



The Cable Tow

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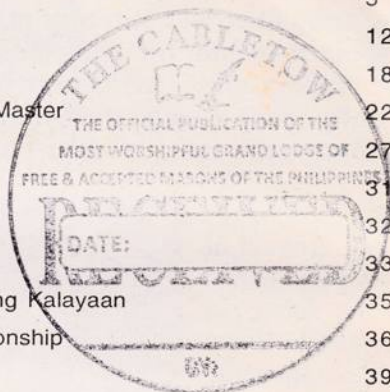
M.W. Bro. Napoleon A. Soriano, Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of F&A.M. of the Philippines, updates brethren in California on the state of the Craft in the Philippines.



M.W. Bro.
 Napoleon A.
 Soriano with
 the brethren,
 including
 Grand Master
 "wannabees", at
 the Multi-
 District
 Convention in
 Tuguegarao.

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OUR FRONT COVER:

Grand Master Soriano during his visit in the states, particularly California, kept the brethren up-to-date regarding the current state on Philippine Masonry.

From the Grand Oriental Chair

During the first quarter of my year in the Grand Orient, in line with our theme for this Masonic year, "Harmony and Progress Through Freemasonry," we focused our attention on the restoration of trust and confidence between the Grand Lodge leadership and the rank-and-file, adopting the policy of open-book governance.

To keep you, dear brethren, abreast of what we in the Grand Lodge are doing, we have posted the Grand Master's monthly reports to you at our website, namely, <http://glphils.org>. We fondly hope you refer to these monthly reports on our website.

In my provincial visitations, moreover, I have cut down on trivia and have gone straight to reporting to the brethren what we in Manila are doing to give due meaning and substance to our theme. One of the topics I have dealt on in my talks before the brethren assembled is the mobilization of the Committees on Accounts and on Management Audit. These committees have looked into the transactions of the Grand Lodge. One of their recommendations was for us to reduce the number of security guards from six to two, thereby cutting expenses in this area.

Limited funds notwithstanding, your



Grand Master ordered the construction of a dormitory for use by our transient brethren. The dormitory is now all ready for occupancy. It can accommodate up to 20 brethren at any one time. The rate, mind you, is only a P100 day!

We managed, furthermore, to give 50 cavans of rice for flood victims in Lingayen, Pangasinan and 100

cavans for the refugee victims of the Mayon volcano eruption.

We also devoted a significant amount of time during the first quarter of this Masonic year to studying and coming out with circulars and edicts, as well as to attending the functions of the different districts, many of which held their turn-over ceremonies – again in line with our open-book-governance policy.

During our visitations of the different districts, we noticed with great joy striking evidence of renewed

commitment and active involvement among the members of the Craft and those of the appendant bodies and orders. We can, on that basis alone, rightfully infer that, despite the intensified attacks against our Fraternity from the majority church and other religious sects, Philippine Masonry is on the move. Not a few of our Lodges are remodeling or restoring their buildings; others are constructing their temples, and still others are raising funds for the building up of their own edifices.

Districts and Lodges, as may be gleaned from the news items printed in this issue, are participating in more community development and other civic-oriented projects; they are also carrying out their own public service programs. They are, in addition, taking their stories to the newspapers and even to radio and television stations. In the face of attacks and criticisms against the Craft from various quarters, too, not a few of our courageous brethren have stood tall for Freemasonry, exerting effort to keep the Masonic name strong, unblemished and honored.

All the foregoing and related activities are a prima-facie evidence of the dynamism of Philippine Masonry.

But, indubitably, there is more to be done in order for us to give due meaning and substance to our theme for this Masonic year. That is why we have set up and operationalized the Masonic Service Network (MSN), a nationally-connected relief network of Masonic Area Service Centers (MASCs) spanning the whole archipelago. We intend to rationalize our

intervention to be of more service to victims of disasters, both environmental and man-made, as in the intensifying social strife that continually displaces refugees.

We are, indeed, gratified by the fact that the succeeding administrations of our Grand Lodge have assured us that they will follow the MSN through.

Since we are pretty resolute to make a go of the MSN starting with my term, we are printing in the next issue the basic project material about the MSN.

Your Grand Master also expects some movement to restore the burnt-down old Plaridel Masonic Temple. Through the efforts of M.W. Bro. Enrique L. Locsin, PGM, we managed to secure eight million pesos from the insurance company as payment for damages resulting from the August 12 conflagration. Construction plans should be on the way, and we can expect some spadework before the end of the third quarter. This concern is being handled by the Building Committee ably chaired by Past Grand Master Locsin.

We should, during the second quarter, set in place our communications infrastructure by way of the Internet and push areas and Lodges to make go of their MASCs. The communications facility should help out in enhancing transparency in the Grand Lodge operations and in linking up different areas with one another, at almost negligible cost. Cyberspace is to the advantage of a network that has deep and wide roots and links, especially that

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one of ours.

We should build up the infrastructure of the MSN, so that it will become our Craft's continuing program, to be enhanced by every succeeding administration. The monies will not go to a bank account separate from that of the Grand Lodge. Rest assured, dear brethren, that all donations will go straight to the Grand Lodge General Fund, and that they will be expended therefrom by a responsible Executive Committee, where the Grand Lights have a permanent stake.

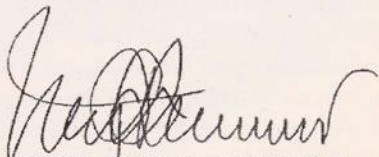
Be it known unto you, dear brethren, that we have accepted the proposal from Okinawa Lodge No. 118, under the stewardship of Worshipful Master Albert J. Encarnacion, that they extend a \$50,000 assistance to our Grand Lodge in exchange for their per-capita assessments for the next 15 years. Offhand, this will ease pressures on our financial position, most especially to our cash flow, up to a couple of years.

We in the Grand Lodge urge you, dear brethren, to come forward with your ideas on how to improve our Craft and, more importantly perhaps, on how we can be of better service to our countrymen. Filipinos will, by year 2030, number approximately 160 million. At present, we, as a nation, number just short of 80 million; yet we are already facing formidable challenges. Certainly, we will be facing more formidable challenges 30 years hence. We Masons

cannot, therefore, sit back and fold our arms. We cannot, I am sure, be happy for as long as there are so many Filipinos, even in increasing numbers as the years pass by, who get more and more unhappy.

I want to conclude this message by paraphrasing a paragraph of an article by Sir Knight Larry M. Miller entitled "What Makes a Mason?" My paraphrase goes this way: "Masonry can be one of the most potent forces for good available to the modern world, particularly in our country. This can happen only if we, the members of Masonic Lodges, become more than just members. Only when we become Masons by name and by nature will we be able to unlock this great potential. To this end, then, we must exert effort in not merely initiating members, but rather, in always seeking to make men Masons – Masons to whom others look for example and inspiration, Masons who contribute their talents and resources for the progress of the country and the whole world.

Till next issue...



NAPOLÉON A. SORIANO
Grand Master

Editorials

1. STILL ON KEEPING THE MASONIC NAME STRONG, UNBLEMISHED, HONORED

"Protecting the Masonic name is not the job of Grand Masters, Lodge officers or leaders of Masonic bodies. The genius of Masonry is that its name – its brand – is kept strong, unblemished and honored by the actions of every Master Mason. The fraternity is made real through the behavior and performance of each of us."

Thus states Sovereign Grand Commander Robert O. Ralston, 33rd degree, of the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction in the U.S.A. in his message printed in *The Northern Light*, August 1999.

