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A POET FREEMASON

In the early days of 1936 Death sealed the lips of one of England's beloved writers and one of her illustrious Freemasons.

Rudyard Kipling, whose name is known to the limits of the Seven Seas of which he loved to write, was initiated under circumstances which are a living illustration of the universality of Masonry. It is recorded that when first he saw the "hieroglyphic bright", the officiating officer was a Hindu, when he was passed Fellow Craft, a Mohammedan, and when raised Master Mason, an Englishman.

He has celebrated his membership in a poem known to Masons everywhere "The Mother Lodge". He was made a Mason in Lodge Hope and Perseverance No. 782 under the English Constitution and for several years served his Lodge as Secretary.

When he left India, as correspondent for the Allahabad Gazette, and finally settled in England after many wanderings, he affiliated with Motherland Lodge No. 3861 in London and retained his membership there till the end.

The Mysteries of Masonry made a deep impression on Kipling and in his work numerous allusions to the Philosophy, legends and ritual of the Craft may be found. Frequently he speaks boldly, at other times more subtly and it is a delight to a Masonic reader to find some keen allusion which conveys an extra meaning to him but screened from the uninitiated.

Probably his most direct allusions are in the poem first referred to and in that fine short story "The Man Who Would Be King". In his later writings, however, we find numerous allusions to Freemasonry thinly disguised as the "Janeites" and in such volumes as "Rewards and Fairies" we find beautifully subtle allusion to more than one incident in our legendary history.

In spite of his imperialism, amounting at times almost to jingoism, Kipling writes for all men, but for none more than his brethren in Freemasonry and among them his love of the Fraternity will keep his memory ever green.

WAS IZAAK WALTON A MASON?

Izaak Walton was born in Stafford, England, August 9, 1593 and died December 15, 1683. It is curious to note these dates, a period that is particularly interesting to members of the Craft, because it was during this time that Masonry assumed the speculative form in which it exists at the present time. For instance, Izaak Walton refers to "My friend, Elias Ashmole, Esq.", and to his house "near to Lambeth, near London". It is more than likely that they were close friends with much in common, Ashmole being a celebrated antiquary and an author, who was made a Freemason on October 16, 1646, with several other gentlemen, and thirty-six years afterwards mentions that he attended a lodge in London where he was the senior fellow.

And then we may quote this paragraph from "The Compleat Angler":

"Piscator. Then first for the antiquity of angling, of which I shall not say much, but only this: some say it is as ancient as Deucalion's flood; others, that Belus, who was the first inventor of godly and virtuous recreations, was the first inventor of angling; and some others say (for former times have had their disquisitions about the antiquity of it) that Seth, one of the sons of Adam, taught it to his sons, and that by them it was derived to posterity; others say that he left it engraven on those pillars which he erected and trusted to preserve the knowledge of the mathematics, music, and the rest of that precious knowledge and those useful arts which by God's appointment or allowance and his noble industry, were thereby preserved from perishing in Noah's flood".

Yes, it is very probable that Elias Ashmole and Izaak Walton sat in lodge together.

WHY ARE YOU A FREEMASON?

How many brethren could give without hesitation, a clear straightforward answer to this question, asks the "Masonic News", London. Few, perhaps, could give as clear and intelligent an answer as did H.R.H. the Duke of Sussex, Grand Master from 1813 to 1843, through whose efforts the rival Grand Lodges of the Ancients and Moderns were united, thus forming the United Grand Lodge of England. Speaking at Sutherland, in 1839, he said:

"If brethren, when they enter into this Society, do not reflect upon the principles on which it is founded; if they do not act upon the obligations which they have taken upon themselves to discharge, all I can say is that the sooner any such individuals retire from the Order the better it will be for the Society, and the more creditable to themselves. When I first determined to ~~link~~ myself with this noble institution it was a matter of very serious consideration with me, and I can assure the brethren that it was a period when at least I had the power of well considering the matter, for it was not in the boyish days of my youth, but at the more mature age of twenty-five or twenty-six years. I did not take it up as a light and trivial matter, but as a grave and serious concern of my life. I worked my way diligently, passing through all the different offices of Junior and Senior Warden, Master of a Lodge, then Deputy Grand Master, until I finally closed it by the proud station which I have now the honour to hold. Therefore, having studied it, having reflected upon it, I know the value of the institution, and may I venture to say that, in all my transactions through life, the rules and principles laid down and prescribed by our Order have been, to the best of my faculties, strictly followed. And if I have been of use to Society at large it must be attributed, in a great degree to the impetus derived from Masonry."

