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THE GRAND MASTER'S NEW YEAR MESSAGE

"Ring in the nobler modes of life
With sweeter manners, purer laws."

"Ring in the valiant man and free
The larger heart, the kindlier hand!"

Man in his wisdom has accepted the orderly rounds of the universe to mark the passage of his life period. And so we are now observing the entry into a new round of the sun from which we receive all light and life. We call it a New Year.

Back in the dim distant days some one conceived the thought that the passage of the old year was like turning a page in a book. The blurs and the blots and even the torn bits of the old page could be put out of sight with the covering of it by a beautifully clean new page without blemish. But in order that the new page should not be smeared like the old, firm resolutions were entered into, that old ways and old sins should be abandoned. And so it is, my Brother, that this is the time of making "GOOD RESOLUTIONS".

As men and Masons, therefore, may we now resolve to be more Generous and more Kindly, and to steadfastly face the vicissitudes of life, more mindful of the laws of the Great Sovereign Power and Ruler of the Universe, from Whom all Blessings flow.

As Grand Master I extend to the Lodges, Fraternal Greetings and Best Wishes for a Prosperous New Year. But as a Brother Mason may I extend sincerely the right hand of fellowship in renewal of the ties that bind us in Masonic Brotherhood, trusting that the lessons of the past will enable us to use the opportunities of this New Year with benefit to ourselves and the Craft at large.

V. H. MACAULAY,

Grand Master.

"MERIT YOUR TITLE TO OUR PRIVILEGES"

In all altruistic institutions there can be found a faithful group of members ever willing to give time, talent and capacity in the service of the ideals the group represents.

In no institution is this more apparent than in Freemasonry. Yet seldom does the average lodge member give a passing thought to the enormous amount of work performed in his Lodge, his District and in Grand Lodge, by the faithful few working silently and gladly for love of the Craft. Theirs is the driving force of the Fraternity and theirs the accomplishment which keeps smooth the pathway of the individual Craftsman.

In the Lodge the Master must plan for his Brethren in the District, the District Deputy Grand Master must keep his finger on the pulse of the Lodges he serves and in Grand Lodge the numerous activities represented by Standing Committees demand service of a high order. To the Grand Master falls the lot of investing almost the whole of his leisure time to the business of his honored office.

That the service is so willingly and so freely given is the best evidence that Freemasonry attracts and holds men who have not only the generosity to give freely of their services but the knowledge skill and ability to perform these services and say little about them.

Too often the service is taken for granted, accepted as a matter of course scarce worth comment. Herein lies a weakness by no means confined to Freemasonry. No man enjoys doing unappreciated work and the word of thanks which might mend and keep his enthusiasm is too infrequently given.

Then too, there are men, and again Freemasonry has her share whose main function in life seems to be to criticize. No creative worker worth his salt will resent helpful criticism but he will resent the attentions of the member who, doing nothing himself, appears to be waiting harpy-like for the worker to do something so that the critical chorus of destruction may be called upon for its sour and carping aria.

The moral seems plain. If in passive acceptance of all that comes their way lies the satisfaction of the majority of our Brethren, at least let that majority be thankful for the generosity of the few, speak the word of thanks in timely season, and refrain from hair-splitting on non-essentials, mean-spiritedness and narrow faultfinding. Thus may be saved to Freemasonry many a shining mind and willing hand now drifting to goals where unselfish service is more valued.

A. M. M.

IS IT POSSIBLE TO DEFINE OR ENUMERATE THE LANDMARKS?

(A matter of small moment, says Joseph E. Morcombe, Editor of The Masonic World, San Francisco, in the Masonic Craftsman's Monthly Symposium of Masonic topics.)

To those of us who for any considerable time have been in close touch with the perennial subjects of Masonic discussion, any mention of the Landmarks is as the smell of battle to the veteran warrior. Now we are supposed to consider the question of whether it is possible to define and enumerate the Landmarks of the Craft. One has no doubt that the young brother, but lately received into the Fraternity, would without hesitation declare that Landmarks are things of great value, and, therefore, are definite as to place and number. For how otherwise could they serve to delimit the fraternal estate or warn off all transgressors?

