



Grand Lodge Bulletin

M.W. Bro. W. J. COLLETT, Editor

A REMINDER — DOES YOUR LODGE USE THIS LETTER?

Dear Mr.

As you have expressed a desire to become a Freemason we presume you are willing to consider thoroughly the step you propose to take. The exact nature of the Masonic Order is unknown to you now and we deem it advisable, before you sign an application form, to inform you on certain features and phases of the institution. Please read and consider this letter carefully, you will then have a better understanding of the duties of a member and what is required of him.

Freemasonry has, in all ages, insisted that men should come to its doors of their own freewill and accord, as no one is authorized to solicit members. We expect those who apply to have a favourable opinion of the Order and not to be attracted by curiosity.

The Masonic Fraternity is an organization founded on high ideals and sound moral principles. The membership consists of men of good character drawn from many classes and creeds. Its teachings are based on a belief in God, the immortality of the soul and the brotherhood of man. An Athiest cannot be a member.

We believe in God and welcome men of all creeds. We endeavour to teach a man the duties he owes to God, his country, his family, his neighbour and to himself. Masonry does not interfere with religion or politics but strives after light and truth, endeavouring always to bring out the highest and noblest qualities of men. We do not permit any political discussion in our Lodges but we demand of each member true obedience to the laws of the country in which he resides.

Freemasonry is not a service club, nor is it a benefit society, valuable as these bodies are. We have no provision for sick pay or any other benefit. Our help is always extended to those who through unforeseen circumstances and through no fault of their own, have met with misfortune.

There are three degrees in Craft Masonry. The first is the Entered Apprentice, the second the Fellowcraft and the third the Master Mason. Each degree requires a vow of secrecy which does not in any way conflict with your duty to God, to humanity or to the country in which you reside.

Your admission to the Craft will entail certain financial obligations which you should be able to discharge without detriment to yourself or those dependent on you. In addition to the fees payable on your entrance there will be an annual dues for the support of the lodge. These amounts you can ascertain from the member to whom you have spoken. If you become a member and receive the three degrees, you will be expected to attend as many meetings of your lodge as you can.

The petition form contains questions which must be answered truthfully. When the lodge receives your completed petition a committee of members will make close enquiries about you. After receiving the committee's report the members will decide whether it is wise for you to join the Fraternity at this time and you will be advised of their decision.

We trust that you will consider these statements in the same spirit of honesty and friendship in which they have been presented to you. Should there be some other points on which you desire information, will you please apply to the undersigned.

Yours very truly,

Secretary.

..... Lodge No.

I have read the above letter and I wish to receive a petition form in order to apply for membership.

Signed

Date 19.....

(Petitions for Initiation should not be given out until this form has been signed by the petitioner and returned to the Secretary.)

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW AND BE ABLE TO TELL A PROSPECTIVE CANDIDATE

(Editor's Note — The Senior Grand Warden, R.W. Bro. K.L. Crockett, who shares the concern of many about the information that should be given to non-masons and as a result of a Mini-Workshop held in Edmonton on February 7, suggests that it would be helpful to print this paper. We are unable to give the author credit but it was given to Bro. Crockett by M.W. Bro. S.H. Hardin, P.G.M.)

I have found that many Master Masons, and in particular, newly-raised Master Masons, are somewhat uncertain about what they can tell to, or discuss with non-Masons. Many of us become downright embarrassed or, at the very least, "ill-at-ease" when asked a direct question about our organization by a non-Mason. The fact of the matter is that a Mason should feel a definite responsibility to provide a direct and open reply to any questions that a non-Mason may ask regarding the Craft.

I have, on several occasions found myself and other members somewhat hesitant and unsure when replying to what seems to be a perfectly innocent question. It must sound to the non-Mason as though he has, inadvertently, asked a Mason to commit treason.

I find that the simplest way to overcome this problem of answering questions from non-Masons, about the Craft, is to develop my own definition of Masonry. Having a broad, generalized definition helps, I feel, to formulate answers to most questions that are likely to be asked by a non-Mason.

