

## THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE WORD "GRAND"

"Grand," as it is in Grand Lodge, Grand Master, etc., is a difficult word to manage. A word denotes some fact, or some property or quality in a man or in a thing, but it is difficult to isolate the exact fact or quality denoted by "grand" (to define a word is to find the fact for which it stands), and we Masons are not alone in the difficulty, because etymologists find the history of the word a confusing one. Probably it began a very long time ago, perhaps in the Sanskrit, with now some unknown term which has some reference to the breast. It came early to have also the meaning of powerful, of chieftainship, of being senior, or head. It may be that a leader was usually a large man with a broad breast, or it may be that a leader wore some insignia across his breast, or even that he had a large heart, which in the early periods of the Ancient World would have meant large courage.

In any event when the original term came into the early Greek language as *brenthos* it denoted "proud," a meaning which continues in the Portuguese and Spanish word *grandee*, a proud and highly placed man. In French *grandis* meant large as well as powerful, and when the same word came into English it took on also the meaning of being in control, or rulership, as when the head of the Templars was called Grand Master. With other shades of meanings it appears in grandiloquent, grandiose, grandeur, grandfather, grand jury, etc.

If the history and use of "grand" be taken into consideration as a whole, there would appear to be in it two main streams of meaning, distinct and yet somehow related to each other. There are all the uses of it when it means imposing, spectacular, a display of riches, etc., as when it is said that a king lives in a grand palace and moves about in a state of grandeur. There are all the uses where it means there are some kinds of work, of duties, or responsibilities, or dangers which are paramount, which stand above others, so that the man or the organization charged with them is described as "grand."

It is the latter of the two general meanings which we have in our Craft, therefore the Grand Master is so called not because he is a grandee, but because he is the chief workman, and the Grand Lodge is so called not because it is tyrannical or despotic or proud but because it is a lodge composed of all the lodges, and therefore is charged with larger duties and responsibilities than any other.

It is because we thus use it that we can without lapse of taste lift it into that august and awesome region where we remember those

who have passed to the Grand Lodge above, and bow before the Sovereign Grand Architect of the Universe.

—H. L. Haywood

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## HOW TO LISTEN

Leon Godown, Editor  
The Orphans' Friend and Masonic Journal

Occasionally we find ourself seated next to a brother in a lodge meeting who insists upon supplying us with unsolicited information. He seems only too glad to dish it out free of charge. We hear him say such things as "Where I come from, they say so-and-so" or "In my lodge the master does this or that," until we inwardly express the wish that our brother were back in his home lodge, where they do things to suit him. It was quite obvious that, in addition to the fact that he was getting little or nothing out of the work going on, he was making it reasonably sure those seated near him would find it almost impossible to gain anything of value from the lessons being presented at the moment.

This brother's attitude brought to mind the story of the man, who, when approached by an angel, complained that this was a terrible world in which we live, and the angel's reply was, "Go, thou, and make it a better world; that's what God put thee here to do."

Did you ever stop to think why it is that Masons—real ones—can stand the constant repetition of the lectures? Many a man who knows them all by heart hears them again and again, and still derives pleasure and profit from them. How is that possible? It is because he listens with his brain as well as with his ears. He is listening with an open mind for a message—rather than watching a pageant with mouth wide open, ready to find fault. He follows the words of ritual more or less automatically, because he knows them so well. But, he suddenly catches some emphasis or expression; some new thought is reflected in the message as delivered by a new voice, and the entire degree takes the shape of a newer and fresher relationship to him and to his life.

So, my brethren, when you are present at the conferring of the degrees of Freemasonry, be sure to listen with more than your ears; listen with your mind and heart. By so doing, you will never depart from a meeting without being a little better man than you were before it was called to order.