The exemplary behavior and performance of each of us Freemasons is, clearly, the most effective way of protecting the Masonic name. It is also the best way of attracting intelligent young men in our communities to desire our fellowship and join in our assemblies. Decidedly, we can best attract potential members of the Craft by demonstrating to them that Masonry is a worthwhile way of life, precisely because it is a science and an art of character building, and its purpose is, as the late Chief Justice of the Philippine Supreme Court Manuel V. Moran, then a distinguished and revered member of the Craft, stated, "to create in the world a band of men to whom others might look for example and inspiration – men who others will say are men of honor, virtue and charitable

feelings." We are, as many of the senior members of the Craft have recurrently told us, what other people say we are. Hence, how important it is that we emulate the GMHA in his exalted and exemplary character, in his unfeigned piety to God, and in his inflexible fidelity to his trust. How important it is that we faithfully fulfill the Worshipful Master's solemn injunction for us to ever walk and act as just and upright men and Masons. How important it is that we not only learn but also consistently live Masonry's simple lessons of practical morality and sublime teachings of religious philosophy, that the Masonic Light will so shine before other men that they will get interested in becoming Masons themselves. There can be no doubt that the best argument for Masonry is a just and upright Mason – one who cares not only for the values and principles embodied in the Masonic fraternity but also for his fellowmen, especially the disadvantaged. The creed and vision of our beloved fraternity is, after all, according to the late Past Grand Master

The exemplary behavior and performance of each of us Freemasons is not only the most effective way of protecting the Masonic name, but it is also the best way of attracting intelligent young men in our communities to desire our fellowship and join in our assemblies.

Manuel M. Crudo, "service – service without counting the cost, service without expecting any material reward save the self-satisfaction that arises from a job well done for the good of our fellowmen and to God's greater glory."

We must, in addition, contribute our respective shares in defending the Craft against those who oppose us. We must know exactly what facts we can and should cite to prove to fair-minded people that the allegations against us are untrue, thereby helping keep our critics and detractors to a small number.

Those brethren who have used their pens for correcting misconceptions printed in our daily newspapers and weekly magazines are, therefore, to be commended. A recent example is V.W. Bro. Geminiano V. Galarosa, Jr., a Past Grand Lecturer for Masonic District No. 9 and currently a Grand Lodge Inspector, who wrote a rejoinder to Butch Francisco. Commenting on Manuel Morato, erstwhile head of the censors/classification board, Mr. Francisco wrote the following paragraph in his "Star Bytes" column in the March 31, 2001 issue of *The Philippine Star*:

"In one old TV interview on Channel 4, ... he (Morato) claimed that Jose Rizal was the greatest Christian ever to be born into this world. Now, I have a lot of respect and admiration for Dr. Rizal and I like him a lot better than Andres Bonifacio. But he turned mason later in life. So, does that make him a good Christian? I'm not here to judge.

But my point here is that we should always put things in their proper perspective."

Forthwith V.W. Bro. "Jun" Galarosa jotted down the following reaction to Mr. Francisco's paragraph:

"The writer should be pitied; how lack of knowledge about Masonry can induce one to write meaningless and irresponsible comments. Putting Rizal in his proper perspective will necessarily compel him to include Marcelo H. del Pilar, Andres Bonifacio, Graciano Lopez y Jaena, Apolinario Mabini, Emilio Aguinaldo, Manuel Luis Quezon, Jose Abad Santos, Jose P. Laurel, Benigno Aquino Sr., Manuel A. Roxas, Lope K. Santos and the many other national heroes and leaders who fought for the nation's liberty and progress. Even Ading Fernando of the movie world. Pray tell me, are they bad Christians because they are all Masons?

"Additionally, the writer may not be aware that there are Freemasons who were in the forefront of both the EDSA 1 and EDSA 2 people power revolutions. They fought for the people's rights not because of religious beliefs but only because

they believed it was the proper and logical thing for them, as citizens, to do!"

No, we cannot altogether stop important religious bodies, as well as individuals, from persisting to criticize and condemn Freemasonry and Freemasons because they would be happier if Freemasonry, which champions freedom of religion,

did not exist. But, certainly, we can do many things to keep those who always oppose Freemasonry and Freemasons to a small number.

Let us all stand tall for our ancient and honorable Fraternity, ever ready to help keep the Masonic name strong, unblemished and honored. — eF.R.eN

2. NEEDED: UNANIMITY AND CONCORD AMONG US

"Finally, my brethren, as this association has been formed and perfected with so much unanimity and concord, so may it long continue."

This is an exhortation which we hear every time the officers of our Lodges are installed.

In our stated meetings, moreover, we are reminded that harmony is the strength and support of all societies, especially of ours.

In union, one author averred, there is strength. Morris expressed this idea in a different way when he said, "United, we stand; divided, we fall." These words of truth and wisdom have been proven and tested down the centuries.

Now that, as a Fraternity, we are once again faced with a renewed vilification

Masonry has stood the test of ages, and the waves of persecution which have beat against her have only established her on surer foundation.

-- ALBERT PIKE

campaign by outside forces, particularly the majority church, we should remain steadfast in our Masonic conviction, knowing that it is the truth or the

nearest approximation thereof. "One for all," the motto Bro. Jose Rizal adopted for La Liga Filipina, must now become ours. We must remain unified and proudly stand tall for Freemasonry when subjected to anti-Masonic influences or personally harassed by anti-Masons in our respective churches or the religious organizations we belong to. If we are firmly convinced that we are an organization of excellence, that what we do counts for something, and that the

problem lies with those individuals and groups who would be happier if Freemasonry did not exist, and not with us, then we will not succumb to such influences, harassments or pressures. We must prove to all and sundry, especially to those who always oppose us, that we are true and tested Masons, that we know where we stand, and that we are certain we are on the side of truth and goodness, believing as we do that, as the late Ill. Bro. Albert Pike said, "Masonry has stood the test of ages, and the waves of persecution which have beat against her have only established

her on surer foundation."

Yes, dear brethren, against this background of disinformation campaign contra our ancient and honorable Fraternity, we have got to steadfastly cling to our Masonic convictions and remain unified; for it is only when we demonstrate our unanimity and concord that we can withstand the pressure and vilification against the Craft.

Note: Adapted from the editorial V.W. Bro. Jaime L. Nabua wrote for *Lee Sin Times*, Vol. 12, No. 2, February 2001.

3. WHO BEST CAN WORK AND BEST AGREE

Another Masonic year is about to come to a close. We are once again confronted with the duty of selecting from amongst us the next group of leaders who will lead us, as Lodges, into the next twelvemonths. This is an exercise which has shaped every civil society – one to which Masonry has given a unique implication.

Man's instinctive desire for acceptance and recognition has fueled the dynamism of every organization. It has helped the group a lot to achieve, wittingly or unwittingly, its collective aim. More often than not, however, some members of the group tend to interpret it in a different context to be more congruent with their prejudices. This is inevitable, nonetheless. Everyone has his own criteria as to what makes a good member or an effective leader. Differences, small though they may be, could sometimes be blown out of proportion as to make them antithetical to one another. This is healthy in a democracy, some say. Healthy even if it invites animosity, pretension, division? The venomous

hatred, which is the closest relative of defeat, will linger, poisoning the group's wisdom and obscuring its noble objective(s).

Freemasonry has a low threshold of tolerance for discordance among its members. Every member is a potential candidate for a certain station or office in the Lodge. No personal criterion, whether it be social, financial or professional status, is considered an advantage. The dedication, the performance and the involvement of every candidate are weighed and considered. Personal favors do not count. Popularity is Greek. Coercion is unheard of. Election norms are strictly

followed; officers are selected by the brethren on the basis of who best can work and best agree.

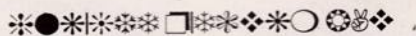
The Lodge elections in December are crucial and interesting in the sense that younger petitioners are knocking at the door of each of our Lodges. This is a good sign of acceptance, and the new set of Lodge leaders must have the moral ascendancy to further revitalize our Lodges and reaffirm the leadership of Masonry in our communities, local and national alike. This will entirely depend on the choice of the majority of Lodge members. Lodge members must make their decision with clearness of mind, without any prejudice or bias; they must base their decision on an objective evaluation of every candidate for office. Foremost in their minds should be the welfare and future of their respective Lodges.

