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Grand Lodge Bulletin

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Mother Lodge of the North West Frontier, Khyber No. 582

By W. Bro. W. Reeve

"FREEMASONRY . . . is spread over the four quarters of the globe." Apart from being a truism, this statement conjures up mental pictures of the same ritual being conscientiously worked in tropical heat, Arctic cold, in peace, war and strife.

One quarter of the globe, which gave birth to a flood of adventurous and romantic novels and films, inspired by true stories of heroism, was also the birth place of a lodge which bears a name symbolic of the North-West Frontier in India—Khyber Lodge No. 582.

It was founded in Peshawar in 1850, a year after the annexation of the Punjab, and when the British possessions in India were still under the rule of the East India Company. The "Frontier" was turbulent and Peshawar was a far-flung outpost of defence against the constant threat of warring hordes pouring down the Khyber Pass. At its foundation, Khyber must have been one of the loneliest lodges in the world. It came under the Provincial Grand Lodge of Bengal, nearly two thousand miles away, whilst some five hundred miles separated Khyber from its nearest "neighbour" lodge.

Mainly Military Brethren

Understandably so, its founders and the majority of its members were soldiers. Masonry must have been strong in the heart of the British soldier in India, as, in those days and for many years to follow, there were seldom more than a few thousand white troops in the whole of India. Yet, during the first quarter-century of its existence, not only did Khyber attract civilian members, but was held in high esteem by all residents of Peshawar, for the part its members played in their everyday, and often dangerous lives.

In 1853, a certain Lieutenant Roberts was initiated and, four years later, he became Master of the Lodge. This was a name which was to blaze across the pages of military history and, later, to be revered by soldier and civilian alike—Field Marshal Lord Roberts (Lord "Bobs"). He won the Victoria Cross at the Relief of Lucknow during his year of office, surely a unique distinction among lodges.

In 1869, the District Grand Lodge of the Punjab was formed and Khyber Lodge was transfer-

red from the Province of Bengal to help found the new District. In time, it was to play a great part in the sponsoring of other lodges which were formed on the North-West Frontier.

War with Afghanistan and more constant and localised wars with the fiercely independent tribes surrounding Peshawar were a mixed blessing. Most of its regular members would be called away on active service but re-inforcements coming into Peshawar included Freemasons who were pleased and proud to "visit" Khyber. In spite of all the difficulties and, except for a short spell in 1870, Khyber Lodge has continued working without interruption right down to this day. It has lived through innumerable Frontier wars, two World Wars and the unhappy period following the Partition of India.

End of British Rule

The granting of independence to India and Pakistan resulted in an exodus of British officers and men, and most lodges, particularly those in Pakistan, were faced with extinction. The few remaining and zealous brethren of Khyber decided that the lodge and its history should be preserved. Grand Lodge was petitioned for permission to remove the lodge to England and this request was granted. In the meantime, a Centenary Warrant was also granted and Lodge Khyber held its last meeting in its birthplace, Peshawar, in its Centenary Year (1950). In 1951, the lodge was officially transferred to London, since then it has continued to meet at Duke Street, St. James's.

Gradually, it has gathered again into the fold from all over the country a large number of brethren who were members in Peshawar. In its 114th year, it is going very strongly and becoming established as a London lodge. The link with Peshawar may now be weaker but it is still unbroken. Old friends of service days from times before the last war still meet; the "Festive Board" echoes nicknames, the odd phrase in Hindustani and the inevitable reminiscences. Khyber has a tendency to attract as initiates and as members those with military connections who, although they may never have been to India, can still feel a thrill of pride at being admitted as members of the Mother Lodge of the North-West Frontier.

TO TOAST THE QUEEN

It being quite general custom, at Masonic functions of various kinds, to pay respect to Her Gracious Majesty, the Queen, through the medium of a toast, it might be well if the correct method of proposing and responding to such a toast could be generally adopted.

