



Grand Lodge Bulletin

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MERRY ENGLAND

A recent article which appeared in the California Freemason gives an interesting summary of Freemasonry in England. Being a past Grand Steward (1940-41) of the United Grand Lodge of England, and a past Master of one of the oldest lodges in that country, I am tempted to elaborate upon some of the ancient history of the Craft as I know it.

My mother lodge was the Lodge of Emulation, No. 21 in the Register of the United Grand Lodge of England, and I was installed in the Master's chair in January, 1940, which position I occupied for a year. I would like to interpose a small personal reminiscence here. In January 1941, during the ceremony of installing my successor in the Master's chair, the air raid sirens sounded, and shortly afterwards the anti-aircraft guns started up, mingled with the explosions of bombs dropping. What with the noise, and the shaking of the building—and myself—the ritual of the ceremony was not exactly as word perfect as I would have wished it to be! I was told afterwards that any lapses were undetected by the rest of the Lodge members. The "All Clear" sounded in time for us all to enjoy our Installation Dinner afterwards. All during the upsetting and trying years of the war, the Lodge met regularly every month and not a meeting was missed.

The earliest record of this Lodge is in 1710, and is derived from a Warrant of Confirmation granted by Grand Lodge on the 15th of March in that year. This, however, was not recognized, and officially a "Warrant of Confirmation under the Seal of Masonry" was granted to the Lodge on the 15th May, 1723. It appeared as No. 7 in the first engraved list of regularly constituted Lodges and met in the Griffin Tavern in Newgate Street, London. In 1923 the Lodge celebrated its bicentenary, and the Grand Master graced us with his presence.

In 1717, four of the old Lodges operating in London combined for the purpose of forming an English Grand Lodge, but it was only in the second decade of the nineteenth century that this and another rival "Grand Lodge" amalgamated, and the United Grand Lodge of England was form-

ed and continues as such at the present time. In these early days, the old Lodges bore no distinctive numbers, and were without names, and each was associated with the name of the tavern in which its meetings were held.

The members of the original Lodge who met at the Griffin Tavern, moved to the Mourning Bush Tavern in St. Martin's le Grand, in London, in 1735, and later combined with the Lodge which was meeting at the Constitution Coffee House, in Covent Garden. Afterwards it became known as the Lodge of Emulation. It was not until 1832 that it was given the number "21" and as such it has been known ever since, and has met and is still meeting regularly.

Its ritual has been adopted by most London Lodges and is known as the "Emulation Working."

The Lodge of Emulation is known as a "Red Apron Lodge", which means it can (and must, if this privilege is to be continued) appoint one of its members to be a Grand Steward for one year. This honour was granted to the Lodge for donating the sum of Twenty five guineas to Grand Lodge in the year 1732, when Grand Lodge found itself in monetary difficulties. This amount today is equivalent to about £70, but at that time it was worth much more, relatively, and this doubtful honour is shared by only twenty other old established English Lodges.

I have stated that this is a "doubtful" honour, as the Grand Stewards are responsible for the cost of the yearly Grand Lodge Banquet, and for the entertainment afterwards. As well over one thousand Masons sit down to this feast, comprising at least ten courses with different wines for each, the outlay for this festive occasion is costly, and bears a ridiculous comparison to the fit of twenty-five guineas to Grand Lodge in 1732.

After World War I, Grand Lodge issued an appeal called the "Million Memorial Fund" and this was freely and generously answered by the brethren. As a result, a stately, beautiful building, Freemason's Hall, was erected in the heart of the City of London, known among Masons as the "Masonic Million Memorial Temple." It is dedicated to those Masons who gave their lives for

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EDITORIAL

During the past two or three years there has developed a greatly appreciated "pen" friendship between the writer and Bro. Cleve R. Mills, P.D.G.I.W., and Secretary of Lodge Fellowship of New South Wales, and in the current notice of his Lodge appears the following, titled "Perseverance".

We must not hope to be mowers
And gather the ripe gold ears,
Unless we have first been sowers,
And watered the furrows with tears.
It is not just as we take it,
This mystical world of ours;
Life's harvest will yield as we make it,
A harvest of thorns or of flowers.