Yes, the Lodge elections in December will again test the resolve and wisdom of every one of the members of each Lodge. Lest we forget, the past has shown us the unpredictability of one's tenure, the inherent risks of holding a position in Lodge, and the sacrifice that goes along with one's sincere desire to

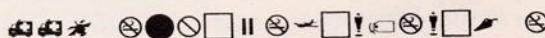
Every Lodge is obliged to bring about a solemn and meaningful conferral that should impress upon the hearts and minds of the brethren the beauty of Masonry...

serve his Lodge with dedication. Admittedly, part of the mystery of the Craft is that every Master Mason is inspired to strive for the coveted seat in the East. But all of us have been taught to be circumspect in all our actions. During the Lodge elections in December, therefore, let us reflect and judge and pray for divine enlightenment and guidance; for, as we all know very well, "when human strength and wisdom fail, we should ever remember that divine assistance is vouchsafed us through the medium of prayer..."

May we, brethren, overwhelmingly elect to responsible positions in our Lodges those who best can work and best agree.-- WB Carlos R. Manabat (#53)



We ought to elect to responsible positions
in our Lodges those brethren who best
can work and best agree.



4. OF ACTING AS RUFFIANS

Why is it that brethren who play the role of ruffians during the Tragedy are not introduced as such while the brethren who play other roles are introduced after the conferral of the sublime degree of Master Mason? Have they done a shameful and dastardly act that their identities should be hidden forever behind the hoodwink? Why does it often happen that brethren who act as ruffians do not recite their lines? Does this mean that they are ashamed of what they have done to the candidate? Why do some Lodges invite brethren from other Lodges to do the unnecessary barbaric acts for them? Is it because the members of such Lodges themselves cannot stomach doing the unnecessary barbaric acts? What is, really, the purpose of perpetrating such unnecessary barbaric acts? What do we gain from doing this? Humor? But we are putting on a tragedy, not a comedy skit! Loyalty? But loyalty is earned; it's never extracted nor demanded!

What are some of the reasons given in defense of those brethren who, acting as ruffians, commit the unnecessary barbaric acts? One is "As all brothers and fellows have done who have gone this way before..." Another is "Hilaw ang trabaho dyan!" A third one is "It's a tradition."

What tradition are we speaking of? Modern Masonry was founded in Scotland; then it spread all over Europe and from there to the rest of the world. Masonry was brought to the Philippines by the Spaniards. The Grand Lodge of the Philippines was later on reorganized under the Americans. In other parts of the Masonic world unnecessary barbaric acts are not practiced during the reenactment of the tragic death of the GMHA. It seems we are the exception, rather than the rule, that sticks out like the proverbial sore thumb in the whole Masonic world.

It seems we have forgotten the

significance of that part in the ritual when the Worshipful Master took the candidate, who was then in the dark, by the right hand and told him to arise, follow his guide and fear not what man could do unto him since he was then in the hands of a true and trustworthy friend in whose fidelity he could with the utmost confidence rely.

It seems we have forgotten our obligation to "give... notice ... so far as the same may come to my knowledge."

Isn't it ironic that the brother who acts as guide to the candidate has forgotten the Worshipful Master's injunctions and even violates his solemn obligation?

Masonry is supposed to "make good men better," thereby bringing to the fore the best in each and every brother. There is nothing in the two branches of Freemasonry that could have transformed a "MORALLY UPRIGHT ADULT, GENTLEMAN" into a

"HOODLUM IN APRON" – unless, of course, he is a closet "MARQUIS DE SADE" hiding behind the lambskin.

In fact, having noticed deterioration in the conferral of Masonic degrees, M.W. Bro. John L. Choa promulgated Edict 131. Yet, the Edict has not eradicated the ill practices during conferrals. Hence, M.W. Bro. Leon Angel Bañez, Jr. supplemented it with Edict 13-A. But the ill practices have continued.

I am sure that the majority of the brethren share my sentiment. But they have kept mum lest they go against the misguided bullies practicing their misconstrued "tradition". Unfortunately, however, through our silence, we have, wittingly or unwittingly, tolerated the unnecessary barbaric acts – or even encouraged their perpetration.

The silent majority must now be heard... Every Lodge is obliged to bring about a solemn and meaningful conferral that should impress upon the hearts and minds of the brethren the beauty of Masonry, thereby fanning the flame of interest and dedication started in the preceding degrees.

We should endeavor to conduct an enlightening conferral that portrays the true value of the teachings of Freemasonry, so that the candidates will feel obliged to do similarly when they confer the degrees of Masonry on those who will come after them.

I believe we can start with introducing the members of the team immediately after the conferral and reflecting our recognition of the contribution and effort of each member of the team in the minutes of the meeting. Yes, even the ruffians should be introduced, so that they, too, will be given due credit. This, I believe, will impel them to act out their roles in a dignified manner.

I suggest that officers and members of Lodges under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of the Philippines attend and observe the traditional conferral and decorum at Lodge Perla del Oriente No. 1034, S.C., every 3rd Saturday of the month, 6 p.m. By attending and observing, we may learn something which will redound to the enhancement of our conferrals of the three degrees of Craft Masonry – V.W. Bro. Benito K. Tan, PDGL

“Freemasonry is the subjugation of the Human that is in man by the Divine; the conquest of the Appetites and Passions by the Moral Sense and the Reason; a continual effort, struggle and warfare of the Spiritual against the Material and Sensual.”

-- ILL. ALBERT PIKE

INSIGHTS INTO THE SIGNIFICANCE OF MASONRY, ESPECIALLY ITS SCOTTISH RITE

"Masonry is concerned with far deeper things than social fellowship. It is one of the streams of the ageless wisdom of humanity that contain the problems of living."

Thus stated V.W. Bro. Vicente Hao Chin, Jr., one of the Masonic scholars in our grand jurisdiction, at the start of the lecture he delivered before Scottish Rite Masons recently.

The problem of human life is, according to him, dual in nature; it is both personal and social. Explained he:

"On the personal level, we are burdened by unhappiness, fear, worry, stress, resentment, anger, depression, etc. On the social level, we have interpersonal conflicts, whether marital or family; we have social divisions, ethnic conflicts, religious conflicts, wars, crimes, intolerance, persecution and injustice. We must solve both problems. It is not enough that we just seek inner peace without regard to social peace; for when there is social disorder, individuals cannot be personally at peace."

He then discussed the process of achieving an enduring social order, as follows:

"One of the important insights of the ageless wisdom is that the ultimate solution to the social problem lies in solving the individual problem. The individual is the root of the social.

"Just imagine the family as a simple

example. If the family is a happy and harmonious one, what do you think is the root of such happiness and harmony? Is it because they are wealthy, or have a big house, or have enough cars, or are well known? We know that many families who have so much of these material things are still extremely unhappy. A happy and harmonious family must be composed of individuals who are mature and possessed of wisdom. When any one of the members shows immaturity, selfishness, lack of self-mastery, then such a member will be the cause of disharmony in the family.

"The same principle applies in an organization, community, city or country. Peace and harmony in an organization or country depend not on its constitution or penal code but on the individuals that compose it. You may have a perfect constitution or perfect laws, but if the citizens are still selfish, immature and inconsiderate, then they will willfully violate these laws. For example, people know that selling illegal drugs is punishable by death, and yet they still engage in it.

The key therefore to social harmony is individual maturity. Masonry seeks this fundamental transformation in the individual as the key to social change. Albert Pike, in his *Morals and Dogma*, stated, 'Masonry labors to improve the social order by enlightening men's minds.' Please note that he did not say that we should try to evolve a perfect constitution, or that we should have a stronger police force, or that we should have a perfect judiciary, before attaining social order. He says that by enlightening the minds of people, we can have a better social order. When the minds of people are unenlightened, laws and constitutions will be violated, policemen cannot eliminate crime, and the judiciary can easily be corrupted."

Next V.W. Bro. Vic Hao Chin, Jr. pointed out that it is in the area of the transformation of individuals that Masonry has something fundamental to offer. Said he: "Masonry has a deep understanding of human nature, and it knows the basic approach towards the transformation of people. In fact, we can say that the purpose of Masonry is nothing less than to effect such transformation." To bolster this submission, he cited Ill. Bro. Albert Pike's definition of Masonry in the lecture of the 32nd, or Master of the Royal Secret, degree of the Scottish Rite which is directly relevant to this process of transformation, as follows:

"You have heard more than one definition of Freemasonry. The truest and the most significant you have yet to hear. It is taught to the Entered Apprentice, the Fellow-Craft, and the Master, and it is taught in every Degree through which you have advanced to

this. It is a definition of what Freemasonry is, of what its purposes and its very essence and spirit are; and it has for every one of us the force and sanctity of divine law, and imposes on every one of us a solemn obligation. *It is symbolized and taught to the Apprentice as well as to you, by the COMPASS and the SQUARE.*

"For the Apprentice, the points of the Compass are beneath the Square. For the Fellow-Craft, one is above and one beneath. For the Master, both are dominant, and have rule, control, and empire over the symbol of the earthly and the material.