A recent letter from Bro. H. A. Anderson, a Life Member of Truro Lodge No. 43, Truro, Nova Scotia and a member of Foothills Lodge No. 174, Calgary, to the Bulletin, gives what we believe to be the correct method of proposing and responding to this important toast.

Quoting an article in the *Freemason*, 1962, Bro. Anderson pointed out that a ruling had been obtained from the Comptroller of the Lord High Chamberlain's Office, St. James Palace, London, England; the ruling read:-

The chairman of the meeting at which both ladies and gentlemen are present raps once with his gavel and, having obtained silence, says; "Ladies and Gentlemen, the Queen". The audience then stands at attention while the National Anthem is played or sung. Only then is the glass lifted from the table and held at eye level. The words, "The Queen" are repeated, one sip of the liquid used for the toast is taken and the glass replaced. Should only men be present at the gathering the salutation shall be 'Gentlemen, the Queen'.

None other than the foregoing constitutes the approved form.

All such introductions as "Will you rise and drink a toast to Her Majesty, after which we will sing one verse of the National Anthem" are improper. It is incorrect to hold the glass in one's hand while singing and altogether improper to click glasses.

Bro. Anderson also points out in his letter, and again, his contention is altogether correct, that it is improper to propose a toast to the Queen and the Craft, because, in effect, when the two are joined in a single toast the members of the Craft present would be toasting themselves which would not be at all in order.

When a toast is proposed to Grand Lodge, for instance, all members of Grand Lodge remain seated; similarly when a toast is offered to the Visitors, they remain seated, accepting the courtesy. If a toast is desired to the Craft, then it should be proposed by a non member of the Craft and not proposed by one of ourselves.

It may well be argued that a member of the Craft proposing a toast to the organization of Freemasonry is paying tribute to the spirit of Freemasonry, rather than to the membership and if this is actually the thought in mind at the time the toast is offered, then there could be little against its use on occasion, but, on thought being given to the question of linking the Queen and the Craft it will, we believe, be evident that there can be no justification whatever for linking the two.

Grand Master's Message



When the Roman calendar was revised, the name of January was given to the first month, in honor of the God Janus, who was depicted as having two faces, one looking back and the other forward. The first of the year has traditionally assumed this dual aspect, a time to review the accomplishments and failures, the successes and frustrations, of the year just past, and to look forward with new hope and expectation for the year to come.

In all of the constituent Lodges, newly elected Masters will begin their terms of office, and other officers will assume new stations and responsibilities. The experience of the year just past should afford valuable assistance for planning the year ahead, in taking advantage of ideas and policies that have been proven to be sound and progressive, and avoiding the pitfalls and errors that have been disclosed.

To the Brethren, I bespeak for the Masters and Officers, your whole-hearted and enthusiastic support and cooperation. You are part of a great and glorious fraternity, which can and should be a powerful influence for good throughout the world—for the betterment and enlightenment of mankind. The Brothers whom you have elected as Masters will be charged with the burden and responsibility of conducting the affairs of your Lodges during the coming year. They, together with their Officers, will bring to this task a full measure of dedication and devotion of the ideals of Freemasonry, and, I am sure, a determination to make the coming year one of continued growth and success. They, however, cannot accomplish this alone; they need the confidence that comes from the knowledge that they have your approval and commendation. This can be best expressed in attendance at the Communications of your Lodges.

A sincere effort to do your part in promoting a successful year will, I am confident, be repaid in a feeling of pride and satisfaction, and in the knowledge of having contributed your just share in the mission of Freemasonry.

To all the Lodges, their Masters, Officers and members, I extend my sincere wishes for a most successful and rewarding year.

Samuel H. Hardin
Grand Master.

Above all let us never forget that mankind constitutes one great brotherhood; all born to encounter suffering and sorrow, and therefore bound to sympathize with one another.

—Albert Pike.

WHY ATTEND LODGE?

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"From ancient times, no master or fellow could be absent from his lodge, especially when warned to appear at it, without incurring severe censure, unless it appeared to the Master and Wardens that pure necessity hindered him."

