

GRAND LODGE BULLETIN

GRAND LODGE OF ALBERTA - A.F. AND A.M.

Vol. 3

March 1938

No. 7

THINGS GREAT AND SMALL

In a recent book, "A Saga of the Seas" by Philip B. McDonald, appears two illustrations of the value of little things. When the first Transatlantic telegraph cable was completed it was burnt out in the belief that heavy currents were necessary for the tremendous distance across the ocean.

When the second cable was laid it was known that very small currents only were required. To prove the point one technician made a battery from a silver thimble, a fragment of zinc and a few drops of sulphuric acid. The current generated was sufficient to send the message.

Not to be outdone another engineer sent his compliments across the Atlantic "with a battery composed of a gun cap with a strip of zinc, excited by a drop of water, the simple bulk of a tear!"

In Freemasonry we are too much inclined to think that the big parade is what counts and forget that the "simple bulk of a tear" from the sincere Mason is what keeps the mass moving. The Mason who has caught the gleam, be it even a pin point of the flame, is the one who gains most from Freemasonry.

During the recent installation season we participated actively and passively in the annual flow of soul which attends the time-honored ceremonies. We are still pondering the effect. Notably we observed that attendance was lower than in former years and most notably we observed no single suggestion for any march on our present problems.

We have said before that there appears to be little use in perpetuating an institution for its own sake and oceans of congratulations and back-slappings are empty reward for small accomplishment.

We venture to suggest again that it might be an excellent exercise if the Master and officers of each Lodge should indulge in a little heart searching in an endeavor to find out just what they are trying to do and having found that, examine the record of their progress.

It is axiomatic that the individual is most interested in himself and his own affairs, but he is a poor Freemason who has no friendly word or friendly act, without hope of reward, for his neighbor. These things are what make fraternity and understanding. When they disappear Freemasonry is in danger of degenerating into empty form where men compete for honors to be worn in the sunlight of Lodge ceremony but thrown aside when the closing gavel falls.

Look, then, to the small things and from them build the great.

A.M.M.

NORTH STAR LODGE NO. 4 CELEBRATES ITS JUBILEE

In notifying us of the forthcoming Jubilee of North Star No. 4 at Lethbridge, the Secretary mentions some of the details of the celebration which we believe are of more than local interest. The following extract from Bro. Faunch's letter will explain:

"We anticipate having our first Worshipful Master, Right Worshipful Bro. Thomas MacPherson, with us together with his first candidate who is still a member of the Lodge in good standing. Both have signified their intention of being present.

"The Right Worshipful Brother is eighty-eight years old to-day (February 12th). He was also the first Master of Medicine Hat Lodge No. 2. He was Junior Grand Warden of the Grand Lodge of Manitoba in 1889 and Senior the following year.

"He drove the first locomotive into Lethbridge and his first candidate Bro. Ben J. Burrill, was his fireman on that occasion, the year being 1886. In 1885 he was sent to Lethbridge to assist in moving troops from that city to Edmonton by water. The S.S. Alberta, owned by the Galt Coal Mines was used for the trip, R.W. Bro. MacPherson being engineer on the boat. He was initiated in St. John's Lodge No. 4, Winnipeg on June 4th, 1879.

"He celebrated his 61st wedding anniversary on September 21st, 1937 and he and his good wife are still keeping house without assistance."

The real test of the "standing" of the Craft lies in the character and conduct of its members, the example they set in the community, the manner in which they discharge their duty to their neighbors, the support they give to movements for the uplift of their fellow-men; in a word, their influence for good. — London Freemason.

THE CARDINAL VIRTUESPRUDENCE

This brief discussion is devoted to the third cardinal virtue, namely, prudence. According to the fundamental meaning of the word, one possessing this virtue, that is the prudent man, is one who is able to form wise judgments. He will be able to decide what is worthy of imitation and what is to be avoided. When something is to be attempted he will be able to plan wisely for the task in hand.

Again an illustration from the military field will serve. A strong point has to be captured. One way is to make a frontal attack, usually a costly one. An able commander will always explore the possibility of a turning or flanking movement. Such is the part of prudence. This does not mean that when faced by a hard duty we are to sit down and say it cannot be done. It does mean that

"avoiding fear on the one hand and rashness on the other we shall steadily persevere" after having counted the cost.