"FREEMASONRY is the subjugation of the Human that is in man by the Divine; the conquest of the Appetites and Passions by the Moral Sense and the Reason; a continual effort, struggle and warfare of the Spiritual against the Material and Sensual." (Emphasis added).

This fundamental purpose of Freemasonry is, according to V.W. Bro. Hao Chin, restated by Ill. Pike thus: "There are two natures in man, the higher and the lower, the great and the mean, the noble and the ignoble; and he can and must, by his own voluntary act, identify himself with the one or with the other. Freemasonry is continual effort to exalt the nobler nature over the ignoble, the spiritual over the material, the divine in man over the human."

V.W. Bro. Vic then proceeded to explain how this can be accomplished. Pronounced he: "In the Blue Lodge, a

person is introduced into the mystery teachings of Masonry. It is often but a mystery, and the Master Mason remains in the dark as to what its true teachings are. But those who feel serious about the challenge of transformation must now ascend towards the goals of Masonry, through the higher degrees, and this is the reason for the existence of the Scottish Rite."

If a Mason has merely taken his degrees and considers himself a Mason in all that the term implies but has not been properly informed or makes no effort to inform himself, he cannot be no other than an indifferent Mason, of no little benefit to the Fraternity." – Bro. E.R. Johnston, 32nd degree, *Masonry Defined* (1930)

He again cited Ill. Pike, who states in *Morals and Dogma*:

"Step by step men must advance toward Perfection; and each Masonic Degree is meant to be one of those steps.

"Every Degree of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, from the first to the thirty second, teaches by its ceremonial as well as by its instruction that the noblest purpose of life and the highest duty of a man are to strive incessantly and vigorously to win the mastery of everything, of that which in him is spiritual and divine, over that which is material and sensual."

This is, according to V.W. Bro. Vic, the reason for the different kinds of degrees: the Ineffable, the Philosophical, the

Chivalric, the Historical and Religious, the Ceremonial and Official. All these, he said, are facets of this wisdom that the Mason must endeavor to imbibe.

Then he stressed that the significant mission that Freemasonry, particularly its Scottish Rite, has to do is to undertake the systematic transformation of its members through the lessons of its degrees, and that we have to ask ourselves whether or not we are accomplishing this mission. If we are not accomplishing this mandate of the Masonic fraternity, what can we do to carry it out? V.W. Bro. Vic proposed three courses of action we might take, namely, (1) the establishment of a permanent institute of Masonic wisdom, (2) seeing to it that the work of the institute focus on young people, and (3) actively disseminating Masonic wisdom to the general public.

The purpose of the proposed permanent institute of Masonic wisdom is, he said, "to systematically train Masons on the philosophy and practice of the Masonic Life."

He justified his first proposal with this explanation:

"In the same way as it needs four or five years to study engineering, so it will also take many years to imbibe and integrate Masonic wisdom into one's life. But unlike engineering, it will take more than head knowledge to learn the wisdom of Masonry. It involves a mastery of our entire nature, the understanding of the laws of life, and the awakening of our higher self or the higher compass.

The principles involved in such wisdom are not secret. It has been known for centuries, even thousands of years. Masonry is one of the repositories of such wisdom."

Note: Perhaps our Grand Master will take up the establishment and conduct of a permanent institute of Masonic wisdom in one or more meetings of the Masonic Coordinating Council, of which he is the chairman, since this is a matter which the whole Masonic Family in our grand jurisdiction should be concerned with. The Institute of Masonic Education and Studies (IMES), which M.W. Bro. Franklin J. Demonteverde formally established during his term as Grand Master, may as well be firmed up. Our current Senior Grand Lecturer, V.W. Bro. Ruperto Sangalang, is an academician; hence, he is in a very good position to put more teeth to the IMES. He should get able support from the Junior Grand Lecturers and other knowledgeable brethren. He may also solicit the support of the members of the Speakers Bureau of the Supreme Council, 33rd degree, of the Scottish Rite, one of whom is V.W. Bro. Vic Hao Chin, Jr. himself. It is going to be a great loss for us if we do not take V.W. Bro. Vic's proposal seriously. But through the combined efforts of our Grand Lodge, the Rites, and other Appendant Bodies or Orders, we will yet find the principles of the ageless wisdom of life effectively handed down to us by the great sages by way of the proposed institute. Let's do it! — eF.R.eN

V.W. Bro. Vic emphasized that those who hold senior positions in the Fraternity should take the lead in learning and exemplifying the wisdom of Masonry and

then share it with the rest of the brethren. He averred, "The work of the Institute must be a continuing one. We must get, as well as give, Masonic education. We must also actualize, as well as stimulate the brethren to actualize, the Square and Compasses."

He explicated his second proposal, that the work of the Institute should focus on young people, whether Masons or non-Masons, in this manner: "The young people of today will be the leaders, citizens and parents of tomorrow. We must endeavor to bring to their young minds the timeless principles of the sages of humanity."

V.W. Bro. Vic explained further why we should teach the wisdom of Masonry to young people in particular in the following paragraphs:

"First, in my experience of working with both adults and young people, we have found that beyond a certain age, many adults have difficulty in undertaking fundamental transformations in their lives. It is not because they are unwilling, but it is because it will **break** too much in their lives if they do so. For example, a middle-aged person whose livelihood, business or profession involves unethical practices may find it difficult to just drop his source of income because he cannot easily start a new profession, business or source of income. He must send his children to school and maintain his family. Another example: many adults are so deeply conditioned with unwholesome attitudes and behaviors that to change these may also mean like being a completely new person — a misidentification with his former self.

This is not something easy to do, and we must recognize this fact. A 50-year-old person whose management style or parenting style is to threaten or scold or show anger may find it almost impossible to transform himself into a patient, listening, caring and understanding but firm boss or father.

"Secondly, young people are not yet too immersed in attitudes, behaviors, livelihoods that they cannot alter. In fact, I have been impressed by the willingness of young people to take personal sacrifices in being consistent with their ideals and values. In the youth seminars and camps that we do, a very high majority of young people is extremely responsive to the challenge of living an integrated life – integrating the higher self with the lower.

"Thirdly, these things are not being taught in our schools. So much time is spent in learning polynomials and historical dates and agricultural products of provinces; but when did we ever learn in school how to handle our anger, or fear, or worry; or how to have harmonious relationships with other people; or how to be honest and still be effective in our work?

"It is urgent, therefore, that we start teaching the ageless wisdom of Masonry to young people, if we wish to see a different world for our grandchildren."

And he expounded on his third suggestion, that we actively disseminate Masonic wisdom to the general public, like this:

"Masonry has no secret teachings. It only has private modes of communication. During times of tyranny or oppression, Masonry became a secret organization. But during times of liberty and tolerance, such as today, there is no need for secrecy anymore. We can openly perform the duties of the Mason to selflessly help uplift humanity from the lower square to the higher compass.

"It is a sad thing that Masonry seems not to be very active in the outside world. I believe that this should not be the case because we have a sacred mission to do that which has been entrusted to us by great sages of the past. We are not here in the Craft for just social purposes. We are here to receive the legacy of the ancient wisdom, to imbibe it in our lives, and then by the inner light that has been lit in us, to help enlighten the world. This is not just a boastful claim. Masonry is one of the oldest esoteric organizations in the world. Some of the greatest men in history are from its ranks. We are the inheritors of a sacred tradition. We must work hard to deserve the opportunity to have been admitted to this school of life called Masonry."