The foregoing words are quite generally printed on notices of meeting; how many of us read and understand them? Now is the time, more than ever, that we should take heed of them. There are those who feel that institutional Masonry is not at all necessary and, indeed, of little real value for their own personal experience; all that matters, they say, is that a person should win his way sincerely and thoughtfully to his own Masonic convictions and strive to model his conduct in accordance with the Light he sees; this, they say, can be done without attending lodge, the proceedings of which are somewhat dull and the ceremonies possibly coldly formal and uninspiring.

There are Masons, by and large, who are rather casual in their attitude towards lodge attendance; for many it is incidental, it is quite optional, it is, to their way of thinking, in no sense obligatory; they do not take it seriously or look upon it as an essential part of their Masonic duty and privilege. We so easily excuse ourselves with some petty criticism or so readily resort to some platitude to excuse ourselves, such as to say, that the inner attitude is what matters, not outward observance, with the result that outward observance is minimized or even belittled. It is maintained, by some, that spiritual Masonry is what really counts for it is independent of forms and ceremonies.

In support of such contentions we hear comments running all the way from "Can't I practice Masonry in the green fields?", to "I don't go to lodge because I see no particular point in it". Members giving expression to such thoughts certainly consider themselves as members of the Craft and perhaps feel that their time may be spent more profitably than attending lodge. They do, however, overlook one important consideration; Inner Attitude is the vital thing in Masonry, but, Inner Attitude should not be divorced from outward observance. It is said that Masonry is a transaction between the individual and the Creator, that to practice its principles and tenets

needs no form or ceremonies, needs no external aids, but may be offered alone and where and when it seems most natural, in the quietness of one's room, among the towering magnificence of the mountains, even among the din and bustle of the busy street; admittedly time and place for the practice of our great Fraternity's beliefs can be any where, at any time.

To the question, "Can't I practice Masonry on God's green fields?" the answer is 'yes', but you don't; of course, like all sweeping statements exceptions should be taken in to account, but it does underscore the broad general fact of the matter. Let's be honest; do we really practice Masonry on the golf course?, at the football game?, watching television?, or just staying at home? Are we fooling anybody when we make such rash generalizations or, more important, do we fool ourselves? In a small town in Kentucky a young minister made a somewhat unusual funeral announcement from his pulpit; he was about to move to another charge, perhaps because he was rather given to such unusual announcements, he said, "The funeral of Mr. John Smith will be held from this church tomorrow afternoon at three o'clock and Mr. Smith will be here himself, in person, for the first time in three years". Mr. Smith had been neglectful of outward observance; is it a fair presumption that he had been even more neglectful of the Inner Attitude?

Regular and devoted attendance at lodge calls forth admiration and approbation; it is, first and foremost, a tribute which the member owes his lodge. Our formula for the making of better man and a Mason should be; I come to seek because I need the Fellowship and Brotherly Love which my lodge offers. We go to lodge because we need that which it exists to provide, insight into life's meanings, control over life's circumstances, inward power for life's moral purposes; we can slip out of the hurly burly and press of the work-a-day world into the Temple and here may restore our souls and keep our vision and courage and love for our fellowmen; here we can find moral cleansing, spiritual enrichment, new perspective. In our Temples we are reminded of something finer, more enduring, greater than the pre-occupations of the common day and it is there in the spirit of what Freemasonry teaches that we find ourselves to be not only engineers, doctors, business men, laborers, teachers, but brothers on a common level, heirs of immortality.

No one with the interests of his fellow citizens at heart would think of proposing that a pleasant park in the centre of a city should be parcelled out to merchants or real estate men to be made into an industrial area, such park areas being a reservation for the future enjoyment of citizens; so our Temple should be for us as a reservation in time, an occasion on which, by our attendance, and the assistance of the Most High we may breathe a clearer air, walk with a firmer tread, see life steadily and see it whole. Were all our lodges closed, and we could not meet together as

brothers. it would be as though the reservoir that supplies a great city with water had suddenly gone dry. Last, but not least, we should attend lodge regularly because of the fellowship to be found there. Our Temples of Freemasonry are built to create fellowship, in them we will find happiness for ourselves and an opportunity to communicate that happiness to others.

