A Master’s Viewpoint

What is Masonry?

Masonry is an ancient institution, in fact it is the oldest Fraternal Organization in the world, dating back to the erection of Solomon’s Temple, which was the House of the Lord which took seven years and six months to build at a cost of three hundred thousand six hundred and two dollars per month.

From Sacred History, we are taught that there was not the sound of axe, hammer or any tool of iron heard in the house while it was being built. It was supported by 1453 columns and 2906 pillars, all made from the finest Persian marble.

Freemasonry is a stupendous factor for good. It teaches reverence for the Master Builder of the universe, and for His divine will; loyalty to the government and the preservation of property which it sustains. It promotes no bigotry, and asks no man at the threshold of the Order what is his creed, color, politics, whether be Prince or Peasant, but rather if he be a true man; moral in action, loyal in purpose, and one who seeks the good of others, and will be ever ready to do his part to honor the Order into which he seeks to enter.

Governed by these principles, the Order has flourished and planted its Lodges in all lands where civilization and Christianity rule. Today, it is honored and patronized by hosts of men who occupy the highest positions in both Church and State; who have found its principles a grand factor for the benefit of mankind. Masonry has no written creed per se, but the essence of its principles is embodied in the sublime idea of the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man. True to this noble sentiment its deeds of charity are not blazoned before the world, but find a grateful echo in the hearts of the needy.

God is Masonry—Masonry has always taught that there is but one God; that He is a spirit while the human body is the temple in which the real and only man dwells. It is the duty of all to shield and protect that anatomy from intemperance, corruption and the vices of the world.

Masonic Lodges are held by the members to be sacred places of worship. In many respects, Masonic Lodges are the most typical examples of what is meant by a Christian Church.

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The Masonic Lodge is a social and intellectual society, whose members are bound together in a spirit of mutual respect and fellowship. The Lodge is a place where men can come together to discuss the problems of life, and to seek solutions to the challenges that confront them.

In conclusion, Masonry is an ancient and honorable institution that has made a significant contribution to the development of civilization. It is a source of inspiration and guidance for those who choose to follow its principles.

S. Mathew Hendershott
Grand Master

An Adventure in Masonry

by Henderson J. Williams, WM
Associate Editor

The profundity of Freemasonry as it exists in the world today is complex. The temples and shrines, metaphorical supports of Masonry, are symbolic of the Divine. Indeed, the translation from Hebrew of our Three Great Pillars—“Gomcr,” “Oc” and “Dabar”—reflect the initials of GOD and challenges further study into the antiquity of our history and a comprehensive understanding of Masonry. Therefore, our minds must reflect upon this enormous heritage as an educational adventure into the relevancy of our operative practice, and, as stated by our Grand Master, S. Mathew Hendershott, in his inaugural address, enlarge upon “the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man.”

The nourishment of our Masonic Gardens is this adventure may well begin with our newly initiated members. Instructions in the Ritual of the Order or its external ceremonies are beautiful and eloquent to the initiated but the very core of this complex lies in the purpose, principles and philosophy of the unchanging symbols of our institution wherein is found the real mantra of our existence. Our new brothers, especially, must be involved in well organized study groups to search, explore and unlock the splendor and boundless knowledge of Freemasonry. They must be encouraged to become “Masonic Students,” well versed in masonic Laws, Rituals, Tools, Jewels and Symbols, if they would preserve, with sacredness and reverence, these valued credentials, lofty truths and ancient landmarks. Certainly, the erection of such a Temple in the hearts of men creates a true Mason and opens a reservoir of service for the Past Masters, Council, officers and special groups of Masons endeavoring to find holding power for the higher and broader quality of service this educational adventure in Masonry offers.

In every well regulated Lodge, we may see worthy evidence of dedicated interest through serious teaching and training of its officers in the various stations and places in the Lodge. Each office challenges the very best expertise in our growth and development in the Craft. As Stewards, we learn to give attention to our brothers and service to our Brethren. We are inspired through a clearer sense of knowledge of our history to walk with confidence in the pathway of duty, to be attuned to the communal needs of the Craft and to make this expression with altruistic performance— with missionary

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35c per copy No. 3
THE MEANING OF FREE MASONRY

(Graffon J. Daniels, PM)

The Masonic Digest

Page 2

November, 1969

Graffon J. Daniels, PM

Editor-in-Chief

Freddie Robinson, S.W.