V.W. Bro. Vicente Hao Chin, Jr. concluded his lecture on the significance of Masonry, especially its Scottish Rite, in the following manner:

"Friends, in our country today, as well as in most parts of the world, there are crises that grip our societies; there is growing crime and violence, even among the most developed nations. Changing the political leadership often turns out

to be a superficial change. Like the game 'Trip to Jerusalem,' we change chairs but it is the same people who sit – people who are basically self-centered, brought up in the culture of the lower square. Unless we go to the roots of human problems, a change in leadership will not bring about the basic transformation that we want for our society.

"There is, today, too much culture of the lower square, and too little of the higher compass. It is our duty, as Masons, to take part in this national education towards the awakening of our higher self,

the higher compass. I believe that this is our work as Masons, especially as Scottish Rite Masons. It may take us not only years but even generations, before we even make a dent in our society. But there is no other way, and there is no higher or nobler work than this. Let us have the will to start it. And when the work is transforming the minds and lives of people, then shall we witness the true moral and social significance of Masonry, especially its Scottish Rite."

Let us ponder on the insights V.W. Bro. Hao Chin has shared with us and then act accordingly.

"There are two natures in man, the higher and the lower, the great and the mean, the noble and the ignoble; and he can and must, by his own voluntary act, identify himself with the one or with the other. Freemasonry is continual effort to exalt the nobler nature over the ignoble, the spiritual over the material, the divine in man over the human."

-- ILL. ALBERT PIKE

THE WORSHIPFUL MASTER'S QUALIFICATIONS



The Cabletow editorial staff (CES) had a joyous opportunity recently to interview V.W. Bro. Fernando V. Pascua (FVP), Jr., Past Senior Grand Lecturer, Past Grand Orator and member of various committees of our Grand Lodge, at his office in the Scottish Rite Temple on Taft Avenue, Manila. He is currently the Asst. Grand Secretary of the Supreme Council of SGIGs of the 33rd and Last Degree of the A.&A.S.R. of Freemasonry for the Philippines and SGIG for the Orient of Quezon City and Rizal. The interview focused on the qualifications of the Master of a Masonic Lodge. The highlights of the interview are hereunder given.

CES: What are the main qualifications of the Master of a Masonic Lodge?

FVP: The main qualifications of the Master of a Lodge fall under three heads: moral, intellectual and social. As laid down in the installation service, the Master is required to be of good morals, of great skill, true and trusty, and a lover of the whole fraternity.

CES: Why is the Master required to be of good morals?

FVP: The Master is required to be of good morals because he is expected to be the teacher of the principles of virtue and morality, which Freemasonry aims to inculcate. As such, he should himself be, if not an admirable pattern, at least not a notorious transgressor of those principles. As Dr. Townsend, the Deputy Grand Master of Ireland, has remarked, "The most elegant homily against those vices for which the preacher is distinguished falls dead upon the ear; the most graceful eulogy of virtue is but

disgusting in the lips of a man whose conduct gives the lie direct to his words; but he who teaches good, by example, will ever be listened to with respect." But the Master is not only a teacher of his brethren; he is also their representative to the world. Therefore, it becomes his peculiar duty, by his own exemplary conduct, to impress the world at large with a favorable opinion of the institution in which he holds so high a position, and of which his own exemplary or unworthy conduct will be considered by the uninitiated as a fair exponent. Mankind will very naturally presume that the members of a moral institution would hardly confer so important a trust upon an immoral or licentious brother, and they will judge of the nature and character of the Lodge by the behavior of its presiding officer.

CES: Why must the Master be "of great skill" in the intellectual realm?

FVP: To answer that, let me cite Dalcho, who wrote more than a century ago, "A

man of education and talents will elucidate with admirable beauty, perspicuity and interest the origin and progress of the arts in different ages, the development of genius in the organization of our Order, and the adaptation of the system to the wants and happiness of man He will, in short, speak upon literary and scientific subjects as a Master; he will understand what he professes to teach, and consequently, he will make himself understood by others. All will listen to him with delight, and all will be benefited by his instructions." But we have to take note that the developments of the Masonic System in our grand jurisdiction have required a still greater amount of intellectual qualification than that described by Dalcho. An educated man, however well skilled in general literature and science, will make an incompetent Master of a Lodge if he does not devote his attention to the peculiar science of our Order. Since Masonry is "a science of morality clothed in allegory and illustrated by symbols," the Master of a Lodge must qualify by a diligent investigation of these symbols and allegories, the myths and legends of Masonry, their mystical application, and the whole design of the institution in this, its most important feature, must constitute his study.

CES: Why is the Master of a Lodge required to be "true and trusty, and a lover of the whole fraternity"?

FVP: Each of these indicates a particular quality. His truth and fidelity will secure his obedience to all the regulations of the Order, his observance

of its Landmarks and ancient usages, and his opposition to all unwarrantable innovations. They will not only induce him to declare at his installation, but to support his declaration during his whole term of office, that "it is not in the power of any man or body of men to make innovations in the body of Masonry." They are his guarantee that he will not violate the promises he has made of fidelity and obedience to the constituted authorities of the Order. His love for the fraternity will be an evidence of his zeal and fervency in the cause, of his disposition to cultivate all the benign principles of the institution, and to extend its blessings in every unobjectionable way. Where there is love, there must be reasonable service, and affection for the brethren will show its results in devotion to the association of which these brethren form a component part.

CES: What are other qualifications than those mentioned earlier that are necessary to the Master of a Lodge?

FVP: They are qualifications which he needs in his capacity as a presiding officer. He should rule his brethren with love rather than with force. He should also exercise firmness with moderation. He should, moreover, cultivate a spirit of conciliation. He should learn to subdue by mildness and authority the irritations which will too often arise in an angry debate. And, in deciding every question which is brought before him, he should establish the correctness of his judgment by the persuasions of reason rather than claim obedience by the force of authority. The office of a Master is one which should not be too readily

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sought because its functions are not easily discharged.

CES: What are the extraordinary powers of the Master which belong to the presiding officer of no other association?

FVP: The Master of a Lodge presides over the business, as well as the work or Masonic labor of the Lodge. Besides, in all cases, his decisions on points of order are final; for it is a settled principle of Masonic Law that no appeal can be taken to the Lodge from the decision of the Master. The Grand Lodge alone can overrule his declared opinion on any point of order. The Master of a Lodge alone can overrule his declared opinion on any point of order. The Master also has the right to convene his Lodge at any time, and he is the judge of any emergency that may require a special meeting. Without the Master's consent, except on the nights of the stated or regular communications, the Lodge cannot be congregated and therefore any business transacted at a called or special communication, without his sanction or consent, would be illegal and void.

CES: If the Master be present at the regular communications of the Lodge, is the time of opening left to his discretion?

FVP: Yes, even at the regular communications of the Lodge, if the Master be present, the time of opening is left to his discretion since no one can take from the Master his prerogative of opening the Lodge. But if he be absent when the hour of opening that is specified

in the By-Laws has arrived, the Senior Warden, if present, and if not the Junior, may open the Lodge, and the business transacted will be regular and legal even without the Master's sanction because it was his duty to be present, and he cannot take advantage of his own remissness of duty to interfere with the business of the Lodge.

CES: Is the selection of the time of closing also vested in the Master?

FVP: Yes. He is the sole judge of the proper period at which the labors of the Lodge should be terminated, and may suspend business, even in the middle of a debate, if he supposes it is expedient to close the Lodge. Hence, no motion for adjournment, or to close, or to call off from labor to refreshment, can ever be admitted in a Masonic Lodge. Such a motion would be an interference with the prerogative of the Master, and could not therefore be entertained.

CES: Why is this prerogative of opening and closing his Lodge necessarily vested in the Master?

FVP: By the nature of our institution, the Master is responsible to the Grand Lodge for the good conduct of the body over which he presides. He is charged, in those questions to which he is required to give his assent at his installation, to hold the Landmarks in veneration, and to conform to every edict of the Grand Lodge; and any violation of the one or disobedience of the other by the Lodge, in his presence, he would be answerable to the Supreme Masonic Authority. Hence, the necessity that an arbitrary

power should be conferred upon him, by the exercise of which he may at any time be enabled to prevent the adoption of resolutions, or the commission of any act which would be subversive of, or contrary to, those ancient laws and usages which he has sworn to maintain and preserve.

