



Authorized as second class mail by the Post Office

Department, Ottawa, and for payment of postage in cash.

# Grand Lodge Bulletin

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

## When Is a Man a Mason ?

When is a man a Mason? When he can look out over the rivers, the hills and the far horizon with a profound sense of his own littleness in the vast scheme of things, and yet have faith, hope and courage. When he knows that down in his heart every man is as noble, as vile, as diabolic, and as lonely as himself, and seeks to know, to forgive, and to love his fellow man. When he knows how to sympathize with men in their sorrows, yea even in their sins—knowing that each man fights a hard fight against many odds. When he has learned how to make friends and keep them, and above all, how to keep friends with himself. When he loves flowers, can hunt birds without a gun, and feels the thrill of an old forgotten joy when he hears the laugh of a little child. When he can be happy and high-minded amid the meaner drudgeries of life. When star-crowned trees and the glint of sunlight on flowing waters subdue him like the thought of one much loved and long dead. When no voice of distress reaches his ears in vain, and no hand seeks aid without response. When he finds faith in every good that helps any life, whatever the name of that faith may be. When he can look into a wayside puddle and see something besides mud, and into the face of the most forlorn mortal and see something beyond sin. When he knows how to pray, how to love, how to hope. When he has kept faith with himself, with his fellow man, with his God; in his hand a sword for evil, in his heart a bit of a song—glad to live, but not afraid to die! In such a man, whether he be rich or poor, scholarly or unlearned, famous or obscure, Masonry has wrought her sweet ministry! Such a man has found the only real secret of Masonry, and the one which it is trying to give to the world.

*Joseph Fort Newton*

## EDITORIAL

As early in each new year we look forward to the days that lie ahead, we endeavor to do something towards planning just how we can add a little to our contribution to our respective communities; it is not always easy to decide on the steps we should take, and, if we are puzzled, perhaps we could take advantage of the words of a little article by Virgil V. Bjork, Pastor of the Methodist Church in Fort Wayne, Indiana; heading the article "On Learning to Say Thank You", this writer went on . . .

"Albert Schweitzer, one of the great hearts and minds of the twentieth century, tells how he went one day to the graves in the cemetery of his home town to speak loving and grateful words over the dust of those people, long since dead, to whom he might have spoken a grateful word while they were still alive. There in the cemetery he reflected on how he took the benefits of his parents and friends for granted. The lengthening years had taught him how much he owed to others and what a lift his grateful and gracious words could have been to his benefactors. There in the cemetery he muses over the unresponding tomb stones, and he writes, "We must try to be the water that does come up—a spring at which men can quench their thirst for gratitude."

Being thankful can be such a vague and abstract thing that it really has no joy in it. You can make gratitude come alive this season by a simple act. Tell someone you are grateful to him. Write a simple note of 'thanks'. How about this for a starter? To one of your teachers; to your employer for the opportunity of useful work; to a friend for knowing your faults and loving you still; to your wife for her affection and understanding beyond price and beyond compare; to your minister who never lets the light of hope grow dim; to your fellow workers for making ways easy instead of difficult.

You can add to this list. You can be "A spring at which men can quench their thirst for gratitude". Do it today.

The early weeks of the bright new year would be an excellent time to follow the advice of Schweitzer and to make plain to our friends and to the members of our family that we do fully appreciate all the kindnesses and thoughtful acts that have meant so much to us; we can recall times when we felt altogether appreciative to someone for confidence reposed in us, or for the touch of the gentle hand; it is not always easy to repay small kindnesses but there is little to prevent our making it known that the friendly gesture means much to us.

Within the Craft we can bring joy to the heart of the Brother by telling him how much we appreciate the opportunity of his fellowship; we can make the Worshipful Master and his officers happy by expressing our appreciation of first class work, when it is exemplified; we can make the newly made Mason grateful for his association with Masonry by the kind word, freely expressed.

S. C. H.

## Dear Dad

I wrote how pleased I was when Jim petitioned the Masonic Lodge, even though I didn't know anything about it. I felt that my husband would enjoy Masonry because I remember how much you seemed to enjoy it, Dad. Well, I am even more pleased now, because I know more about what Masonry is and does for a man.

Jim and I went to a meeting at the Lodge last night. It was a part of a program they call The Lodge System of Masonic Education and they said it was to help Jim and me learn more about Masonry.

When Jim and I got the invitation, I wasn't sure that I would enjoy being the only lady at a meeting of men. When we arrived there was another candidate and his wife and the wives of two of the older members had also come down to make us feel a little more at home. There were several other men there, too, and the Master of the Lodge took us around to meet everyone. They are really a friendly bunch of people!

Before our meeting began, the Master took us around the Lodge and explained the building to us. It is a beautiful building and, I must admit, I was surprised. I didn't say anything, of course, but I had thought there would be pool tables and things like that—but there weren't. The Lodge Room is really impressive and I felt that we shouldn't talk above a whisper in it. The Master told us where the Lodge Officers sit and explained that dignity and decorum were always practiced there. He said the meetings were reverent, in keeping with Masonic teachings.

