

GRAND LODGE BULLETIN

GRAND LODGE OF ALBERTA A.F. & A.M.

VOL. 1

December 1935

NO. 1

GREETINGS.

At the Thirtieth Annual Communication of Grand Lodge held in Calgary on June 12th, 1935, the Grand Master recommended the publication of a Monthly Grand Lodge Bulletin in experimental form for distribution to the Lodges. The Committee on the Grand Master's Address concurred in the recommendation and it was ratified by Grand Lodge in session.

M.W.Bro. A.M. Mitchell has been given the duty of preparing the first copies and this issue comes to your Lodge as an indication of the lines which are to be followed. Naturally with space decidedly limited all material must be in very brief form, but it is hoped that ideas on many Masonic topics collected from widely distant fields may interest the brethren and induce them to follow the subjects farther.

Three copies only of the Bulletin will be supplied each Lodge for the present but it is suggested that it will be time well spent were the Bulletin read at the Regular meeting of your Lodge, thus giving every attending brother the benefit of a short summary of Masonic news and views elsewhere.

The Bulletin will be composed of items from the Masonic press, opinions of notable Masons everywhere and where possible news of Masonic happenings of more than local interest.

The necessity for and use of the Bulletin will be a subject for discussion at the Thirty-first Annual Communication of Grand Lodge in Edmonton on June 10, 1936. All officers should examine its contents and make-up to be ready with considered opinion at that time.

With this first issue the editor takes the opportunity to extend to all Lodges and Brethren everywhere the Compliments of the Season.

The future of Freemasonry depends largely upon the better selection of men. Not every man is adapted to understand or appreciate the Masonic fraternity. It is a very unusual institution and what a man gets out of it will depend very largely upon his mental process. It is doubtful if there will ever again be a great influx of men into the fraternity. The chances are that as soon as the fraternity again becomes stabilized it will select its material with the utmost care.

"Fraternal Record"

THE MISSION!

Masonry is unique in many respects. In its program, its method, and its outlook, it differs from all other existing institutions. This difference needs to be recognized by Masons in order that they may advance its mission in the world and be able to unveil for themselves and others the true Masonic light.

The same watchword is used by the church as by Masonry - "The establishment of the Kingdom of God." And the same prayer is uttered, "Thy kingdom come;" but their respective "programs" are different. The church conceives the "kingdom" as something already existing apart from humanity, with its laws and institutions already perfected; that its "establishment" is to be brought about by imposing it upon mankind by reasoning and persuasion. Masonry conceives the "Kingdom" as something that is being built up by man-in-the-making - that its laws will be the laws which men will learn to make when they finally see the futility and folly of trying to legislate in the interests of favored classes and groups; and that its institutions are those which men will finally build when at last their energies are devoted to the work of building for the common good.

As its program is different from other institutions, being more fundamental and far-reaching in its scope, so also the method of Masonry is unique and distinctive. In an age of propaganda, it wholly abstains from prescribing for men what they shall think or what they shall do. It is not engaged in the task of making men into partisans of a given idea or disciples of a given leader or movement. Its work is to make men Masters - Masters in their own right - Masters and overseers of the work of God in the world. Masonry's great weapon is education; the education which draws out of a man that which is in him of power and resource, and which tempers it and sharpens it for use by thought and self-discipline. Its symbols and the language of its ritual provoke to thinking and cite to aspiration. In order to achieve mastery men must first

win freedom, and it is for this reason that the spirit of Masonry has always been at the forefront of every movement having for its object the breaking of shackles and the winning of the priceless boon of liberty.

In its outlook, Masonry is also unique. It does not believe in the "fall of man" in a theological sense, but in his "rise" age by age to his full stature. Every "rough Ashlar" is to become a "perfect Ashlar". Every "living stone" is to be fitted into the completed building. When this building is finally complete its supports will truly be Wisdom, Strength and Beauty.

Every lodge is a symbol of this temple of human fortunes which will some day be completed. Its "covering is no less than the cloudy canopy or starry-decked heaven" its floor is "the Mosaic pavement of human life, checkered with good and evil," its boundaries are "The East," "The West", "The South", and "The North". It requires two globes, one "celestial", and the other "terrestrial," to denote the "universality of Masonry."

The implications of all this are: The essential unity of mankind in origin, purpose and destiny; the need of working together and cultivating a sense of kinship and brotherhood; the reasonableness of the law of service whereby one man gives of himself freely for the development of the common good; and finally, the certainty that the plans of the G.A.O.T.U. will be worked out at last to glorious completion and that all the sons of men will come into their heritage of peace and fruition.

Masonic Tidings.

Three things to give: alms to the needy, comfort to the sad, and appreciation to the worthy.

MASONRY AND MUSIC

In the "St. Cecelia" lodges in Chicago and New York, music plays a very important part. These are daylight lodges, composed of actors, actists, musicians, and public entertainers, whose vocation requires them to work at night, so that if they attend lodge at all it must be in the day time. Past Grand Master Louis Block thus describes his experience in visiting one of these lodges!