CES: What rule arises from the principle that the Master, when present, must always preside over his Lodge?

FVP: The rule that a Masonic Lodge can never, under any circumstances, be resolved into a committee of the whole.

CES: What are some of the prerogatives of the Master?

FVP: It is the prerogative of the Master, with his Wardens, to represent his Lodge in the Communications of the Grand Lodge As the Grand Lodge is the Supreme Tribunal of the jurisdiction, as all its decisions on points of Masonic Law are final, and as there can be no appeal for its judgment, it is evident that it is highly important that every Lodge should be represented in its deliberations. The Master and Wardens become, like the old Roman Consuls, invested with the care of seeing that their constituents receive no detriment. It is essential, therefore, that one of them at least, and

the Master more particularly, should be present at every communication of the Grand Lodge; and accordingly the observance of this duty is explicitly inculcated upon the Master at his installation into office.

Another prerogative of the Master of a Lodge is that of controlling the admission of visitors. He is required by his installation charge to see that no visitors be received without passing a due examination and producing proper vouchers; and this duty he cannot perform unless the right of judging of the nature of that examination and of those vouchers be solely vested in himself, and the discretionary power of admission or rejection be placed in his hands. The Lodge cannot, therefore, interfere with this prerogative, nor can the question be put to it whether a particular visitor shall be admitted. The Master is in all such cases the sole judge, without appeal from his decision.

Having explained to us the prerogatives of the Master of a Masonic Lodge, V.W. Bro. Nanding Pascua told us that he had to meet with the Sovereign Grand Commander, Ill. Rosendo C. Herrera, 33rd degree, and the Grand Secretary General, Ill. Agerico V. Amagna, Jr., 33°. Hence, we hastily expressed our heartfelt gratitude and left his office.

The Master of a Masonic Lodge should rule his brethren with love rather than with force, exercise firmness with moderation, cultivate a spirit of conciliation, learn to subdue by mildness and urbanity the irritations which will too often arise in an angry debate and, in deciding every question brought before him, establish the correctness of his judgement by the persuasions of reason rather than claim obedience by the force of authority.

QUALITIES, POWERS AND DUTIES of a WORSHIPFUL MASTER

VW Samuel P. Fernandez

Pharaoh to Joseph: "Can we find such a one as this is, a man in whom the spirit of God is?" (Gen. 41:38)

"The man whom the Lord doth choose, he shall be holy." (Numbers 16:7)

King Solomon prayed thus: "Give therefore Thy servant an understanding heart to judge Thy people, that I may discern between good and bad." (1 Kings 3:9)

"Where no counsel is the people fall." (Prov. 11:14)

"Where there is no vision, the people perish." (Prov. 29:18)

"Better is the poor and a wise child than an old foolish King, who will no more be admonished." (Eccl. 4:13)

The foregoing Old Testament quotations give us some insight into the qualities leaders must have in order to govern well. A leader must be holy, must have an understanding heart, must be able to discern between good and evil, must know how to counsel, must have a vision and must be humble enough to accept admonition.

What qualities of leadership a person must have? Let us meditate on the following New Testament verses:

"Whoever will be chief among you shall be your servant." (Matt. 23:37).

Jesus said: "The good shepherd giveth his life for his sheep." (John 10:11).

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." (John 10:27).

"If a man knows not how to rule his house, how shall he take care of the church of God?" (1 Tim. 3:5).

"Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour." (1 Tim. 5:17).

A leader must be humble, must know how to give his life for his people, must be heard by his followers, and know how to rule his house.

I have conducted countless leadership seminars and all attendees dream that they will be successful as leaders. I have associated myself with a number of civic organizations and have seen leaders, good or bad. Some leaders have been successful, others have been utter failure? Why?

It is said that a cabinet member of President Lincoln blurted: "We cannot fight a war without generals. We suggest that you promote a colonel immediately and create a new leader."

President Lincoln calmly answered thus: "I can promote a colonel to the rank of a general by a stroke of my pen, but that won't make him a leader. Leaders create themselves."

QUALITIES OF A MASON LEADER

1. Knowledge of the Craft – Ambition to be in the limelight is no guaranty that a brother can be a good leader. Understanding the endemic problems of a Lodge is a step towards finding the solution to what ails the Craft? How is the financial standing of the Lodge? Is the Masonic education strong and includes educating our loved ones and non-masons? How organized is our

charity mission? Is our budget realistic? How educated are our members on our Grand Lodge Constitution and the By-Laws of our Lodge?

2. Teaching the Brethren – "Such is the nature of our Constitution, that as some must, of necessity rule and teach, so must others, of course, learn to submit and obey."

A Worshipful Master must not only rule but must teach his members and nurture them in the ways of the Craft.

A successful Worshipful Master is one whose teaching touches the lives of his successors.

3. Clarity of direction and tenacity of purpose – Much of the misunderstanding of implementing programs and direction is the lack of clarity of conveying one's thought.

A Worshipful Master must be able to make clear decisions and reason logically. He must have the courage to push his program and survive odds with resolute determination.

4. Moral Boldness – Worshipful Masters must have a "zealous regard for the interests of Masonry."

In investing the jewel of the Master, the Installing Officer extols him thus: "The Square, my Brother is an emblem of morality; and as it is the special badge of the Master's Office, it should

constantly remind you that not only by precept, but by example, you should promote good morals among brethren and thus endeavor to avert the shadow of any scandal or reproach against fraternity."

Freemasonry has a firm code of ethics. A Mason leader should show a strong sense of personal morality in his showing the way. He shows by example how to lead a mason's life. The strength and/or weakness of a Lodge is often traced to the leader's way of moral concern.

5. Skill and Assiduity – The time-honored Worshipful Master's seat is fraught with grave responsibilities. How a Worshipful Master addresses the myriad problems will depend upon the skill and assiduity with which the Master manage its concern. It is basic that the leader know the objectives, tenets, and the "genuine principles" of the Craft. A devised method of accomplishing Lodge vision and mission gets others to follow a well-planned direction. The test of Lodge leadership is in its being able to have a unified Lodge action in carrying out its Lodge program. If there are no designs on the trestle board, there will only be confusion in the temple. Poor attendance in Lodge meetings is symptomatic of disorganized and uninteresting meetings. When Past Masters are recycled to occupy the Oriental and/or Warden chairs, expect a weak Lodge and/or dying Lodge.

Wardens should have a working plan long before their time comes. There is no substitute to planning ahead.

SOME IMPORTANT POINTS TO PONDER ON

Whoever will be chosen as Junior Warden will in three years time occupy the highest position of the Lodge as Worshipful Master, he will focus his attention on how to head and represent his Fraternity, with dignity and honor. Hence, before finalizing your choice, please consider the following qualities needed for a Worshipful Master.

A. Leadership

Can the Brother inspire others to have unity of purpose? Does he have the ability to inspire teamwork and encourage a high degree of morale? Does he have the ability to get others to do willingly what is to be done?

B. Organization and Planning

Does the Brother have the ability to look ahead and foresee the requirements of his responsibilities? Does the Brother have the ability to choose Brethren who will assume the responsibilities delegated to them?

C. Responsibility

Does the Brother know how to discharge his obligations as a Mason and as a leader of the Craft? Does he have the feel of the endemic problems confronting the Lodge? Does he have a realistic appreciation of the tasks he eventually will undertake? Has he demonstrated ability to see and solve problems?

D. Judgment

Does the Brother have the wisdom to select the right persons to make maximum use of their talents, qualifications and abilities? Has he demonstrated the ability to use scarce resources for achieving given ends?

E. Acceptability

Does the Brother have the ability to establish a constructive contact with people? Does he have the ability to make people feel that he is always thinking, speaking and acting in their best interests?

The choice of an able and acceptable, worthy and well qualified Lodge Officers should be our utmost concern. Ours is not a civic organization. We are a fraternal institution. As such, no one among us is to use financial resources to be elected into a responsible position of leadership in the Lodge. We must bear in mind that "merit is a just title to our privileges." We need leaders who have the courage to introduce meaningful and visionary change to make Philippine Masonry attractive not only to us, its current members, but to potential members. The future of our therefore lies in our judicious choice of leaders.