For instance, my current definition is: "Freemasonry is a world-wide fraternal organization founded on high ideals and sound moral principles. Although it is not a religious organization, it is based on the principles of the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man and welcomes men of all creeds. Masons are committed, by their doctrine of Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth, to do charitable work in the community and among their brethren."

Admittedly, this definition is incomplete, especially when you consider the broad scope of activities embraced by Freemasonry. However, if one looks at his own definition as a foundation upon which to build, and then carries out his Masonic responsibility "to make a daily advancement in Masonic knowledge," his definition will expand as his Masonic knowledge increases.

Masonry and Religion

It should be made quite clear to non-Masons that Masonry is not a religion. Although one cannot become a member unless he believes in a Supreme Creator, Masons do not attend Lodge for the express purpose of worshipping God. A prospective candidate is not examined for religious beliefs nor is he asked to embrace any religious tenet or dogma.

Voluntary Aspect of Freemasonry

A further important point that could be tied in with your definition of Freemasonry is that Freemasonry is a "voluntary" Association. **No one** is invited to become a member. We all know that it is a breach of Masonic Law for a Mason to invite a prospective member to join the Craft. Freemasonry has always insisted that a prospective candidate should come to its doors of his own free will and accord. This information should be provided in answer to any queries concerning "How a person can become a Mason."

Qualifications for Membership

It is a Master Mason's duty and responsibility to know what qualifications a prospective candidate must meet. The following qualifications are those set out in the Mentor's Guide of the Grand Lodge of Alberta and all Master Masons should be familiar with them:

- 1) Of mature age and we mean 21 years - the candidate must be the full age of twenty-one years. Freemasonry requires that an individual be morally and legally responsible for his own acts in order to assume the Masonic obligations and responsibilities.
- 2) An applicant must be free-born; capable of reading, writing and the forming of judgements and decisions. He should be physically able to learn the Masonic Art. Dispensation may be obtained from Grand Lodge for certain physical disabilities which might prevent an individual from carrying out parts of the Masonic Art.
- 3) He must believe in a Supreme Being and in the continued existence of his own soul. An Athiest is not eligible.

It is also a Master Mason's duty to communicate these qualifications, along with several other key points, to a prospective candidate, so that the candidate may judge for himself as to whether or not this is the type of organization that he would like to petition for membership. Some key points which should be related to a non-Mason who has indicated a definite desire to apply for membership are:

- 1) An overall definition of Freemasonry as mentioned earlier.
- 2) That Masonry does not interfere with an individual's religion or politics but does demand abstinence from religious or political discussion within the Lodge.
- 3) That there are three degrees in Craft Masonry and that each degree requires a vow of secrecy which does not, in any way, conflict with a man's duty to God, humanity or his country of residence.
- 4) That, should he become a member of the Craft, he will assume certain financial obligations comprising a fee payable upon entrance and annual dues for support of the Lodge. The specific amounts should be stated.
- 5) That, if he becomes a member of the Craft and receives the three degrees, he will be expected to attend as many Lodge meetings as he possibly can.

Are there any other points that could be added to this list?

THE MAILBAG

Editor,
Grand Lodge Bulletin,
Calgary, Alberta.

Dear Sir & Brother:

Since becoming a joining member of a Lodge in Calgary I have become disappointed, and to a point where I am disgusted. I have found that in Craft Lodges there is little work executed in the way of charities in the monetary sense.

Many Brethren have said to me that Masons just meet for fellowship, that's nonsense to just say that, because if that's the only reason I would quit Masonry and just go to the Legion.

I have met many non-attending Masons who feel as I do that there is not enough done for Charity.

A candidate is placed in the N.E. and asked if he has anything to give in the cause of charity etc.

I have just received my summons from my Lodge in the U.K. and it stated that the Province of Sussex has set a target of £500,000 (one million dollars plus) for the Royal Masonic Benevolent Institution for 1978. My own Lodge's target is for £2,500 (five thousand dollars plus). The Province of Sussex has just over 150 Lodges. This is one of many charities.

