

WB C. F. Arkoncel (50)

Mackey's Definition of Freemasonry.

Freemasonry or Speculative Masonry, according to Bro. Albert G. Mackey, 33^o, may be defined as the scientific application and the religious consecration of the rules and principles, the language, the implements and materials of Operative Masonry to the veneration of God, the purification of the heart and the inculcation of the dogmas of a religious philosophy. It is a progressive moral science taught by degrees, veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols, which has its moral, religious and philosophical doctrines. It is a fraternity of men bound together by a peculiar tie which inculcates its obligation of kindness as a moral duty to his neighbor. Its moral design is to make men better to each other; to cultivate brotherly love and to inculcate the practice of all those virtues which are essential to the perpetuation of brotherhood. A Mason is bound to obey the moral law; and of this law the very keystone in the Divine Precept — the Golden Rule of Our Lord — to do unto others as we would that they should do unto us.

Its moral doctrines teach us to relieve the distressed, to give good counsel to the erring, to speak well of the absent, to observe temperance in the indulgence of the appetite, to bear evil with fortitude, to be prudent in life and conversation and to dispense justice to all men.

Its religious doctrines are belief in God and in the immortality of the

soul, and teaches universal brotherhood of men based upon the universal fatherhood of God.

Its philosophical doctrines involve the symbolism of the lost and recovered word, the search after the divine truth, the manner and time of its discovery and the reward that awaits the faithful and the successful searcher.

According to Pike.

Gen. Albert Pike, 33^o, Masonic ritualist and author of *Morals and Dogma*, says:

"A good Mason is one that can look upon Death and see its face with the same countenance with which he hears its story; that can endure all the labors of his life with his soul supporting his body; that can equally despise riches when he hath them and when he hath them not; that is not sadder if they are in his neighbor's exchequer, nor more lifted up if they shine around about his own walls; one that is not marred with good fortune coming to him nor going from him; that can look upon man's lands with equanimity and pleasure as if they were his own; and yet look upon his own and use them too just as if they were another man's; that never spends his goods prodigally and foolishly nor yet keeps them avariciously; like a miser that weighs neither benefits by weight and number but by the circumstances of him who confers them; that never thinks his charity expensive if a worthy person be the receiver; that does nothing for opin-

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ion's sake but for conscience, being careful of his thoughts as if acting in markets and theatres, and in as much awe of himself as of a whole assembly; that is bountiful and cheerful to his friends and charitable and apt to forgive his enemies; that loves his country, preserves its honor and obeys its laws, and desires and endeavors nothing more than that he may do his duty and honor God."

According to Newton.

Dr. Joseph Fort Newton, 33^o, in his monumental work, *The Builders*, says:"

"When is a man a Mason? When he can look out over the rivers, the hills and the far horizon with a profound sense of his own littleness in the vast scheme of things; and yet have faith, hope and courage. When he knows that down in his heart everyone is as noble, vile, as divine as diabolic and as lonely as himself and seeks to know, to forgive and to love his fellowmen. When he knows how to sympathize with men in their sorrows, yet even in their sins, knowing that man fights a hard fight against many odds. When he has learned how to make friends and to keep them and above all how to keep friends with himself. When he loves flowers, can hunt the birds without a gun and feels the thrill as an old forgotten joy when he hears the laughter of a little child. When he can be happy and high-minded amidst the mean drudgeries of life. When star-crowned trees and the glint of sunlight in flowing waters subdue him like the thought of one much loved and long dead. When no voice of distress reaches his ears in vain and no hand seeks his aid without response. When he finds good in every faith that helps everyman to lay hold of higher things and to see majestic meanings in life whatever

the name of that faith may be. When he can look into a wayside and see something besides mud and into the face of the most forlorn mortal and see something beyond sin. When he knows how to pray, how to love, how to hope. When he has kept faith with himself, with his fellowmen and his God; in his hand a sword for evil, in his heart a bit of a song, glad to live but not afraid to die. In such a man, whether he be rich or poor, scholarly or unlearned, famous or obscure, Masonry has wrought her sweet ministry."

Summarized Definition.