POWERS OF THE MASTER

- A. To assemble the brethren.
- B. To issue or cause to be issued summonses or notices.
- C. To refuse admission to any one who

shall not have proved himself to be a Master Mason.

D. To refuse admission to any member who is intoxicated, who is making trouble, or who is not in proper attire.

E. To refuse admission to a visitor if a member of the Lodge has made a valid objection privately to the Master giving him the reason therefore.

F. To suspend any officer for irregularity or disobedience.

G. To perform all acts which by ancient usage are proper and incident to his office and not in contravention with the Constitution, By-laws, Edicts, Ordinances, or General Regulations of the Grand Lodge or the By-Laws of his Lodge. (Masonic Law Book 1984)

DUTIES OF THE MASTER

A. To designate the appointive officers of the Lodge.

B. To preside at all meetings.

C. To confer the degrees in strict accordance with the ritual of the Grand Lodge.

D. To give or cause to be given in full the lecture of each degree on the day of conferral.

E. To examine the minutes of each meeting and sign them after approval.

F. To supervise the acts of all officers of his Lodge.

G. To cast the deciding vote in case of a tie vote.

H. To guard against any infraction of its By-Laws, the Constitution, By-Laws, Edict, Ordinances or General Rules and Regulations of the Grand Lodge of the General Regulations of Masonry.

I. To prepare a budget of expenses of his Lodge and a statement of its income for approval by the Lodge.

J. To transmit through the Grand Lodge Inspector a copy of the approved budget to the Grand Secretary.

K. To cause to be prepared at the close of each calendar month a statement from the books and records of the Lodge, showing in detail the receipts, debts and disbursements, meetings, attendance, and such information as may be required. One copy of the report signed only by the Master will be mailed as early as possible to the Grand Master, Treasurer, Secretary and Inspector shall be sent later to the Committee on administration of Lodges. Both copies shall be mailed thru the Grand Secretary.

L. To read or cause to be read Section 2, Article II, of the Uniform Code of By-Laws for Subordinate Lodges at the Stated Meetings of October, November, and December of each year. (Masonic Law Book)

CONCLUDING REFLECTION

The Apostle Paul's admonition to the church of Corinth, which was split into different loyalties – to Peter, to Paul and to Apollo, is very revealing. Paul wrote: "You should regard us as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God." Paul, Peter and Apollo as leaders

were stewards, nothing more and nothing less.

This reminds us of the prayer wish articulated by the Installing Officer: "Within your peaceful walls may your children's, children celebrate, with joy and gratitude the annual recurrence of this auspicious solemnity. And may the tenets of our profession be transmitted through this Lodge, pure and unimpaired, from generation to generation.

As leaders, we are stewards of God. Worshipful Masters come and go. The strength of our mystic tie hardly will snap if we are aware that we must give our best in wielding judiciously the gavel entrusted to us. As Masters we must wield the gavel to the best interest of our brethren. Masonry is a unique organization. Worshipful Master is not a creation of the present moment. Worshipful Master have their baptism into the Craft's leadership through serving as Wardens. This is why the Installing Officer charges the Warden thus: "In the absence of the Master you will succeed to higher duties..."

Worshipful Masters are but stewards of the Exalted Station. We owe it to our Great Creator that our brethren has given us the privilege to lead them to teach the members the Masonic way. At most Masonic leaders can only be once a Chief Officer of the Lodge. After the Worshipful Master's term the Chief Officer of the Lodge will become Past Masters. Past Respectful Leader whose stewardship and leadership mantle is passed to the successor in the Oriental Chair are products of experience and dedication. They are not products of a stroke of a pen or of the size of the pocket book.



by Sean O' Neill, 32nd degree

This article is printed in the Scottish Rite Journal, March 2001, pp. 39-43. With permission from the Supreme Council, 33rd degree, of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry for the Southern Jurisdiction in the U.S.A., we are reprinting it; for the problems which Brother O' Neill presents are quite similar to those we have encountered in our grand jurisdiction, and the solutions to the problems he proposes may be either adopted by us or adapted to our particular situation. – Editor

Being made a Mason is pretty easy. Despite all the ceremony, it's a lot like joining any other association. A man fills out an application, is approved, pays a few dollars, and goes through a few formalities. In Freemasonry, the latter consists of the Entered Apprentice, Fellowcraft and Master Mason Degrees. Then, if he can memorize and recite, he's done. Nowadays, what with one-day conferrals, he probably won't even have to do that. He is instantly a Master Mason. So what's the problem? Well, why would anyone bother joining this version of Freemasonry in the first place? Second, if he did, what would keep his interest over a few years, let alone a lifetime?

Surely most of the Brethren would object to this dismissive description of their Masonic experience. Although it captures the mechanics of the procedures, it clearly excludes the emotional and psychological change that attends the gradual making of a man into a Mason. A man being "made a Mason at sight" is an extraordinary occurrence precisely because, rather than the transformation it should be, it reduces the procedures into an incident.

Today the Craft attempts to achieve what would seem to be mutually exclusive

goals – to stem the contraction of our Fraternity by building the membership, and to maintain the exclusivity of the Brotherhood by selecting only enthusiastic men of good character as Candidates. How are we doing in meeting these objectives? Masonry used to strive to make good men better; our aim today seems to be to make anything we can out of anyone we can get.

If being made a Mason is a process, it is important that Lodges imbue knowledge of the real meaning of Masonry to the Candidates and do so

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over time so that it can be absorbed. If they do not, then those men will have joined something but become nothing.

It is popularly known that in colonial America the Degrees were given in a different manner. After the conferral of each Degree, the Brethren were seated at a large table, and a discussion about the content and meaning of the ritual was held. When the Master Masons were satisfied with the Candidate's understanding, everyone enjoyed fellowship, good food, and spirited beverage. It was a festive board from which members left for home at a civilized hour refreshed in body, mind, and spirit.

This doesn't resemble today's meetings very much. The very idea of having a sociable glass in a Lodge social hall is anathema. We force our Candidates to memorize obscure passages filled with archaic words and phrases. In our Degree work, the Brothers are so busy correcting each other's recital that one would scarcely know that the entire exercise is supposed to be for the Candidate's benefit. Many of our Stated Meetings are more an insomnia cure than informative sessions of brotherhood and enlightenment. Educational programs primarily consist of plaintive requests for blood donations, child ID program participation, and financial contributions to the Masonic homes — all worthwhile causes to be sure, but how often have you heard the identical presentations?

... In America, the Square and Compasses are now better represented on gravestones than on lapels or rings.

Sometimes we rationalize all of this by

thinking that membership numbers don't matter. We don't care if men join, in other words, because we are better off somehow if most of them don't want to. But you wanted to join — why shouldn't they? What has changed too much since the "old days," and what is too much the same?

In early America, the Masonic Lodge was the center of the town's activities. Everyone knew of it, and it was the focal point of most citizen meetings that were held after nightfall. At that time, every good man sought to become a Mason because every good man that he knew was a Mason. Today, urbanization and frequent relocation have forced a transient culture upon the Fraternity. The obvious benefits of membership — respectability, reputation and mutual reliance — have diminished in society generally and are currently dismissed by many as naïve and idealistic. This actually means that although people would like to live in such a world, they have given up hope.

Today, we cannot count on good men having heard of us and wanting to join. We are a nearly obscure organization, membership in which conveys nothing in particular to the average person. Indeed, there seem to be only two categories of persons in the USA — people who have heard of the Shriners and are surprised to hear that they are all Freemasons, and people who know of us only by virtue of their grandfathers having been, as one woman phrased it, "Masonics."

So much for the problems. What can we do to implement solutions? How can we become the Fraternity we endlessly advocate and aspire to be?

