

GRAND LODGE BULLETIN

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YOUR SHARE

In a few days Masters and Wardens will be attending the Masonic Parliament, the Annual Communication of Grand Lodge.

To many, attendance may be the culmination of a year in office, perhaps an occasion for celebration of release from official cares and responsibilities. Conversely it may mean to others new duties and new resolutions for more and better services to the Fraternity.

To the latter comes a more secure sense of the worthwhile in Freemasonry. Each of us has some personal talent and in no organization with altruistic motives can he use it to better advantage than in the Craft.

It is quite unnecessary to be spectacular about that use. The pomp and ceremony of Grand Lodge, the dignity and decorum of its proceedings are all inspiring, but if the Master who attends the Communication for the first time will listen and inwardly digest he cannot fail to learn something of the enormous amount of painstaking and conscientious effort given to the affairs of Grand Lodge by men who are working quietly behind the scenes and all the year round.

On their work are the Lodge Masters asked to pass opinion and if they and all their brethren will consider and weigh that work they cannot fail to leave Grand Lodge with a better understanding of the concentrated effort, given willingly and gratuitously, to keep the Masonic machine in motion for the general good of all the Craft.

As preparation for appearance at Grand Lodge a perusal of the Proceedings of former years is useful. From these volumes will be learnt something of the nature of the various Committees and their work and an attentive reading coupled with some study of the questions on the agenda paper will assist in making a visit to Grand Lodge not only memorable but profitable and the expression of opinion, in the various votes and ballots, intelligent, considered and of value to all the brethren. That is your share as the accredited leader of a Chartered Lodge.

COMMERCIALISM IN FREEMASONRY

Commercialism in Freemasonry is a practice that cannot be too severely condemned. Deep rooted in my heart is the belief that the member of our Fraternity who uses its name or insignia in any form whatsoever to further his material gain, has entirely misconstrued the objects and aims of the Fraternity and is not entitled to respect, encouragement or patronage.

I cannot too emphatically disapprove the use of business cards with the name or names of Masonic organizations or symbolic designs. The placing of Masonic emblems on automobiles is exceedingly bad taste and has a tendency to cheapen the Fraternity, particularly in the minds of the profane, and generally speaking, I seriously doubt its effectiveness in trade.

The membership of our brotherhood is human in every respect and it is too much to hope that every member of the Craft could properly differentiate between its social features through associations and companionship and the suggested opportunities offered for increased business relations. However, we must keep in mind the high ideals of Freemasonry and demonstrate by precept and practice that self interest is the least of its objectives.

- Proceedings
Pennsylvania 1933.

".....If the parents of this country (America) follow all the advice given them, the next generation of Americans will be a race of physically perfect, efficient, book-fed, unimaginative, uninteresting, standardized, water-guzzling, contemptible smug and priggish little people.

ESPECIAL GRAND LODGE

This year will be marked by the holding of an Especial Grand Lodge on Tuesday, June 9th, opening at 3.00 o'clock sharp in the Central Masonic Temple, Edmonton.

Registration will be required of all members attending, commencing at 9.00 o'clock in the morning. Members are reminded that they will also be required to register for the Annual Communication the following day.

This Especial Grand Lodge has been called by the Grand Master to consider the revision of the Constitution, three copies of the proposed draft having been sent to each lodge in the jurisdiction. Delegates are requested to bring at least one of these copies with them to enable them to follow the discussion.

LIBRARY BOOKS

The Grand Secretary finds that a number of books borrowed from the circulating library have not yet been returned. Some of these have been out on loan since last Fall and other members who have applied for them have been greatly inconvenienced because they were not available.

Secretaries would oblige by seeing that these books are returned to the Grand Lodge Office at the earliest possible date.

"As an antidote to blues, treat yourself to something you can't afford. Fling down the gauntlet to the circumstance of debt! Challenge the future by making the first attack!"

FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS

Recently a newly admitted brother asked one of the principal officers of his lodge, one proficient in the ritual, the meaning of "Free and Accepted Masons" and was unable to get a satisfactory answer. No doubt the reader knows, but for the benefit of the few who may not be informed, a brief statement will suffice. During the fourteenth century, Masonry, as we know it, began to emerge from hazy tradition, with records and fairly definite dates. In the early organized craft the members were known as masons and were all operative. When a group was employed in the building of some great church they were bound by the ties of mutual interest. Their "loge" was situated close to their work, being usually where they ate their meals. They had a rule of secrecy and mutual support and each admitted member was required to "swere upon ye boke yt he sal trewly ande bysyli at his power hold and kepe holy all ye poyntes of yts forsayde ordinance." The free masons were free men, and masons of Gilds or Companies. Their right to exercise their craft and to sell their products depended on the freedom of their cities. The privilege of working as a mason was not accorded before the workman had been made free. The "free masons" would not work with others, even though skilled, if not free but called them "Cowans." This may explain a much used and little understood work. If they violated this rule and worked with an uninitiate the "loge" fined them heavily. In brief the view most generally held by authorities is that a free mason was one free from a guild and claimed exemption from any such control, or that they were emancipated skilled artisans who might travel and serve wherever and whenever they pleased, "To travel and work as such." Later members of lodges exercised the right of making

"free" masons and denied such freedom to "Cowans." "Masowmys of a loge" were the only ones recognized as free masons. To make this short, later others than operatives were admitted. The Masons Company of London, a prominent and influential organization, was early and active in this. On application and on certification of good moral character, others were "accepted." When they entered, the meetings were called "accoption," and the new members were called "Accepted Masons." So there you have it. From then on lodges were composed of "free" and "Accepted" masons. Now we use it to describe all members and almost as one phrase or word.

- Ernest R. Moore, P.G.M.

From - Iowa Grand Lodge Bulletin.

"COULDN'T SEE A THING"

I am going to relate a very interesting incident that occurred in the lodge at South Pass City many years ago. A man whose name was Amos was being passed to the degree of Fellowcraft, Charley Fogg was acting as Master. During the perambulation about the lodge room, the Master was reciting the 2nd verse, 8th Chapter of Amos: "And the Lord said unto me: Amos, what seest thou." At this juncture the candidate stopped the march, facing the east, said, "I don't see a darn thing, Charley!"

That is the trouble with many of our Brethren today, "They don't see a darn thing" in Masonry and they do not practise its teachings.

- Proceedings
Wyoming 1934.

FREEMASONRY UNDER ATTACKABROAD

We have heard vaguely, mostly from disconnected news dispatches or interested statements, that Freemasonry is under attack in various countries. Such attacks come from the right of reactionism and the left of radicalism. While these forces are opposed to each other, and do not in any case act as allies, they find a common object of hatred where Masonry is concerned. The regrettable conditions in Italy and Germany, where Masonry is proscribed and the Lodges dormant, has seemingly given fresh impulse to those in other countries who would destroy what ever stands for freedom of conscience. It is just now doubtful if the comparatively new but vigorous Masonry of Austria can long survive, as a hostile ecclesiasticism sustaining a weak dictatorship is dominant in that hard-pressed land. There is a greater surprise in finding the Grand Lodge "Alpina" of Switzerland preparing to fight for its life. There the referendum has been invoked, in effort to declare the fraternity inimical to the life of the nation and therefore to be banned. Those having acquaintance with European Masonry will agree that the craft of the Swiss republic is high-minded beyond the common, being foremost in good works, and standing as a model for strict adherence to the tried principles of the institution.

Nor is the list as yet exhausted. In Greece the Orthodox Church has lately violently attacked Masonry, using the ancient and long-exploded argument that in the Lodges a religion is secretly practiced, not according to the plan of salvation, as interpreted by the ecclesiastics. In Holland, also, where the Grand Lodge of the Netherlands has long occupied

a position of recognized probity and gained respect of the people, the Synod of the Evangelical Church launched attack. To this the Brethren wisely opposed a campaign of education, designed to give information as to the history, the methods, and the purposes of the Craft. Books dealing with the fraternity were placed in the public libraries and the aid of the press invoked. For the time being, at least, the enemies of Masonry seem to have failed.

In Spain, where the long period of Masonic persecution came to an end with establishment of the republic, there has been of late, a recrudescence of monarchial and ecclesiastical strength and influence. Again there are threats of a renewal of espionage and attacks upon the freedom of members of the Spanish Lodges, who have certainly not abused their new-found liberty. Similar threats are heard in Portugal.

It is evident that wherever the extreme of radicalism or that other of fascism has force and reaches to authority, their Freemasonry is doomed. There is in this a warning that might be taken to heart even by Masons of the English-speaking countries, where true freedom still exists for in those favoured lands there are elements working for the downfall of democratic government and destruction of all institutions that are for freedom of thought and liberty under the law.

-Report of Committee on
Correspondence.

Grand Lodge of California, 1934.

"Reputation is what people think about you, character is what you are."