There was a neat little kitchen and a small room with tables where they have coffee and snacks and sometimes serve meals before meetings. Then, we went into the library for our meeting.

The first part of what they read told us that Masonry is a philosophy of life and a system of morality based on the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man. They said that Masonry was like so many other things in life; a man gets from Masonry just about what he puts into it. I had always thought it was more social, but I found out that it is based on much deeper things like temperance, fortitude, prudence and justice. And, when I learned all that, I was really proud that Jim had decided to become a Mason because Masonry takes good men and makes them better.

They had encouraged us to ask questions, so, since I have always thought Masonry was all secret I asked about that. They said that the ritual and a few things like how they conduct the Lodge were secret, but it's not really a secret society at all. What Masons keep to themselves just gives them a common bond and makes it possible for one Mason to be sure if another man is a Mason or not.

Jim said he would be away from home quite

a bit at first and I asked them why he had to do that. They told me that the ritual is never written, so Jim has to learn it from another Mason. That takes a lot of time, as I can understand.

After he gets each of the three degrees, he will learn a lot about the degree and the things he should learn from it. Since they explained that to me, I honestly won't mind his being gone a lot because now I know that he will be making a better man of himself as he becomes a better Mason.

The second portion of the reading was about where Masonry came from. I didn't realize it was so old! They told us all about the workmen's guilds in ancient times and how they eventually became Masonic Lodges. And, I was surprised to find just how many of our country's heroes were Masons! In the question and answer period, I asked about some of the things that Masons use, like the Square and Compasses I first saw on your ring. It was explained that Speculative Masonry adopted many of the tools of Operative Masonry as symbols, so the Square and Compasses and the Plumb and a lot of other tools which stone masons used meant something to Masons today and teach them part of what Freemasonry should be.

Then they told us what Freemasonry means. Of course, it means much more than just this, but I summed it all up in my mind and it means that men should follow the Commandment that we love one another. I just can't imagine an organization having a finer purpose than this. They told us that Masonry is not a social organization, not a way for business gain, not a burial society.

The other candidate's wife said she had always thought that Masonry was just a different kind of religion and one of the Masons told her that it most certainly was not. In fact, he said, Masons must not consider Masonry to be a substitute for their own religion or church work. He said that Masons don't talk about religion or politics in the Lodge because it might cause arguments and that Masonry tried to be the kind of organization in which men of all beliefs could participate in peace and harmony.

The final portion of the meeting was devoted to how Masonry works and it re-assured Jim and the other candidate that all Masons had learned what they would have to learn. Jim said afterward that he felt a lot better about it all.

I want you to know how much I learned about Masonry, since they didn't have anything like the Lodge System of Masonic Education when you became a Mason. In fact, I'll bet you that Mom would learn a lot if you were to take her down to the next meeting when they have a first reading in the Lodge. She would understand what you have been doing all these years and I'm sure she would make the wife of the candidate feel much more at home. And, a lady might feel freer to ask questions of another wife than she might of one of the Masons.

Well, Dad, this has been too long already,

but I knew you would be pleased to hear about it. I certainly want to thank you for all the time you have devoted to such a wonderful organization; and I'd like to thank the men who thought of this Lodge System and decided to invite the wives to the first meeting. They have made it possible for me to understand what Masonry is and to be truly proud and grateful when Jim finally gets to wear the Square and Compasses on his lapel.

*Your loving daughter*

### PITY THE PRINCIPAL SPEAKER

*by W. A. Peterson in Wisconsin Freemason*

Many a time at luncheons and dinners, I have sat and felt sorry for the poor principal speaker.

For instance, at a recent national convention, where I was present, the principal speaker was a big man in American industry. He had travelled five hundred miles to deliver a serious address. Before he was given the floor these things had to go on first: introduction of distinguished guests, many of whom had to get up and give little orations of their own. Introduction of the toastmaster with what was supposed to be a funny story. Remarks by the toastmaster. A full hour of third rate vaudeville, including a mediocre ventriloquist, a torch singer who couldn't sing, a trumpet player who almost broke your ear-drums, and a magician whose tricks had whiskers.

When the principal speaker finally arose to speak, the hour was late, the audience was already exhausted, and he didn't have a chance. Out of courtesy to the sponsoring group he went through with the talk, but he was licked before he started. I have a lot of sympathy for a speaker who, in a similar predicament is reported to have said: "Ladies and gentlemen, I don't know what you are going to do, but as for me, I'm getting ——— out of here. (We recall the story of the delayed speaker who, about midnight, when asked to now give his address, got to his feet and said . . . "My address is No. ——— on ——— Street and sat down . . . thus showing plenty of courage and a lot of good common sense . . .)

