

GRAND LODGE BULLETIN

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MASTER WHAT OF THE DAY?

In a few days many Lodges will be celebrating the annual feast of Saint John. A new race of Masters will be seated on the Throne of Solomon and the old race stepping aside in the procession of change.

Immediate Past Masters will be looking back over their year in office with quiet pride in the little stone each has added to the cairn of accomplishment or, perhaps, a trifle ruefully, shaking heads over opportunities missed. Installed Masters filled with the power so newly theirs will seek fresh fields to conquer. Year in, year out, the historic progress continues. "Time marches on", and we march with it. But whither?

At no point in the progress of our generation is there more reason to pause and consider the Plan than here and now. Arrogance and bloodshed, vindictiveness and sadism are abroad, the tenets of the Craft are thrown to the winds and worshippers of strange gods appear everywhere.

When within our Lodges common purpose is abandoned in the conflict of interests tacitly forbidden "on the square"; when sincerity, a foundation stone of all our labors is lost; when the "hand over back" grasps a dagger of deceit, albeit the whispered words are fair, then indeed is the mystic tie in grave danger of being torn asunder. Dictatorship and communism slowly come to death grips and already among the nations of the earth the Ancient Brotherhood is levelled in the dust.

Smug complacency has as little place in the minds of thinking Masons as bigotry and intolerance and forewarned is forearmed. The danger may seem far away; in truth it is with us now.

Crisis comes but Freemasonry has ever stood the test. Will the new race of Masters, grasping the gavels of 1937, be equal to their task?

A. M. M.

THE PRESENT NEED

No organization in these days can justify itself solely in terms of its past. Nor is it sufficient for members of the Masonic Fraternity to certify to the glorious career of more than two hundred years as its present "raison d'etre." Freemasonry has survived because mankind has needed in all ages the efforts of the fraternity to thwart the enemies of liberty, establish beneficial governments, develop a civic consciousness throughout the population, and practice the virtues of brotherly love, relief and truth.

Said Goldsmith:

"Ill fares the land, to hast'ning ills
a prey,
Where wealth accumulates and men decay."

We are of opinion that our country needs Freemasonry today as strongly as ever before. In fact we have had few periods in our history more critical than the present one. Land marks of Masonry are revered by us all, but land marks of government, civilization and liberty seem on the verge of being swept away in an inundation of the Nile of "isms" which flood the contemporary scene.

And the cry is "But the times have changed". So they have - but human nature has not changed nor will the need for these ancient landmarks ever be eliminated this side of the millennium. Material prosperity purchased at the price of surrendering all personal and group freedom becomes bought at too dear a price.

- Virginia Masonic Herald.

"There is also a Charity of thought and action; that thought which constrains us to recognize and appreciate true values in others."

DARE TO RIGHT

Citizenship is a sacred heritage for every man and Mason. Through it the will of the people is expressed and the responsibility of government fixed.

The actual need for sober and intelligent analysis of the troublesome problems of the day was never greater nor individual emphasis more imperative.

No man who reads and thinks can be unmindful of the spirit of intolerance that is now rampant, nor the distrust being engendered from the public forum and printed page.

Freemasons, alert and conscious of their rightful position in society and cognizant of their responsibilities will not be swept off their feet by any emotional display, for we are supposed to be men of courage who dare to do right.

The perpetuation of ideals free from entangling influences must be extended by every honest effort.

- Scottish Rite Sun.

THE WARNING NOTE

Because we do not hear of sensational movements in Masonry it is not to be assumed that there is no particular activity in the depths. Vast changes are impending in all affairs of life and Masonry is a vital part of life. We need men at the head of things who know about these problems. The time server is always out of place; never more so than now. A small intelligently led group tends to take on the nature of invincibility.

- Orphans' Friend & Masonic Journal, (North Carolina)

THE AIM OF FREEMASONRY

(Condensed from an address by V.W. Bro. Hensley Henson, D.D., Bishop of Durham, at a celebration of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Durham.)

I distinguish three conditions which have favored the growth of Freemasonry in Great Britain and which do, I think, disclose its essential principles. These conditions are: 1. Freedom of civic life. 2. Abstinence from party politics. 3. Loyalty to the moral law as it is presented in the Bible.