MASONRY AND PEACE

"It is not by never ending conferences, which as a rule are nothing more than occasions for diplomats to wrangle and barter one selfish interest and another, but by the influence of millions of men throughout the world, who will not allow wars of self interest, and whose influence is so strong that long before the "crisis" arrives, they, by the influence of their mutual fellowship, can destroy the racial antagonism which is the sure breeding-ground of war.

"This, then, is the Great Aim of Freemasonry in the Twentieth Century. If it succeeds, it may yet save the world; if it fails, no paper League of Nations can do so."

J. M. S. Ward -

"Freemasonry: Its Aims and Ideals"

THE AIM OF MASONRY

The Aim of Masonry is not to make "Disciples" nor to secure a following of any certain system of thought, but rather to make men masters of their own right, capable of discerning for themselves the true course to be followed and strong to lead the way, in the age-long progress of the race, to the dimly discerned heights of enlightenment. Masonry does not teach by means of explanation, but by provocation to thinking. Its work for a man is not done until it has awakened him, aroused him, stimulated him to seek for the "light", more light, further light for himself, and until it has inspired him with courage and resolution to follow that light wherever it may lead him.

- Masonic News

A CREED

Do not keep the alabaster boxes of your love and tenderness sealed until your friends are dead. Fill their lives with sweetness. Speak approving, cheering words while their ears can hear them, and while their hearts can be thrilled and made happier by them; the kind things you mean to say when they are gone, say before they go. The flowers you mean to send for the coffins, send to brighten and sweeten their homes before they leave them. If my friends have alabaster boxes laid away, full of fragrant perfumes of sympathy and affection, which they intend to break over my dead body, I would rather they would bring them out in my weary and troubled hours, and open them, that I may be refreshed and cheered by them while I need them. I would rather have a plain coffin without a flower, a funeral without an eulogy, than a life without the sweetness of love and sympathy. Let us learn to amoint our friends beforehand for their burial. Post Mortem kindness does not cheer the troubled spirit. Flowers on the coffin cast no fragrance backward over life's weary way.

FREEDOM

Let no man foolishly imagine that freedom having been once gained needs no further defense. Every stuffed ballot-box, every crooked politician, every move toward sumptuary control by organized fanatic minorities, every blast of honeyed propaganda intent on narcotizing the public mind is an assault on liberty none the less truly because it is subtle and indirect. The Mason's task is clear. He is the world's great unflinching protagonist of freedom - freedom of thought, freedom of conscience, freedom of act - intelligent freedom, considerate freedom, orderly freedom.

R. A. Schwogler,
Grand Orator, Kansas.

LODGE NOTICES

Through the courtesy of the lodge secretaries, I have had an opportunity of reading many hundreds of lodge notices and as a result of my study thereof I am disposed to offer a word or two of advice to some of the Masters, who appear to be in danger of forgetting that what goes on in the lodge is of outstanding import and that the after-programmes are purely secondary. It matters not how eloquent a speaker is provided nor how many entertainers are on the dinner programmes, the Worshipful Master has failed in his duty to his lodge unless he has put the best of his efforts to the great task of making Masons in the only place they can be made - at the altars of Freemasonry. There is a place in Masonry - and a large place - for social mirth and entertainment, but Masters should not lose their sense of proportion in this matter. A Masonic lodge is an organization unique alike in its polity, its ideas, its dignity, its aims and its methods of attaining these aims. I suggest that we keep it so and that least of all is it necessary in drawing up either our lodge summonses or our social programmes to imitate the methods of any other organization or institution.

Proceedings -
Grand Lodge of Canada
in Ontario, 1934.

There is only one power, conscience in the service of justice; and there is only one glory, genius in the service of truth.

- Victor Hugo

ELECTIONEERING FOR OFFICE

It has been asked if it is proper for a brother to solicit support for election to an office in the Grand Lodge or a subordinate lodge or to allow brethren to solicit for and on his behalf.

Having spent some time looking up and reading what has been said about this matter in other Jurisdictions, I found much comment on the subject in one place or another.

Without any hesitation, we must say that such practices are not Masonic and should not be countenanced. A Masonic office should come as a reward for merit and faithful service and not as a matter of political preferment or as a result of solicitation. The privilege of free, voluntary, and intelligent choice must always be the rule and guide without electioneering. To allow such practice to continue will tend to create discord and ill feeling.

Proceedings -
Kansas 1935.

LODGE FINANCES

I maintain that responsibility for formulating and carrying out plans to improve the financial situation of a lodge rests upon the Worshipful Master, rather than upon the Secretary, whose duty it is to receive, and not collect, money due the lodge.

Proceedings -
Connecticut 1934.

Life's too interesting to dedicate it to one thing.