From the context and connotations of the above definitions, it may be inferred that Freemasonry is a way of life gauged from the personal, natural, social, intellectual, moral and spiritual points of view, which guides man to be at peace with himself, his family, his neighbor, his country, the world and his God. It develops and improves human character and promotes self-study, self-analysis, self-guidance, self-reliance, self-control and self-improvement. It involves a searching inquiry into secrets and mysteries of nature and human nature — a bold exploration into the fields of the infinite, the invisible and the unknown. It requires a man to know positively his capabilities and weaknesses, his bearings and moorings in the rough sea of human life, the high mountains, the shallow waters, and the profound depressions, so as to know where to sail with safety, and to escape from disastrous collisions, accidents and groundings, disasters and calamities so as to take the correct direction onward to salvation, toward success and victory.

The Masonic Profession.

As the profession of law is based upon the municipal law, political law

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and international law; and medicine upon botany, chemistry, zoology, physiology and anatomy, so is the profession of Freemasonry founded upon the sacred scriptures, the humanities, the liberal arts and sciences and the wisdom of the ages. Each of the profession has its own peculiar ethics to guide the practitioner in his relations and interactions with public, the world and God. While himself, his fellow professionals, the law and medicine operate thru professional skill sometimes against the will of the client, Freemasonry works freely and voluntarily, in innocence, silence and secrecy, thru friendship and fellowship, love and harmony, with wisdom, strength and beauty.

The Masonic profession is similar and dissimilar in many respects to the other professions. The entered apprentice Mason is supposed to remain in his station not less than seven years before he can be passed and raised to higher degrees which also require preparatory studies lasting for years where the candidate is required to be proficient in the lectures and rituals; while in law and medicine there are prescribed courses of study to be taken up for 8 or 9 years. In Freemasonry the mode of instruction is indirect, suggestive or figurative by symbols, thru metaphors and allegories understandable only to the intelligent mind; while in law and medicine and other non-Masonic professions is direct and inductive, by questions and answers, by experiment, and observation, analysis and comparison. Instruction in Freemasonry has its peculiar charm and beauty while that in other professions, its inherent directness and fatigable dryness.

Being a peculiar sort of philosophy, it is quite extensive in scope in con-

trast with other professions which are quite specialized or limited. Even professionals including Freemasons agree that every profession is a continuous and diligent study in order to update itself in order to adjust one'sself to the needs of the changing times. The students of the various professions are taught in the colleges and universities by specialized professors or instructors, while Freemasonry is studied in the Lodge, in office or in private where the Freemason himself is his own professor or instructor.

The aims and purposes of the non-Masonic professions are to prepare the professional to be proficient, dexterous and expert in his own line and to make the maximum earning thereafter. But Freemasonry aims to inculcate into the minds of its votaries the wisdom of the ages; to improve man and society without hope of monetary reward; and to seek progress, peace and tranquility of the universe and the happiness and welfare of the entire humanity.

Methods of Masonic Study

The methods of Masonic study may be: (1) by self-study which is self-explanatory and (2) by group study which is also efficacious depending upon the patience, ability and skill to learn.

The group study may be done by the formation of study clubs consisting of 5 to 10 members each to report and be quizzed on the different aspects of Freemasonry. Each will contribute one or more Masonic books on the various aspects of Freemasonry from which the study will be based. For every report, every member will receive a copy. Questions and answers will be made by the members until all doubts are cleared or removed.

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In every serious study of Freemasonry, the student has to delve into its history, philosophy, symbolism and jurisprudence — its rituals, traditions and practices — its ethics, spirit, aims and purposes. These materials are found not only in the works of Masonic authors and writers, but also in the various sacred scriptures, in the teachings of the world's geniuses such as Buddha, Brahma, Mahomet, Confucious and Jesus Christ — in the classical works of Homer, Virgil and Aesop — Socrates, Plato and Aristotle, Voltaire, Bacon and Emerson, Victor Hugo, Dante and Goethe, and Bocaccio, Rousseau, Cervantes, Tolstoi and Rizal — in all of which the wisdom of the ages are concealed and revealed in and between the pages.

For beginners, the following are recommended for reading: 1. History of Masonry, by Delmar Darrah, 33°; 2. Symbolism of Freemasonry, by Mackey; (3) Masonic Jurisprudence, by Mackey; (4) Philosophy of Masonry, by Dr. Roscoe Pound 33°; (5) The Builders, by Dr. Joseph Fort Newton, 33°; (6) Symbolical Masonry, by MacBride; (7) Morals and Dogma, by Gen. Albert G. Pike; (8) Rituals and Monitors.

These may be ordered from the Macoy Masonic Supply and Publishing Company, or the Redding Masonic Supply Company, both of New York City, U.S.A.