Sometimes, perhaps, we are prone to expect a great deal too much from life, simply as a right, whereas if we were to give the matter the rather deeper thought that it deserves it might well become apparent to us that the privileges and pleasures gained are far sweeter if we put worthwhile effort into the game of life in an endeavour to secure the fulfillment of our desires.

It is not much different with our enjoyment of Freemasonry that of life in its other aspects and if we are to obtain all of the benefits that come from our Masonic association to the sincere and enthusiastic adherent of the Craft there can be little question but that we must make a real effort to give to Masonry before we can reasonably expect to get something of value.

Doubtless many of our members recall with the greatest pleasure occasions in which the Lodge has taken upon itself the provision of Masonic charity to an ill or needy Brother and the feeling of deep satisfaction that results; we are told from time to time that in Grand Lodge there are funds available for the relief of distress and we occasionally hear complaints that not enough of the funds are put in actual use for the purpose for which they have been assembled.

Those who are familiar with the work of the committee charged with the effective use of the funds know that the members are unfailingly considerate and generous when proper application is made; there is an obligation on the part of every Lodge in this Grand Jurisdiction to search their own area for members of their families who, by reason of well justified pride, hesitate to request assistance and to make sure that no Brother and no member of his family or, indeed, for that matter, no deserving person shall be allowed to go without the necessities of life if it is in the power that is vested in our great fraternity to alleviate distress.

There is no more genuine satisfaction than reaping the harvests of genuine and responsible extension of true benevolence.

S.C.H.

THE DEBUNKER NEED NOT AFFECT OUR RELIGIOUS BELIEFS —

Speaking to a gathering of Freemasons at the Annual Service at Temple Israel, South Africa, Rabbi Walter Blumental, B.A., M.A.H.L., addressing the representatives of four Constitutions, referred to the work of the "debunker" in regard to religion and Freemasonry. He said:—

Sir Francis Drake, we all learned at school, was playing a game of bowls when informed of the approach of the Spanish Armada. His reply, that there's time to finish the game, and lick the Spaniards too, or words to that effect, is held up to us as an example of the unruffled courage of a truly brave man. In our Bible Classes we are taught that 600,000 Israelites participated in the exodus from Egypt, and that God parted the Red Sea for them, subsequently drowning the Egyptians who attempted to follow them, as punishment for the latter's presumptuous arrogance.

Stories like these, and their implications, become firmly lodged in our memory, and we often quote them in order to prove a point, or reassure ourselves at a time of crisis. And then, to our surprise, and often shock, we discover that someone has shown that the game of bowls did not exist at the time of Drake, that the oases in the Sinai Desert could not possibly have supported more than 600 people, or that the children of Israel crossed the Red Sea on a swampy path which merely bogged down the heavy Egyptian war chariots.

We have come across the work of the man who is symptomatic of our unromantic age—the debunker. Let us not be harsh on him. He does not shatter our cherished notions maliciously. He does so in a spirit of detached scientific inquiry, perhaps unmindful of the possible psychological consequences of his findings. Or perhaps he merely wishes to verify the truth of a particular story, and finds that, as it is popularly presented, it is not factual. Or, to him, it may simply be a matter of sweeping away "popular misconceptions", and establishing what actually happened.

Sometimes the debunker's work is valuable. Where would our programme of space exploration, weather forecasting, long range communications be, if we still clung to the notion of a flat earth which is the centre of the universe? On the other hand, we tend to react negatively when the debunker focuses his attention on those matters which have a bearing on our religious beliefs. Many of us either don't accept scientific theories in regard to the origin of the universe or evolution, thereby flouting the facts of scientific progress, or we accept them, and find ourselves questioning the role of God in these and other matters, sometimes ending up by rejecting Him.

I put it to you, my friends, that we need not under any circumstances fear the work of the debunker and its possible consequences, provided we understand the nature of what he is debunking. Religion, or ethics, or morality, are not based on science. Their foundation is faith,

goodwill — call it what you will — and that cannot be scientifically disproved.

In religion, it is not the story or event which is related, that counts and has meaning. It is what that story teaches in the sphere of life values that is significant.