It is no good anybody saying to me that there is no need for charity in Welfare Canada. There is no greater welfare state than the U.K. and yet there are many cracks in the system.

We as Masons should lead society in the field and set a good example to mankind. It appears to me that many Masons worship the dollar and are afraid to part with it even for a good cause. It's not what you give but how you give.

I feel that if Masonry is to go from strength to strength it must change it's attitude here in Canada. I for one would hate it to diminish here. If I was not concerned I would not have taken the trouble to write this letter.

Masons should be charitable in **Every** sense of the word.

I would hate to think it is just a meeting place for the clan. I know it is very easy to criticise, but I can assure you I mean to be constructive in my criticism.

It is very difficult to become a member in the U.K. because we believe that numbers do not make a Lodge. Brethren tell me, "this is Canada", and are not prepared to accept changes for the better. I am only passing on my experiences for the good of Freemasonry.

I read R.W. Bro. R. W. Collier in the December Grand Lodge Bulletin (Is Masonry Relevant in a Modern World) and starts off by saying, "I ask you, do we really need Masonry today?" My answer to that is Yes, with a capital Y. It is needed more today in a world of greed and turmoil. As I said before we have to set an example.

I also believe if the ritual was carried out correctly and the meanings studied it would help. I found on visits that Lodges work in a slip shod fashion and to a new candidate he finds everybody works differently with signs etc. and not carried out distinctively. I'm not saying that I am perfect nor do I expect other Brethren to be, but I believe that a more serious approach be adopted to ritual.

My motto has been to do my best and work at it. If you put on good work you get visitors coming to that Lodge and take interest. I have noticed some Brethren do their work with sincerity, and I have thought, if only others would try! As I said, nobody expects perfection. Knowing it and doing it are two different things.

I had prepared in my mind not to write this letter, but I have been encouraged by a few Brethren who think as I do. I'm sorry to have had to express my views like this but I'm afraid something has to be done for the good of Freemasonry. I can assure you I mean well in writing this letter.

Best Fraternal Regards.

James Peapell.

THE MAGIC FLUTE

Several years ago at the Masonic Spring Workshop Bro. Bert G. van Helden, the Secretary of Zetland Lodge No. 83, presented a study of Mozart's, The Magic Flute. He included in the presentation some of the music of this opera and pointed out the Masonic implications in it. Mozart was a Mason and was very much under the influence of masonic practices and philosophy. The study was so well done and so thoroughly researched that Bro. van Helden repeated it several times at Lodge meetings.

The great movie director Bergman has brought Mozart's work to the screen and it is now playing in many theatres in the Province. It is a movie that masons should not miss and it would be well for them to read what Bro. van Helden had to say. Some of the critics obviously unacquainted with Masonry see little connection between the movie and Freemasonry. Perhaps Director Bergman himself was not conscious of it.

It is impossible for a Mason to sit through the movie and not be inspired by the Masonic implications. There are a number of parts in the opera that have been adjusted for the purposes of the screen play and the scenery is different than Mozart would have had it. At the same time the basic message of the fraternity comes through again and again. Certainly the struggle between Sarastro, the ruler of the brotherhood, and the Queen of the Night is significant. Bergman changes the Mozart story by making the Queen of the Night the wife of Sarastro. Bergman also treats the opera with a type of lightheartedness and in a playful manner which would be foreign to Mozart's purpose. The whole movie is pleasant and makes for a very enjoyable evening.

The mason will be impressed with the distinctive Masonic Philosophy. He will also be interested in the three trials through which the young man Prince Tamino has to go even to the point of going down into the very depths of death and being raised from darkness into light. When Tamino and his lady companion are presented to the assembled brotherhood they are blindfolded. At one point the vow of silence is extracted and later a solemn obligation is demanded. The altar and the arrangement of the hall in which the brotherhood meets will be very familiar to masons. Remembering the connection of Craft Masonry with the Royal Arch the mason will not be surprised to see the brothers dressed in red robes and the two young initiates clothed in blue.