Lafayette Harris, J.W., and

Joseph S. Thomas, PGM

J.W. and

CEDC.C.'s Column

From the very inception of Masonry and its stated lodges have communicated their information, programs and activities to the members of the Craft. This policy, however, has failed to provide sufficient material which would adequately prepare future Masons for the demands and needs of the changing society in which they live.

Our Founding Fathers firmly believed that assistance to Welfare Organizations and Causes of Charity and Progress should adhere rigidly to our precepts. Today, however, it is felt throughout the Craft, in our Community Relations, a more effective approach to meeting the demands for charitable dispensations must be accomplished through the media of a well organized Public Relations Department.

Important, in any aspect, is the need for the establishment and protection of the channels of communication between the various Grand Jurisdictions through which information will flow and keep its members well-informed of all activities.

The C. C. F.'s attending the recent Conference of Grand Masters held in Los Angeles, California unanimously endorsed the idea of setting up such means of exchanging information concerning the progress achieved and activities within their respective Jurisdictions. Although those procedures are still in the formative stage, I am very happy to submit to our readers the following condensed articles of Proceedings received from several Sister Jurisdictions.

ALABAMA

The Alabama Jurisdiction has made rapid strides in achieving a solvent financial structure and the adoption of a set of By-Laws. Contributing to their solvent condition is a growing and successful average attendance at regular reports submitted by Grand Lodge Officers and Committees. Among these reports is a list of Master Masons who live and work in peace and harmony under the auspices of Masonry throughout the State of Louisiana which has a membership of 10,435 Master Masons. The C. C. F., Brother Gilbert Smith, submitted a very informative report in which considerable space was devoted to the progress of the Lodge and JURISDICTIONS for the enlightenment of his Jurisdiction.

MICHIGAN

The Jurisdiction of Michigan closed its 103rd Annual Communication in May 1969. In his annual address delivered before that Grand Body, Grand Master Albert Foster said, "Well do I remember the years Charles Waugh and I served as Deputy Grand Masters of our Jurisdictions and the plans we made for the time when we would ascend to the Grand East. We reviewed our tenure of office at the conference and I am pleased to pass on to you that the Jurisdiction has laid a progressive foundation for the future. It is now your time to assume our former duties and I admonish you to continue building on this foundation in the coming years."
Masonic Profiles

(This column will be dedicated to those "Sons and Daughters of Light" whose noteworthy contributions have made possible the growth and progress of Prince Hall Masonry in our Jurisdiction.)

THORNTON A. JACKSON
Past Grand Patron

Sunday, November 2, 1969
will inaugurate the First Annual Thornton A. Jackson Day commemorating the first Worthy Patron and Grand Worthy Patron of the Georgiana Thomas Grand Chapter of the Order of the Eastern Star. On that day, the Worthy Patrons of the thirteen Eastern Star Chapters will present the Prince Hall Masonic Family Choir in Recital.

The celebration, an integral part of the Grand Master's Program for 1969 and co-sponsored by the Grand Worthy Patron, will pay fitting homage to the man who, together with other brethren of Pythagoras Lodge No. 9, was instrumental in bringing about the organization and establishment of an Eastern Star Chapter among Negro women within the Jurisdiction.

Thornton A. Jackson received the Degree of the Adoptive Rite of the Eastern Star on August 10, 1874 from Brother C. B. Case, a Deputy and Agent of the Illustrious Robert McCoy, Supreme Patron of the Rite of Adoption of the World. After receiving his degree, he collaborated with other Master Masons, members of Pythagoras, Warren, John F. Cook and Meridian Lodges and solicited the Light and Privileges of the Order for the purpose of organizing an Eastern Star Chapter which was to be known and dedicated as Queen Esther Chapter No. 1.