### BE MODERATE

Freemasons, of all men, should be deliberate in judgement, candid in consideration, charitable in construction, moderate in condemnation. If you feel moved to criticize a Brother, suppose you see him first. Talk over the matter in question and discover his viewpoint. Probably it is a different angle from that which presented itself to you. Perhaps he can tell you things you did not know. On the other hand, perhaps you can enlighten him and lead him to see the error of his way. How much better to convince and reform than to convict and destroy. At any rate, it is a satisfaction to be sure you are right before you go ahead.

Exchange

# Between the Pillars

## CEDAR OF LEBANON FORESTS

by Fred E. Kunkel in the *Victorian Craftsman*

At the building of King Solomon's Temple . . . the timbers were felled and prepared in the forests of Lebanon, carried by sea in floats to Joppa, and from thence by land to Jerusalem. The cedars of Lebanon were thus a vital part of the "House of the Lord" erected on old Mount Moriah. What has happened to those old patriarchs of the Lebanon forests?

In the spring of 1931 an endeavor was made to obtain a supply of cedar of Lebanon logs, sufficient for the panelling of one room in the new Scottish Rite Temple at Louisville, Kentucky. Previously a representative had travelled through Damascus and Beirut, chief seaport of Syria and he had searched near and far for logs of this famous tree, so celebrated in history, but they were nowhere to be found. Various attempts were made to ascertain the whereabouts of the desired material but without success.

Cedar of Lebanon formerly covered the slopes of a chain of mountains in Syria. These mountains rise to 10,000 feet and are snow-capped the year round. The mountains may be seen from far out in the Mediterranean Sea upon nearing the coast of Syria. Today the cedar of Lebanon has disappeared, with the exception of a small grove of approximately 400 trees standing alone in a depression in the mountain 6,000 feet above sea level and about 3,500 feet below the summit of the mountain. The mountain has been denuded of forests for hundreds of years. As far back as A.D. 1550, only twenty eight cedar trees were counted. Today there are about 400, of which eleven or more are very old. Some of them, no doubt, were young trees in the time of King Solomon's reign.

The largest tree is only 100 feet high and each tree carries a biblical name. One of the famous trees still standing there is the St. James; it has a circumference of 47 feet. In recent decades a wall has been constructed around this grove to protect it from roving animals, chiefly goats. Why this grove should be left, like an oasis, is a matter of speculation. The probable explanation is found in the presence of a stream flowing through an otherwise arid region. Around this grove a great many legends have been told, one of them claiming that the grove was planted by Jesus, a belief which is based on the poetical passage in the 104th Psalm referring to "cedars of Lebanon which the Lord has planted".

As a traveller stands on the summit of the Lebanon mountains he is looking over a vast expanse of arid land. Below, on the slope, he sees what still remains of the original cedar of Lebanon trees, the remnant of what was once a mighty forest. Further on the mountain slope there are

ruins of ancient temples. Along its sides have passed Assyrians, Babylonians, Egyptians, Phoenicians, Greeks, Romans, Christians and Moslems. All around this mountain the crusaders for hundreds of years marched their armies to liberate the Holy Land.

But the prophesy that Lebanon should fall and the tall cedars be cut down came true. What was once a fertile region, heavily stocked with cedar trees, is now grazing land and only sparsely populated. Lebanon has always remained a sacred place and for hundreds of years pilgrims have travelled through the region, carrying away cedars of Lebanon wood for crucifixes and relics. This practice alone threatened, in the 16th century, to extinguish what little was left of these trees. Today the cedar grove is protected and no cutting whatever is permitted.

Sacred history also informs us that Moses heard of the beauty of the mountains of Lebanon and longed to see them before he died. "I pray thee", he exclaimed, "let me go over and see the good land that is beyond the Jordan and that goodly Mount Lebanon".

This was Lebanon at the time Jerusalem was in her glory. The region furnished the valuable cedar wood not only for the temples but for many other buildings of great importance. The wood possesses rare and valuable properties, rendering it highly resistant to the destructive forces of nature. For this reason, it is said, King Solomon selected it for the building of his Temple, which he called "The House of the Lord".

At the time of the crusaders this wood entered international commerce. We find, for instance, in the Palace of Versailles, the richly carved gateway above which was inscribed "The Hospital of the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem of the Island of Rhodes". This is made of cedar of Lebanon and in spite of its great antiquity its state of preservation is perfect. But the great demand for cedar of Lebanon almost completely exhausted the resources and for decades past no timber has been cut or taken from the region.

In 1683 cedar of Lebanon was planted in England and similar experiments were made in France, Switzerland and other countries. In the United States there are a few of these trees in existence, notably in Flushing, Long Island, and one tree in the cathedral grounds in Washington.

The United States Dept. of Commerce has continued the search for this wood and a few years ago learned of a small supply of the cedar planks that had lain in an attic of a furniture maker's shop. The planks had been taken out of an old house and were centuries old and were proven to be cedar of Lebanon.

The cedar tree is universally considered as the symbol of eternity; hence, it is said that this precious wood was used to build the Ark of the Covenant.

*Adapted from the Texas Grand Lodge Magazine for February 1935.*