To a mason the final scenes will be very impressive. The ruler of the Brotherhood is about to give up his throne to the new ruler Prince Tamino. It is a scene of sorrow because the brethren loved their ruler dearly. Also it is a scene of joy because a new and younger brother who has passed all the trials successfully is about to be clothed with the power to rule. Then Sarasto, the outgoing ruler, leaves his place of office and disappears into the crowd. It is reminiscent of the words in the general charge of which all of us need to be reminded over and over. The ideal of a Freemason is being described as man who has "a rare power of mind and who will not cease until he has accomplished his work, but who then, without pretension, will retire into the multitude, because he did the good act, not for himself, but for the cause of good."

Masons will want to see the Magic Flute and will enjoy it thoroughly but, in the enjoyment, they will not want to miss the essential message that Mozart so beautifully expresses and which Bergman has so delicately portrayed.

THE VISIT OF BRO. HARRY CARR

Last months Bulletin advised you that Bro. Harry Carr, a Past Junior Grand Deacon of the United Grand Lodge of England would be lecturing in Calgary and Edmonton.

Bro. Carr's topic will be

(A complete history of the ritual from its first beginnings in England.)

PLACE — DATE and TIME

Calgary Masonic Temple,
330 - 12th Avenue S.W., Calgary
2000 hours, Tuesday, May 25th, 1976.

Edmonton, Central Masonic Temple,
10318 - 100th Avenue, Edmonton
2000 hours, Thursday, May 27th, 1976.

The Grand Master, M.W. Bro. W.A. Milligan is pleased to invite you to meet and hear Bro. Carr.

YOUR TALENT

To each, God gives some talent,
More to some than the rest,
But He expects each of his children
To make his talents do their best.
You may think that you have no talent,
Not a trace of what was His,
Try your hand at helping others,
Perhaps that's where your talent is.

— Bert Letscher, N.J.

ZETLAND LODGE NO. 83

At its regular meeting in January Zetland Lodge honored an old time member V.M. Bro. Arthur Kennett in what was called "Arthur Kennett Night". After a brief business meeting the brethren retired to the banquet hall to join their ladies in a Wine and Cheese party to do honour to a brother who has not only been faithful to his lodge through many years but has also been a devoted and energetic member of the Committee for the Visitation of the Sick".

MOUNTAIN VIEW LODGE NO. 16

Dr. Grant McEwan, former Lieutenant Governor of Alberta, widely known for his interests in the history of the west and in conservation was the guest speaker at the February meeting of Mountain View Lodge. The business meeting was preceded by a dinner in the Lodge Room.

DYNAMIC LODGE NO. 96

At its February meeting Dynamic Lodge was honored by the Official Visit of the District Deputy Grand Master, R.W. Bro. W.E. Riome. At that meeting W. Bro. G.H. Taylor was presented with a sixty year bar to his Fifty Year Jewel.

CANADA LODGE NO. 165

Canada Lodge is celebrating its Twenty-fifth Anniversary. To mark this important event it combined an Anniversary Dinner with a Ladies Night. The event was held in Calgary's Heritage Park at the Wainwright Hotel on March 13.

CRESCENT LODGE NO. 87

W. Bro. D.H. Cooke, the Secretary of Crescent Lodge, has held that office with distinction for over ten years. At a recent meeting of that Lodge W. Bro. John Kemp, who was the Worshipful Master of Crescent Lodge in 1969, presented Brother Cooke with a Secretary's Jewel.

DID YOU FORGET?

The Masonic Higher Education Bursary Fund would appreciate donations from any brother who may have forgotten to send in his contribution. There is time to make the donation for this year's fund if you act right away. The Committee appreciates the excellent support that has been given to this fund so far and would like to be able to make this a record year.

MASONIC SPRING WORKSHOP

Plans are now complete for the Eleventh Masonic Spring Workshop which will be held at the Banff School of Fine Arts on April 30, May 1 and May 2. The theme is "Participation is Giving". This edition of the Bulletin will be the last before the Workshop takes place so this is our final opportunity to remind you. It is an event that no mason should miss. Get a registration form from your Lodge Secretary and send it in right away. Registration opens at 3:00 p.m. on Friday, April 30th.