The following year, in 1875, Pythagoras Lodge No. 9 presented to the newly organized Chapter its first badges through Brother Jackson who had been appointed or installed as the first Worthy Patron. In his address to the officers and members of the chapter he admonished them to wear the "Rosettes" with dignity and practical purpose, even keeping them before the memory of the five "HEROINES" - Adah, Esther, Ruth, Martha and Eleazar, exhorting them further in his closing remarks he said, "To you, Queen Esther and Associates, representatives of the rays of the sun, this order is dedicated.

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Adventures

Continued from Page 3

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influence is measured, studied and used as a magic power to spearhead the hopes, dreams and dedicated passions of men and to unite Masonic precepts of truth with our daily tasks and duties, seeking to transform men into Masons and to make them workmen or artisans of fraternal righteousness.

As Wardens, with a stronger background of Masonic knowledge and service, we move thoughtfully and cooperatively into a creative synthesis of planning with the Worshipful Master for the collective good of the Craft. In this capacity or opportunity for service, the strength of our mind is heightened through the intensity of our research as Masonic students in our educational adventure. Here, we untrawl the vitality of our Masonic garden as we planting and harvesting or a sowing and reaping. We become the creators of the climate which makes life grow. We select, refine, structure and assist in bringing to fruition the high purpose, deep resolve and rich heritage of our tradition.

Again, as Worshipful Masters, well versed in the history and symbolism of our venerable institution and a deeper insight in Masonry through varied services in the Craft, we welcome the reins of leadership and influence as opportunities to serve the Lodge and to assist the Grand Master in the success of his program. New leadership continually requires us to study and broaden our Masonic knowledge if we are to maintain the respect of the Lodge. New challenges are ever present but we are mindful to share authority with responsibility and develop programs with full cooperation of the membership in planning and execution. Therefore, we should ever be cautious in our behavior, courteous to our Brethren and faithful to our Lodge and Freemasonry. To preserve Peace and Harmony within our respective Lodges we find ourselves fortified through our Masonic educational adventure to be courageous men possessed of strong moral character and well grounded in the fundamental principles of Brotherly Love, yet, ready at all times to see to it that our Masonic orders are strictly obeyed.

Finally, if we are to build a society with meaningful accomplishments; if we are to help, aid and assist our Brethren; if we are to let our light so shine as to merit the confidence of others and if we are to nourish our Masonic Garden, we must become adventurous and direct our minds toward the attainment of Masonic knowledge and an understanding of the profound principles and symbolism which are firm foundations upon which the advancement of humanity and Masonic virtues may be built. The harvest we seek now becomes a harvest of the "hearts of men."
HIGHLIGHTS OF

The Grand Commandery

Metropolitan Police Color Guard

ST. JOHN'S DAY
ACTIVITIES

No. 10, Aesomms Drum & Bugle Corp.


Interior of Metropolitan Baptist
LITTLE LEAGUE IN ACTION

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Grand Lodge, F & A. M. and the Georgiana Thomas Grand Chapter, OES, P. H. present a contribution of $1,000 to fight cancer.

Grand Master Presents Check for $500 to the Y Partner in Membership Drive from the M. W. Prince Hall Grand Lodge. L to R: Jesse F. Snowden, PM, Chairman of Grand Lodge Charity Committee; a representative of Governor Peabody, M.W.G.M. S. Matthew Hendershot and R.W. Grand Secretary, Richard C. Farrow.
Stairway to The Stars

by
Edith M. Lloyd

(Beginning with this issue of the Newsletter, a series of articles on the Origin of the Eastern Star and the Establishment of its Chapters within our Masonic Jurisdiction will be presented by Edith M. Lloyd, Editor.)

** PARTI.**

While the ancient landmarks of Freemasonry, which can never be changed, excluded women from its rites and privileges, they did not shut her out from breathing its atmosphere and sharing its glory. Whether to satisfy a demand, or to fill an actual need, the Eastern Star, in time, has come into its rightful place as the beautiful handmaid of Freemasonry. In his activities, man could never divorce himself permanently from woman, even if he chose to.

The origin of the Order of the Eastern Star, like that of Freemasonry, is, in a sense, shrouded in the mysteries of the past. It is the oldest of the so-called "branches" of the Masonic Order, and its five degrees give evidence of great age. The precepts of those degrees have always been considered the property of Master Masons, their wives, widows, sisters, mothers and daughters. The Masonic records of France show that androgynous Masons (from the Greek word meaning "man" and "woman") existed in that country as early as 1730.