There is no surer test of civic liberty than the citizen's freedom to enter into association with his fellow citizens to promote objects of common concern. Despots, ancient and modern, are ever suspicious of every form of combination. They suspect that behind respectable pretenses — there may be lurking disaffection, sedition and potential revolt. It is only in communities which are united and stable that such associations can be safely tolerated. Freedom is the essential condition of Freemasonry as we have it in English self-government — loyally, actively, benevolently and proudly but decisively religious.

Not the least valuable of the services which the Masonic Brotherhood rendered to the community was bound up with its abstinence from party politics. Thereby Freemasonry enabled partisans to meet on a plane where their normal differences were confessedly unimportant, and thus it mitigated the suspicions and misunderstandings which partisanship tended to create by the mutual sympathy which fellowship never failed to generate between men of goodwill.

Accordingly Freemasonry is today an influence within the nation making always for social cohesion, for unity of sentiment, for social justice, for active charity. It bridges the chasms

which sever classes and interests and upholds the ideal of a genuine and operative fraternity.

Let but the Masonic Brotherhood hold to its professed principles, constant loyalty to its belief in the moral law, which is not only the first duty of man but also the only security for the happiness which is truly sound and it may face the threatening future with the certainty that the record of its not inglorious past will be continued on the still wider areas of effort and triumph.

- "The Freemason" London.

CRITICISM IS EASY

Criticism is so easy that anybody can work at it and a lot of people do. Some criticize when they know nothing about that which they are criticizing. When criticism is honest and there is back of it a knowledge of the thing criticized, and a sincere purpose that brings to light facts that should be known, there may be justification in it. But there are times when criticism, with a desire to expose and profit by it personally, is cruel and selfish in the extreme. Anyone who desires things is subject to the critic, whether the critic knows anything about what he criticizes or not, and often, too often, those who do criticize are reckless about marshalling facts before they begin an attack.

Still there are some Masons who do little else than criticize.

"The Victorian
Craftsman"
(Australia)

SPECIAL NOTICE

A limited number of extra copies of this bulletin may be obtained from the Grand Secretary at Five Cents Each.

HAS FREEMASONRY GAINED BY
YOUR MEMBERSHIP?

What has Masonry gained by your membership? You have been permitted to enjoy its privileges and drink at the fountain it has provided for you. What have you given in return? Is one human heart happier to-day because of a good deed you have done in the name of Masonry?

Freemasonry gives you a greater incentive to higher thoughts and nobler deeds because of a greater knowledge of your responsibilities and of the history and teachings of the institution.

Far from being a sectarian institution, Freemasonry preaches a religion that is free and all-embracing. It is a doctrine to which the man who has any religious belief at all can subscribe with a clear conscience.

Masonry has no connection with superstition, the product of ignorance. The Craft urges all to seek the light and certainly light is not to be found fostering that which has been revived from a period of darkness. Gradual education has brought man to a realization of the folly of superstition. Charms and witchcraft have been banished by science and enlightenment.

The true Mason must first have been prepared in his heart, and he who is not made a Mason there, will never be made one in the Lodge, no matter how careful he may go through all the forms and ceremonies, there is no room adjoining the Lodge in which he can be prepared properly if he has not previously been prepared in his heart. Better far add ten who have been made Masons than a hundred who have merely joined the Order.

- South Australian Freemason.

WHY AM I A MASON?

In the first circular of the current term issued by the committee on Masonic Research & Education, the brethren are invited to answer the question forming the caption of this column. Believing that the Committee should answer its own questions, Wor. Bro. A.E. Ottewell, a member of the Committee, has prepared some answers, the first of which appears below:

The question is fundamental, for unless the individual can answer conscientiously for himself neither his Lodge nor Grand Lodge can for the Craft. There must be reason for the faith in each one of us and as a primary test of that faith every thinking brother will attempt an answer if only to himself.

WHY AM I A MASON

I am a mason because Masonry teaches harmony and concord. Many of the social institutions of the day of whatever kind tend to promote division and strife. There is a great need for some agency which gives men of good will an opportunity to find grounds on which they can agree and unite. Masonry lays down only three fundamental principles on which members of many creeds, races and political parties can without question agree. In a strife-torn world this is a priceless service. Therefore, I am a mason because I believe the institution promotes harmony among its members and inculcates the essentials of social virtue, Friendship, Love and Truth.

A. E. O.

THE SEASON'S GREETINGS TO ALL OUR
BRETHREN WHERESOEVER DISPERSED.