### ROBT. BURNS LODGE MARKS 50 YEARS

We offer our regrets to the members of Robert Burns Lodge No. 49 for delay in extending congratulations for the attainment of their 50th Anniversary which was celebrated during January; gracing the meeting by his presence was M.W. Bro. W. H. Harper, Grand Master, accompanied by M.W. Bros. Rev. Peter Dawson and D. D. McQueen and R.W. Bros. W. L. McPhee, Dr. W. J. Collett and G. B. Luchia.

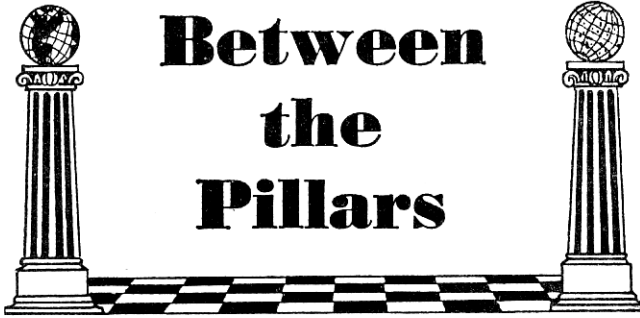
The Grand Chaplain, R.W. Bro. Collett, carried out an impressive Service of Thanksgiving and the Grand Master addressed the gathering.

Suitably marking the occasion with a "Robert Burns" night programme, the Haggis was piped to the dinner by Bro. "Scotty" Sutherland of Vulcan; M.W. Bro. Harper addressed the Haggis in his usual pleasing manner. His Worship, Bro. Vilas Teskey, Mayor of Carmangay, extended a hearty welcome to all visitors, while R.W. Bro. Alan McLean proposed the toast to Grand Lodge.

General regret was expressed that W. Bro. F. J. Whitmarsh, the oldest member of the Lodge, was unable to be present.

Members of "A" Company, Calgary Highlanders presented the Lodge with the Colors, this duty being carried out with efficiency and precision.

The pleasant evening was brought to a close with a grand ball. Lodges throughout Alberta extend congratulations to Robert Burns Lodge.



# Between the Pillars

## FOREIGN MASONRY

A recent address on the "Universality of Masonry," Lloyd E. Wilson, a Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of California and now the Grand Secretary of that body, reviewed the status of the Craft in a number of foreign Masonic Jurisdictions, his remarks being especially interesting as having been made from personal observations and contacts.

In France, he said, there is a division between the Grand Orient and the Grand Lodge of France, the latter organized in 1913 under English sponsorship. The former dates back to 1804 but has been accused of being both atheistic and political. While differences between the two Orders are many, he predicted that probably in the not distant future there may be a merger into one strong body, representative of all Masons in that country.

Italy, with which M.W. Bro. Wilson is well acquainted, presents a problem, he stated. Masonry began in this country in 1733 and reached its peak in 1861 when the patriot, Garibaldi, was Grand Master. During the regime of Mussolini, Masonry was banned, its officers arrested and many persecuted. The Craft "went underground" until 1945 when Masonic prisoners were released. The present problem is which group is the legitimate successor of Garibaldi and which is entitled to recognition by Masonry elsewhere. Time alone will work out the answer.

Greece, he told his audience, is a poor country with rather limited resources and the Masons there are struggling against tremendous odds, striving to keep the light of Masonry burning in an area that could well apply its principles to improving the condition of the common people.

He told an interesting tale about Masonry in Turkey. There the candidate must qualify in each degree and apply for the next degree before he can advance. An unusual sidelight is the custom in Turkey, which requires the password to be changed every three months. Consequently members must attend their Lodges frequently so as to readily gain admission. In Turkey, Masonry received a setback twenty years ago from an unfriendly government and the Craft was not re-established until after the last war. There are not many Lodges in the country and the Craft is now seeking recognition from Masonry throughout the world.

In the eighteen states and federal districts of Mexico there are a number of Grand Lodges, with

two groups of Masons, based on language differences. The York Grand Lodge is the smaller and English speaking branch, while the Grand Lodge of Mexico uses the Spanish language. "Both branches are doing excellent work," stated Grand Secretary Wilson. "Some outstanding Masons have been developed in this country and they are carrying on in spite of great odds. Mexican Masons are justly proud of their free public school system. There are no church schools in Mexico."

Turning to Israel, he cited the wonderful spirit of fellowship between Christian, Jew and Moslem, featured by Masonic principles. In 1948 the National Grand Lodge of Palestine was changed to the Grand Lodge of Israel. Two groups buried their differences to form this body, exhibiting a commendable attitude in order that a virile Masonry might emerge. In this they have been very successful, adding that in this Grand Lodge differences of religion, race, background and environment are submerged for the advancement of Masonic principles.

He related his experience in visiting Galilee Lodge No. 31 at Nazareth where divergent elements broke the bread of fraternity in a wonderful exposition of the Brotherhood of Man the Fatherhood of God. He predicted that Masonry in Israel will become a leading factor in the solution of the problems of the Near East.

(From Masonic Tribune).

A man should recognize the fact that his success or failure, throughout life, is largely a matter of control over his emotions.

—Masonic Chronicler

Last year the Grand Lodge of England constituted 61 new lodges. The "Mother Grand Lodge" now has 6,867 lodges, of which 1,613 are in the City of London, 4,437 in the rest of England, and 817 are located in foreign countries.

One good thing about telling the truth is you don't have to remember what you said.

## A RECORD OF NOTE

Attending the Joint Installation ceremonies of Eureka Lodge No. 10 and Kitchener Lodge No. 95 at Lacombe on January 12th was W. Bro. Joseph Loftus Craigen who was himself installed as W.M. of Eureka Lodge just fifty years ago. All were most pleased to find this venerable Brother in good health and the Bulletin, on behalf of all Masons in the jurisdiction extends the warmest congratulations and good wishes to W. Bro. Craigen.