Merits and Defects of Short-Cut Study.

Freemasonry being a free institution, we are free to study it in the manner of our own free will and accord. We can begin with the Rituals and a Masonic Magazine which would be quite inexpensive, easy and convenient. However, it will take a long time, even a decade, before we

cluded. It is hoped, however, that even up to this point only, that somehow, we have served enough constructive food for thought to every member of the Fraternity which, if only taken in the proper spirit for which it is intended, may pave the way towards the heightening or furthering the interests of the Order. Brethren, may I remind those of us who take Masonry with insincerity, to govern ourselves accordingly by dedicating more serious thought to our past errors and omissions, especially to those committed by "Worshipful Past Masters" who as the brethren expect, should be the main pillar and support to provide the necessary WISDOM, guidance and leadership, in making the light more brilliant, instead of being darkened in the East. All Past Masters may well remember that during their incumbency as Master of the Lodge, *they were seated in a place of honor in the East, where the sacred letter G is suspended and on his right is our national flag — signifying GOD and COUNTRY.* Let them not under any pretext, my worthy brother, become unmeaning symbols for you and me. Adore them, protect them from their enemies, and forsake them NOT. △



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have a working knowledge of Freemasonry because the rituals are written by symbols or abbreviations

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Letters to the Editor...

So nice to hear from friends. Below are excerpts from letters received since the first of December last year. More will be coming this way later.

Ed.

Would be so good to see you and have a visit — we read every word in The Cabletow —

Bill & Iva Owen
Seal Beach, Calif. 90740

Been in the U.S. thirty-four years. I always enjoy reading all the issues of The Cabletow. It matches a similar paper published by the Grand Lodge of New York called The Empire State Mason. I specially enjoy reading about and seeing pictures of my old friends... When I arrived in America, there were very few Oriental Masons; today, there are many. We have a number of Filipino and Chinese Past Masters. Recently, I attended the commissioning of WB Lee as District Inspector in the Grand Lodge of New York. Since I am a member of Mencius Lodge No. 93 in Manila and of Pearl River Lodge No. 8 in Taipei, I cannot hold membership in a Lodge in New York, much as I want to... New York allows only dual membership regardless of Grand Lodge.

Tieng Sing
New York

I am now residing in Brussels as a member of the International Staff of NATO and thoroughly enjoy my only remaining link with all my brethren in the Philippines through your excellent organ, The Cabletow.

I remain a dues-paying member of my Mother Lodge, Mt. Lebanon No. 80, even though it is seventeen years since I last sat there.

In the last nine and a half years with NATO in Paris, I had the pleasure of affiliating with two English-speaking Lodges; Stability 29, which follows the Nigerian ritual, and Concorde 42, which follows the ritual I learned in my Mother Lodge. Both are under the jurisdiction of the Grande Loge Nationale Francaise.

Despite substantial differences in the two rituals, I have always found that ineradicable, indispensable link of universality which characterizes our wonderful Brotherhood.

Charles O. Search
USNATO (I.S.)

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which are known only to the experienced Freemason. Besides that the rituals are very long for every Masonic degree which are 33 in the Scottish Rite and 13 in the York.

The Masonic Magazines contain a little of each aspect of Freemasonry such as history, philosophy, and symbolism, and at times a little of the Masonic principles, tenets and teachings, or practices and traditions, all scattered in the pages thereof, and it will take many magazines to read, and many long years to go before the Masonic student can have some Masonic knowledge. The result may be that the student becomes a doubting Thomas with little Masonic learning, narrow-minded, confused and self-centered, with a feeling of inferiority complex, or with the air of false superiority. He may choose going too fast and jump over the higher degrees thru strategem, but that will not solve the problem of Masonic perfection. The field of Freemasonry is so extensive and limitless as the sky that only by diligent, honest, courageous and persistent efforts at serious study may the individual acquire a fairly good working knowledge. While we approach Masonic perfection by legitimately receiving the higher degrees of Freemasonry, yet we can reach the zenith of perfection only when we arrive at that beautiful region from whose bourne no traveller returns.

References:

1. The Builders — by Dr. Joseph Fort Newton.
2. Symbolism of Freemasonry — by Dr. Albert G. Mackey.
3. Encyclopaedia of Freemasonry — by Dr. A. G. Mackel.
4. Philosophy of Masonry — by Dr. Roscoe Pound.
5. Morals and Dogma — by Albert Pike. △