In tracing the history of the Eastern Star, many writers have made the error of associating the American Order, as a direct offshoot, with the French Order. Some authors have claimed that Lafayette and the French Order introduced the French Rite into this country during the Revolutionary War; others have gone so far as to give the credit and honor of instituting the first chapter to Washington and Lafayette in 1787. There is, however, no authenticated record, either historical or fraternal, to substantiate or prove that such an organization was formed, nor is there any record to show that either of these men were ever connected with the Order.

The Father of our Country was, beyond a doubt, one of the most loyal and representative members of the Masonic Order. His high regard for womanhood and his devotion to the loftiest ideals of chivalry naturally led him to view with more than ordinary sympathy the lot of the opposite sex; and, no doubt, the founding of an order such as the Eastern Star, enlisted his interest and sympathy; but the turmoil of war gave little time or inclination for the founding of social or fraternal organizations.

The generally accepted theory of the institution of the Order in this country is the one that credits Robert Morris, a renowned essayist and lecturer on Masonic subjects, as the author of the first ritual and denominates him as being the "Father of the Order." Robert Morris was born in Springfield, Massachusetts on August 31, 1818 and died at LaGrange, Kentucky on July 31, 1888. He was, probably, better known in or throughout the Masonic world more than any other person living at that time. The Masons of this country raised a purse of $20,000 which was presented to him as a token of their esteem and respect. The funds were used by him to defray the expenses of a trip through Palestine and Syria. During this trip, he collected considerable material for his book, "Freemasonry in the Holy Land," one of the first publications given to the Craft in this country. He planned a number of special features for the use of Masonic Lodges but the crowning effort or work of his life was his brilliant work done in connection with the Order of the Eastern Star.

Gathering together the works of the kindred degrees which had existed in this country for many years, he prepared a series of lectures on the "Ladies of Freemasonry," to be presented in a social atmosphere. They were divided into five degrees or sections, each named after a historical character taken from the Bible, namely: Jephthah's daughter, Adah, Ruth, Martha and Eheza, to represent the five social relations which bind together the members of the Masonic fraternity by the nearest and dearest ties. These lectures gradually evolved into something more complex and, quoting Robert Morris, "I wrote every word of the original lectures and composed the songs. I am the founder of the system."

It is believed that he adapted an ancient system to a modern use, embellishing and adorning it with his brilliant scholarship and poetic conception. The members of the Eastern Star revere and cherish his memory for giving form and substance to an order in which the wives, widows, sisters, mothers and daughters of Masons, who cannot, because of the unchanging laws of the Order, be permitted to enjoy the grand mysteries of Freemasonry, may enjoy not only the social and fraternal privileges but make themselves known to Masons and, thus, secure a measure of the assistance and protection which the Order grants them. By means of this protection and acting in conjunction with and by ties of fellowship, they may cooperate and contribute to the great work of Freemasonry through assisting in the charities and by toiling in the cause of human progress.

The Order may be likened to a beautiful bouquet, whose blossoms represent the highest qualities of the human mind and heart and whose beauty and fragrance permeate the work throughout and radiate the glory of God.

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Meaning

Illustrated by a scene from an old movie in which a renowned comic plays the role of a shyster lawyer. One day a client commented on the swarm of flies flying about the office. In answering the comment the lawyer said, "We have a working agreement with them; they don't practice law and we don't climb the walls."

INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION

Another very important rule is that which pertains to the establishment of lines of communication through which ideas may flow continuously. Industry or success is dependent upon an harmonious interest and participation of those who comprise the membership of a Lodge or organization. Effective communication of constructive ideas and contributions of those workers or members will result in prosperity and growth of that organization because of the effective lines of communication which have been established between the administrators and the workers or members. If, on the other hand, such inter-relationship fails to exist or, the avenues of communication are short-circuited by the rigidity of functional operations or practices, only trouble will result. To be continued in next issue.

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by Edith M. Lloyd

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Gathering together the works

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