Freemasonry is defined as "a peculiar system of morality, veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols." Religion, and many of its teachings, may be delineated in the same phraseology.

Those who are regarded as the founders of a religion, and those who interpreted their teachings, did not, and do not necessarily speak in simple terms. Their genius lies in the fact that they illustrated their teachings with symbolic narratives applicable to any day and age, not only that in which they lived. Stories of miracles, angels, demons, superhuman feats, endure from age to age, their teaching untarnished by the dross of the passing centuries. They are not limited by time or place, and neither is the truth which they convey. The exaggeration of allegory, the unscientific statement, both have their place in religious teaching and Masonic philosophy, in order to bring home more forcefully that the eternal verities cannot be debunked, no matter how much the story illustrating it is debunked. In addition, the story, the allegory, the symbol are necessary to religious thought and teachings. The unsophisticated intellect cannot easily grasp an abstract notion or learn to have faith in an abstract ideal. Such things must be conveyed to it by concrete illustrations from life, or by means of hypothetical events which are larger than life, but which it can accept. The more questing spirit comprehends that the allegory is a narrative which is to be understood symbolically, and makes it his business to ferret out its deeper significance. Thus the allegory serves to put a point across to everyone — in varying degrees of intensity, admittedly — but it has universal appeal, makes universal contact, and communicates its message universally, which few or no other methods of expression are able to do.

The end result of learning by means of allegory is that all those who accept it, whether literally or metaphorically, benefit spiritually by the value so acquired. This is the important thing. The faith, the conviction of the God-fearing and God-loving person is induced thereby, it is supported firmly by his belief, and it enables him the better to understand religious, moral and ethical values, and carry them over into life.

Let us take an instance. Isaiah proclaims in the name of God (Ch. 56, v. 7): "My house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples." This was interpreted to mean the Temple of King Solomon in Jerusalem. The verse is a more succinct expression of the same desire voiced by King Solomon himself 250 years earlier at the dedication of the Temple (I Kings 8, 41). The Rabbis some 100 years later explained the phrase to mean that no matter how many people came to worship at the Temple, there was always enough space to accommodate everyone, Jew and gentile alike. Now today we know the exact dimensions

of the Temple, and can easily calculate the maximum number of people who could be accommodated in its various courts. But I have yet to find a better way of expressing the notion that sincere worship of God by anyone, regardless of race, creed, colour or religious affiliation is acceptable to God. Of course the teaching could be interpreted in its narrow particularistic sense of implying Jews only, but the verse before speaks of those who "join themselves to the Lord, to Minister unto Him, and to love the name of the Lord, to be His servants," and that unequivocally refers to anyone.

Thus, my friends, you may readily see why I am not fearful of allowing the mysteries and metaphors, the stories and parables of that in which I believe and have faith, to be subjected to the glaring searchlight of scientific scrutiny and the scalpel of the debunker. If the values of my religion, of the Craft, of the ethical and moral life are valid and worthwhile, they will emerge unscathed from any ordeal. If they are not, then the sooner I am aware of it, and discard them, the better for my spiritual welfare. The illustrations, the allegories, the stories which set forth those values have no meaning by themselves. But the values, their significance, and their impact on my life is what counts.

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their country in the first World War.

In addition, the Masonic Hospital, situated in the west of London, is organized and supported by the Masonic Order, and as a physician I have personal knowledge and experience, when I state that it is one of the finest hospitals in the metropolis. After World War II, it was enlarged and practically rebuilt, and although it is mainly for Masons and their families, no case of emergency is refused treatment, even though the patient has no connection with the order.

The Masonic School for Boys and the School for Girls, as well as the Home for the Aged, were established and were supported by contributions from the Lodges and their members.

Soon after my arrival in California, I was invited to the local Masonic Lodge in Carmel, No. 680, and later I became a member of this lodge. I was not aware of the differences in ritual. When asked questions as to the means of recognition, I gave answers which seemed to puzzle my interrogators, and also were sometimes difficult to answer. In turn, I asked some questions which they found somewhat strange. However, having eventually discovered that we were on common ground, the interview ended on a very pleasant note, and I was permitted to enter the Lodge.