Progress is rarely an uninterrupted movement. One of the best illustrations is that of the rising tide. This is almost always seen in a succession of small waves. Each wave comes in, then falls back part way. At times a stronger wave comes in which reaches a new high mark. It in turn recedes, often to be succeeded by several others which do not reach its best level, until presently another one comes in and establishes a new high mark. But the general movement is forward.

Prudence tells us when the time has come to bend rather than break, and when resolutely to push forward. Combined with fortitude it warns us when we must consolidate our position and grimly hang on in hope of a better day.

Some of us are so made up that we resemble the goat which tried to butt a railway engine, concerning which one observer remarked, "I admire his courage but don't think much of his judgment".

Prudence has been highly regarded from time immemorial. All languages have exhortations and proverbs based upon it. A familiar English one is "Look before you leap".

Nearly twenty-five hundred years ago the Greek philosopher Epicurus wrote:

"The greatest good is prudence, a more precious thing even than philosophy; from it spring all the other virtues".

A. E. Ottewell.

SWISS FREEMASONRY VINDICATED

As we go to press, we learn in our capacity as Chairman on Foreign Correspondence, that the plebiscite on Freemasonry in Switzerland has resulted in favor of the Order.

From the report of the Swiss Grand Lodge Alpina dated January 1938 we extract the following:

"After a struggle which lasted four years against a campaign of most unscrupulous libel and defamation, Swiss Freemasonry has gained, by popular votation, a brilliant victory over its opponents. By 515,000 against 235,000 the Swiss citizens have rejected a Bill launched by Nazi and Fascist agents tending to the dissolution of Freemasonry in Switzerland.

"The popular votation having given a result which surpassed our keenest hopes, we are now at liberty again to pursue our mission in peace and harmony.

"We much appreciate the numerous messages of sympathy received from all parts of the world. This proves once more that the idea of the spiritual chain of Brotherhood tied around the Universe is an aim, to which more than ever the efforts of all Brethren should converge."

BRAZILIAN GOVERNMENT RESTORES MASONIC ACTIVITIES

The Government of Brazil has withdrawn its decree, issued October 23rd, 1937, provisionally closing all Masonic Lodges there.

The Masonic Bodies in Brazil, represented by Grand Commander Dr. Joaquim M. Sampaio of the Supreme Council Thirty Third Degree of that country, proved to the satisfaction of the Government authorities that Masonry is organized for constructive purposes, inculcating patriotism, obedience, and loyalty to the duly constituted government, and upholding the importance and value of education as one of the greatest considerations in the welfare of the people.

In his communication, Grand Commander Sampaio expressed the hope that the welfare of the Masonic Institution in Brazil would be vouchsafed and that never again would the Craft experience the difficulties that have recently confronted it as the result of false accusations.

COMMITTEE ON MASONIC RESEARCH AND EDUCATION

EDMONTON, February 18th, 1938.

Circular No. 2:

To the Worshipful Masters, Officers and Members of
All Lodges under the Jurisdiction of the
Grand Lodge of Alberta, A.F. & A.M.

Brethren:

For reasons of economy, your Committee on Masonic Research and Education decided, with the courteous consent of the Editor of the Grand Lodge Monthly Bulletin, M.W. Bro. A.M. Mitchell, to incorporate this circular in the Bulletin as the best means of achieving a wide circulation among the Brethren.

We regret to report that the response to our previous circular has not been very gratifying in the following respects:

- (a) Although the members of the Craft were invited to submit biographical material dealing with the lives of brethren who have made outstanding contribution to the Craft in Alberta, no such material was received.
- (b) The quest for material interesting to Masons and the establishing of a museum has not met with success, no material being sent in.
- (c) The demand for educational material has decreased considerably and has not been as great as we feel it should be.

It may be that the work your Committee is doing is not meeting the needs of the constituent lodges and that the lodges are carrying on educational work adapted to their particular needs. If this is the case, the Committee would like to have information which can be used in compiling a report for the next communication of Grand Lodge.

Any helpful suggestions or information would be gladly welcomed by your Committee. Please forward all communications to the Secretary, Mr. A. Blair Paterson, 828 Tegler Building, Edmonton.

Yours fraternally,
A. West
CHAIRMAN.

Worry is the thin stream of fear trickling through the mind. If encouraged, it cuts a channel into which all thoughts are drained.

— The Victorian Craftsman.