The same youngster has heard successive Masters enjoined to preserve the Landmarks and to see to it that in their Lodges there shall be no violating of the sacred markers. The officer being installed solemnly promises as required. Yet it is safe to say that neither the installee or installor, nor any brother in attendance has even a remote idea of what manner of goods or gear is referred to. The fact, the composition, size, weight, number and purpose of Landmarks, as so often mentioned, are of the most recondite of Masonic secrets, of which, perhaps, "future ages may find out the right."

For the curious enquirer there is a wide range of choice, both as to range and definition. The lists are numerous, and they catalogue from two to something over eighty Landmarks, as set forth by the self-appointed authorities. With each one of these suppositious things the welfare and perhaps the perpetuity of the institution is fatefully bound.

We all know there are certain matters that reach almost to the status of dogma, and which are of general acceptance among us. We could hardly imagine Masonry as existing without these as basic. Yet the fact remains that not one of these is of universal acceptance. We bridge the difficulty by easy declaration that any who deny our accepted Landmarks are irregular Masons and not within the pale. But strong arguments can be adduced in support of the proposition that we ourselves have departed from the original plan of the Craft, and that the heretics, as has often happened, have rather the best of it in this contention.

After all, Landmarks are of value only if the estate to be by them delimited is permanent in all of its boundaries. If it be enlarged by accretion, purchase or successful thievery, the former metes and bounds can have no other than a historical or curious interest. There is no claimed Landmark in all the lists but has been changed in substance or modified in intention. Thus they neither answer to the test of time immemorial or universal usage, or the whims or prejudices of those for the time in control have prompted Grand Lodge action.

The interminable arguments over Landmarks make profitless reading for the student. To add thereto would be a weariness of the flesh and distasteful to the spirit. The many heated controversies of the past over such a subject rank in importance with the quarrel that divided Abdera, over the shadow of an ass, or that other celebrated debate, which eventuated in civil war, between the Big and Little Indians in the kingdom of Liliput.

Some of us have ranged quite freely in and about the fields of Masonry, and never yet have been tripped up nor even stubbed our toes over grass-grown Landmarks. Nor will we, at this late day, go in search for intangibles when so much remains of real work to be done for the Craft.

WHY AM I A MASON?

(The second answer to the question propounded
by the Committee on Research and Education.)

There is abroad in the world to-day a widespread cynicism. This takes the form very often of impugning the motives of men, no matter how worthy they may be or how devoted to the service of humanity. How often do we hear it said, "Every man has his price." The only certain thing is that the man who gives honest assent to such a proposition thereby announces that he is for sale. It is his own character that he defames. I AM A MASON because Masonry teaches that honor, honesty, fair-dealing are still a common possession of humanity. In other words, our Order proclaims in no uncertain terms the whole duty of man is "to deal justly, love mercy and walk humbly with the Great Architect of the Universe."

A. E. O.

THE GRAND MASTER RETURNS

The Grand Master returned to the jurisdiction on December 18th, after an exceedingly pleasant trip to Edinburgh, Scotland, where he participated with many distinguished brethren from other Masonic Jurisdictions in presenting fraternal greetings and congratulations to the Grand Lodge of Scotland on the completion of two hundred years as a Grand Lodge, which they marked by this Bi-Centenary Celebration.

Bro. H.R.H. the Duke of York, now His Majesty King George VI, was regularly installed as Grand Master Mason of the Grand Lodge of Scotland on this occasion.

During the week there were many ceremonies and social functions and it is hoped that in the near future our Grand Master will have opportunities to give the Lodges some account of this wonderful Masonic gathering.

NEW CONSTITUTION

The New Constitution is now in force and it would be well if Masters would immediately take steps to see that their By-laws are in accordance with several clauses which have been amended. Prominent amongst these are the clauses relating to Life Membership, Suspension N.P.D., Affiliations and Dimits. With regard to the first, lodges can by by-law charge any fee they deem advisable, but for all Life Members made now the annual dues to Grand Lodge must be paid, the only Grand Lodge fee for registration and certificate being \$1.00. In Affiliations, the dimits or certificates of standing filed with the application, must be sent into the Grand Lodge office.

- Grand Secretary.