Can a man truly say that he is a Mason if he insists that all his highest moments shall be un-social? That he can find and feel the Spirit of Brotherly Love in self centred aloneness, segregated from his brethren? Can such a man be truly happy?

Once upon a time there was a member who went about saying that he could practice Freemasonry in many places and in many ways, without the benefit of lodge attendance. One day the Master of his lodge called on him and he was invited to sit by the fireplace; the member knew that the Master must have noticed his absence from lodge and that he had heard the grounds on which he had tried to justify his non-attendance and rather anticipated that he was to be taken to task. The two men sat in silence for some time; then the Master arose, went to the fireplace and, with tongs, lifted a single coal from the embers and placed it on the hearth. It quickly turned into black ash, while the fire continued to glow and give forth heat. Not a word was spoken; the Master then returned the coal to the fire where it soon brightened up and became once more, a glowing active part, giving warmth and pleasure with the rest of the fire.

The member then spoke up, "You needn't say a word, I understand what you mean". In fellowship with the others in the fire the returned ash was alive and burning and the member said. "I'll be at our next lodge meeting and from then on, that I may share with my brethren the good and great things that our wonderful Fraternity has to offer to all who will accept teachings, working together as brothers."

It is a great privilege to be a member of a Masonic Lodge, to practice its precepts, in the inner place of our hearts regardless of where we are. But it is our clear duty to build and work together as did our ancient brethren. Besides being a duty our attendance in Lodge is a spiritual help, a leading means of Brotherly Love for ourselves individually and to all brethren of the Craft. The point is not that the lodge needs us but that we need the lodge.

WHY ATTEND LODGE? To find and foster Brotherly Love, to acquire insight into life's meanings, control over life's circumstances, inward power for life's moral purposes, to have a full part in the performance of those duties which tends to build better men; to be happy ourselves and to communicate happiness to others; in short, to receive the full benefits of your membership in Freemasonry **ATTEND YOUR LODGE REGULARLY.**

FUTURE OF FREEMASONRY

Recently a Master Mason was heard to express the opinion that Masonry is "on the way out." Asked if he had been truly steadfast to the terms of his obligation with regard to attendance in his Lodge, he admitted that he had not and asked, in defence, who has.

The falling-off in attendance is a matter for concern, but it is not peculiar to the Craft. Clubs and associations who have, as part of their objective, public welfare, are suffering similarly, and even church attendances have been affected. Television, longer hotel hours, new varieties of entertainment and sporting activities have been given as reasons, but the real reason seems to be a serious epidemic of apathy.

The trouble is by no means confined to Australia. It is being given very serious thought by prominent Masonic organizations in the United States of America. In the forefront of these is the Oklahoma Consistory, which issued propaganda, publications and thoughtful articles for inclusion in Masonic journals, which are legion. The following is a short article issued by the Consistory:

ASK YOURSELF

What have I done this year that has been of any benefit to my Lodge?

What would become of any lodge if every member had done exactly as I have done?

How many times have I been absent when I could have been present if I had made the effort?

Have I visited the sick and spoken a kind word to cheer them in their affliction?

Would I be pleased to receive the same consideration in case of sickness as I have given to others?

If I have been negligent, is it because I am at fault or because the rest of the brethren don't do their duty?

Am I going to continue in the same old way, or am I going to start something?

Am I in harmony with the members of the Lodge and with the officers controlling it?

Is it fair for someone else to do all the work and for me to expect an equal share of the benefits and privileges?

Australian Exchange.

The ambitions of great men, the suspicions of little men, the constant misunderstanding of all men, may undermine any structure that this generation builds. If however, we build with wisdom, and with courage, and with patience, those that come after us will be helped by our work. Our building may fall, but if we have built aright, some of the foundation stones will remain and become part of the structure that will ultimately abide.

—Dwight Morrow