The best part of the whole program was the music which was interspersed in the work on every possible occasion, often by purposely making a place for it. After an afternoon in one of these lodges, one could not escape the conviction that harmony was not only the strength and support of the society, but could be made its inspiration and its life. The organ prelude played by master hands prepared the soul for an awakening, the solemn marches made stately processions of the floor work, and the soft, plaintive background music gave a new thrill to the spoken word. Pleyels Hymn, played and sung as never before, bore one aloft as if on angel's wing, and with the wistful, plaintively pleading strains of "Nearer My God to Thee" one felt as though standing in the very presence of the Great Architect. Small wonder, then, that men came miles to see work so rare and fine as this.

C.C. Hunt, Grand Sec'y.
Iowa Masonic Library.

It is squarely up to the Worshipful Master and his associate officers to inject a note of Masonic interest, in addition to the degree work, into every meeting. A wealth of material is available. Attendance will be better when the membership understands that there is an intelligent and persistent effort to make the lodge meeting not merely an incident, but an event. This is a definite and urgent suggestion to every Worshipful Master and its acceptance will be one of the tests of leadership.

Burton H. Saxton,
Grand Master, Iowa

RITUAL PERFECTION

Why is it so many Masons continue to think that Masonry was not only brought into being, but continues to exist, for the sake of the ritual and for that alone? All they seem to talk about, or think about, or care about is "getting the work." In their effort to become perfect in the letter of the ritual they would fain memorize the punctuation marks if that were possible. Among them that man is the best Mason who comes nearest a phonograph in the perfection of his word memory. All too few of them make much, if any, effort to understand the spirit of the ritual or to let that spirit have its perfect work in their thoughts and lives. Ask one of these what a certain part or phrase of the ritual means, and he is not only at a loss to know but even wonders what is the matter with you, that you should think it really had a meaning, or that he ought to know that meaning. He has accurately committed his lines, repeated them without a mistake, and for him that's enough. And if he can say them with fewer errors than you can, he thinks himself a better Mason than you are - despite the fact that he has little or no idea what those words mean.

Is Masonry an institution that exists for the sole purpose of putting a premium upon the mere ability to memorize?

R.W. Louis Block, P.G.M.
Iowa
Texas Grand Lodge Magazine

Masonry needs leaders. If it is going to succeed, it must have men at the head of its various departments who are capable of directing others. If there is a Masonic organization today that is flourishing it is because the man at the head of it is a hustler, and an investigation of those organizations which are dormant reveals that the man who is in charge of it is an unsuccessful leader. Therefore, be careful in choosing the man at the top.

"Illinois Freemason"

DON'T STAY BURIED

This story isn't ours, but nevertheless it is a good one!

A farmer had an old blind horse which had outlived his usefulness. One day he fell into an old well. The farmer looked in and saw him standing deep in the water. There seemed to be no way to get him out, and as he was quite useless, and the well abandoned and dangerous, the farmer ordered his men to fill up the well and leave the horse buried in it.

The men began to shovel dirt into the well. But the horse was not willing to be buried. When the dirt began to pour in upon him he began to shake it off and tread it under foot. As the well was filled up the horse came nearer and nearer to the surface, and when the men finished their task the horse walked out into the pasture.

The very things which conspire to bury the lionhearted these days, are used by them to lift themselves out of difficulties and into the light. The very last thing one should do is to agree to stay dead and buried.

MASONIC LIVING

Notwithstanding this splendid attainment there are those who believe that the geographical spread and numerical growth is all that is necessary to guarantee its permanency. Vain hope - so long as anything in or about Masonic organization is permitted to rank higher than Masonic living.

A good attendance at meetings, a well kept lodge room, good fellowship and feeds, even letter perfect exemplification of the degrees and all else which pertains to organization are but means to an end - and the end itself is the great responsibility of seeing that Masonry is lived by those who receive its rights and benefits.

Scottish Rite Sun, Minneapolis.

N. P. D.

It must never be forgotten that the suspended Mason will henceforth be an ex-Mason with a grouch. Through the years, from time to time, he is going to make disparaging remarks about Masonry, about the Lodge, about certain of his brethren, and will keep his ears open to hear something that will give him a good chance to relieve his feelings. What he says is not going to be at all good for the young man thinking of petitioning for the degree.

Thus, for the good of Masonry, for the good of the Lodge, for the good of the man, for the good of the prospective candidate who is acquainted with the man, no Mason should be allowed to travel the N. P. D. back trail until every rightful thing has been done to prevent it.

It is very harmful to err on either side of the case: to let a man stay in who really ought to be out; or to fail to hold fast to another who ought to be so treated in spite of the fact that he keeps in the red. No one is smart enough to present a hard-and-fast rule of action that will justly cover each case. A person who is not a good and sympathetic and, at the same time, a practical, judge of human nature has no business trying to handle this N.P.D. matter. It is as easy to be too soft as to be too hardboiled - and vice versa.

The Virginia Masonic Herald.

Don't hunt after trouble but look for success;
You'll find what you look for; don't look for distress.

If you see but your shadow remember I pray,
That the sun is still shining but you're in the way.

Don't grumble, don't bluster, don't dream
and don't shirk,
Don't think of your worries, but think of your work.

The worries will vanish; the work will be done;
No man sees his shadow who faces the sun.