Later on, when I became a member of the Lodge, it was my pleasure to give a short talk on the differences between English and American Masonry.

The basis of the Masonic Order is the same, throughout the world; the differences are merely superficial.

EDWARD W. McCORMICK, M.D.



Between the Pillars

A MASONIC MISSION AND MISSILE —

Mission and missile are derived from the same source, "missum", to send. To dispel any misconception or obscurity of this alliterative title, mission is used in a literal sense, missile metaphorically. The mission of Masonry is to exalt and enable humanity to bring light out of darkness. To implement this concept a guided missile of thought and action is necessary.

Last year I perused dozens of proceedings of American current Masonic thought. Two abridged extracts suffice for the inspiration of this address.

The Grand Chaplain of South Carolina considered that "Freemasonry has a mission to the world. It cannot content itself with a beautiful ritual. If the great teachings of the Craft are to end with dramatic exhibitions in Lodges, it is contributing very little to the world. Every member of the Craft is either an asset or a liability. Those who are not a real benefit to the world are a liability. Labour and service are the two dominant notes of the Craft."

The Grand Chaplain of Pennsylvania said in effect that what the world needed "was not a guided missile that could pierce outer space, but a guided missile that could pierce the human heart and destroy the evil that is in the human heart . . . because man and not science may in the end destroy our civilization."

Fifty years ago the atomic nucleus was discovered. It was revolutionary, changing the whole aspect of modern physics, and has made the greatest impact on human relations. Recurrently, new phases develop. From the bronze age down, new problems have arisen, and the advancing intelligence of humans has continually striven after better measures to control the future. Civilization has progressed from the immature, through the adolescent to the more recent maturity. Not, it is true, always smoothly, but meeting on its way interruptions, more or less violent, and, revolutionary in character. However, we do not seem to have the right answers to how the people on this earth can have peace and harmony.

Advances in human contacts, and understanding, have, paradoxically often been the cause of conflict, intellectual and physical. Each has been a challenge to superior intelligence, which has not

always been met by full understanding. The cupidity, and, devices of evil men, have often prostituted progress, or diverted it, by the exploitation of weaker elements to their own profit. This, in turn, creates new problems, and complications, which have to be solved. Commenting on the Conquest of Space, a pamphlet of the Grand Lodge of Israel, had this to say:

"Human brains and intelligence, and the technical resources at our disposal, have made it possible to go beyond the limits of the globe. No toil is spared, and no amount of money is too much, for these achievements, in which East and West engage in an unchecked race. Compared with this achievement, how sad is the actual daily life of individual and society. What similar efforts are being made to elevate humanity, to liberate man from tyrannous oppressors, and, enslavers, to make morality paramount in the life of the individual, and the state? The 'Cold War' for the domination of the world is continuing with atomic heat, and the instruments of destruction are growing ever more powerful".

The Masonic Fraternity seeks no control over processes of government, be it local, state, or national. As an organization, it takes no part in the solution of industrial and social problems, except through the influence of its teachings upon the character and conduct of its members. The obvious course is, that any student of morality has the direct responsibility, as a beneficiary of the highest wisdom of the ages, to impart, by precept and example, the unerring laws of morality and so defeat degeneracy. It seems difficult to get the individual interested in problems of national or world-wide affairs, to the extent that such problems will take precedence over his own individual, day to day distractions. Masses are but groups of individuals.

Material progress has given rise to a materialistic philosophy undermining the foundations of society. Wonderful inventions, which science has made possible, seem to have been more productive of evil than of good. The old saying "Hell is paved with good intentions," might be paraphrased as, "Hell is paved with good inventions". However, as civilization pushes forward with its moon rockets, its orbital satellites, and its intercontinental missiles, is it not possible that we may be losing something as we rush, hither and yon, in the endless pursuit of elusive security, and uneasy peace? In a world fraught with crisis one is apt to become pessimistic, even despondent. However, we must realize we have grave responsibilities and dare not shrink from assuming them.

AREA MEETING DATE CHANGES

Attention is directed to the following changes in the dates of area meetings published in the January issue of the Bulletin:

RED DEER, from April 12th to April 5th, 1963

CAMROSE, from March 8th to March 15th, 1963