Masonic Rights and Benefits

A number of years ago, the U.S. Marines sought to target their recruiting effort by learning what characteristics of the Corps impressed young American men. Their research suggested that the positive impression made by the Marines is three-fold: exclusivity, quality and masculinity. The Corps responded with the following slogan: "The Marines are looking for a few good men." Today's Masonry must make essentially the same offer. The primary right and benefit, then, is the *loyalty inherent in our select society*. Masons are sometimes accused of treating each other preferentially – which one can only hope we really do. Why not? Our Brethren, as men with positive character traits and binding oaths of right conduct, are exactly the sort of people one would like to do business with. In the Virginia ritual, "murder and treason excepted," all Brothers are automatically on your side, though still at their election and according to their conscience.

We were never intended to be like other men; so, we should revel in these fundamental differences and stop trying to convince the public that we are just another fraternity with philanthropic objectives. We are more than that, and this identity crisis has inclined many of us to dilute our message: Masons are better men than most, and we belong to a select society based on morality and character. Our membership problems and unwarranted attacks from some fundamentalist groups have caused us to approach the public with hat in hand, as though we have something to apologize for. We should reject being put on the defensive. Why not exclusive

and special?

The Catechisms

The memorization of catechism is of recent invention. Although many Masons are great and enthusiastic ritualists, perhaps not all men considering initiation wish to spend time learning rote questions and answers. What is the core information necessary to be a good Mason? Certainly familiarity with the ritual, generally, and memorization of all tokens, grips, and passes. Additionally, each Candidate should fulfill a course of study within the Lodge that conveys a clear understanding of the promises contained in the catechism. They should understand what they have sworn to uphold. We should also explain, as part of the oath, that the penalties are entirely symbolic.

The Ritual

When you go to England, you will be faced with the English ritual. Just so for the Italian ritual and so on. Visitors to the United States have the pleasure of being confronted with over 50 different versions of the same thing. How do we rationally explain to our Candidates that it is of great importance they get the words right, when a few miles away, Masons sincerely recite them differently? Over as much time as it takes, a committee of all 50 Grand Lecturers should meet to unify this country's ritual. The Scottish Rite, Southern Jurisdiction, is already well on the way in this regard. This year, several Valleys will be performing the Obligatory Degrees of the Revised Standard Pike Ritual. After this ritual has proven itself in practice, it will, as approved by the Supreme Council,

become the uniform standard for all Scottish Rite ritual work. Our exemplifications – whether Symbolic Lodge, Scottish Rite, or Appendant Body – would be stunning if we could profit from so many ritualists who had worked over so many years.

Membership

Traditionally, interested men virtually have had to plead for consideration as Masonic Candidates. This was fine when most men heard of the Fraternity (one out of 12 American men were Masons in the 1950s). Today we can no longer afford the luxury of such a practice. Furthermore, we still have misinformed Freemasons answering inquiries by saying "It's a secret" or "I can't tell you" to questions they can answer. How can we change this policy without begging for candidates ourselves? The answer, radical as it seems, is to reverse our historic method – men should only become Masons if they are invited to join. In this way we would maintain the exclusivity of the Fraternity and entirely free ourselves to approach openly all men we feel would be quality Brothers.

Minorities

One of the public perceptions that contributes to our membership problem is the concern of some young men that we are just a version of the Ku Klux Klan or at least share to some degree a negative view of minorities. These young men have no intention of being identified with us. We must adopt a formal position statement that Freemasonry is in fact

universal in its view, as opposed to having an egalitarian policy that has nothing to do with who will actually be admitted. It would also help if Grand Lodges would at least recognize Prince Hall Masons as eligible for visitation and quit procrastinating in the face of the inevitable. If bigotry was ever considered a virtue, it is not one today.

The world has changed, and we have not kept pace. At the current rate of membership loss, we seem destined to be a real secret society, one that nobody has heard of or cares about. **Masonry still has much to offer humanity. We must not allow this premier engine of character building and democracy to vanish from the world. To cherish and value the past is not to be chained to it.**

About Brother Sean O'Neill

He is a psychotherapist in private practice in Annandale, Va. He is a member of the Scottish Rite Bodies of Alexandria, Va., where he is a member of the Valley's Education Committee. He is also District Educational Officer for Virginia Masonic District 1-A, Lodge Educational Officer of Ft. Hunt Daytime Lodge No. 353, Past Master of Skidmore Daylight Lodge No. 237, and Librarian/Historian of Springfield Lodge No. 217. He is a member of the Knights Templar, Shrine, and Allied Masonic Degrees, a Patron of the Eastern Star, and an Advisor to the Order of DeMolay.

Suppose we were as active in Masonry as he is. What kind of organization would Philippine Masonry be?

MAY I ALWAYS BUILD

by Bro. Nonnato S.R. Evangelista

Fellow men, Brothers:

May I, a Master Mason, always build!

I've opened my eyes to visions, that I may unlock the message in the sand, in the iron, in the tree, I hope to see in the Holy Bible, the Square and the Compasses, Masonry's three greet lights, the mystery beyond mysteries, the builder beyond all building. With vision, may I always build!

I will open my mind to HUMILITY, that I may understand and gain WISDOM.

I will open my heart to PATIENCE, that I may grow and achieve STRENGTH.

I will open my hands to ARTISTRY, that I may be enriched and present BEAUTY.

In HUMILITY, PATIENCE and ARTISTRY, may I always build!

As I walk through several stations before God and men, let my work go beyond creed, color and nation, bridging the world of differences, and letting fall to ruin the House of War and enlarging the House of Peace.

Guided by the Masonic Light and equipped with Masonry's working tools, may I always build.

As I speak and even if the world is ravaged and destroyed, while the breath of the Supreme Architect is in me, let my words be so pure, my actions be so spotless that Freemasonry may be judged by men, Masons and non-Masons alike, as a worthwhile way of life.

In Him, in Unity, in Harmony, together, my beloved brothers, may we always build Masonry's symbolic temple of liberty, equality and fraternity in the souls of men, particularly our country, and in the souls of nations, particularly our very own.

So mote it be.

Note: This is the short talk Bro. Nonnato S.R. Evangelista gave before Bagumbayan Lodge No. 4, F. & A.M., when he was newly raised to the sublime degree of Master Mason.... Together, brethren, let us always build our Craft and our country into sturdy temples of liberty, equality and fraternity. — eF.R.eN

THE APRON

by Bro. Milford Shields

I took an apron from the pile of white
And tied it on to sit in Lodge one night.

As I sat there I felt a warming glow

About the apron and I looked and lo!

The other brethren who had worn it there
Were gathered round in mystic meeting rare.

We shared with each other the blessings of the years,

The dreams, successes, hopes and joyous tears;

Then we grew humble in each other's loss,

In full compassion shared each brother's cross;

Our hearts are one in that most holy place,

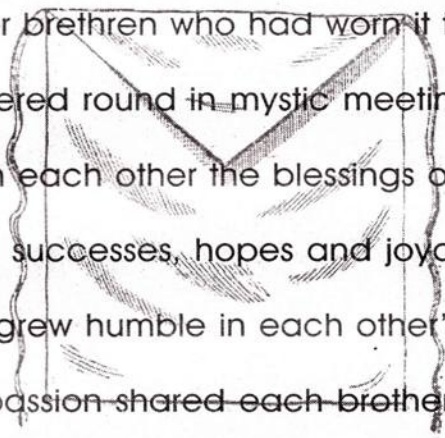
Our spirits fused in God's Masonic grace.

We looked upon the apron's perfect white,

we were all wearing it that mystic night,

We saw that it was large enough to fit

The whole wide world, for God had fashioned it.



A Monitor to All of Us Masons

THE APRON AND ITS MULTIPLE SIGNIFICANCE

by B.J. Torres, PM (147)

In the spirit of the pun "The best way to *have* happiness is to *halve* it," I want to share my "research" on the apron and its multiple significance, if only to remind ourselves of our sworn duties to the Deity, our respective families, and our fellowmen.

Lest we forget, we are taught in the Entered Apprentice Degree that "the lamb-skin apron is an emblem of innocence and the badge of a Mason because the lamb in all ages has been deemed an emblem of innocence. He, therefore, who wears the lamb-skin as the badge of a Mason is continually reminded of that purity of life and conduct so essentially necessary to his gaining admission into the Celestial Lodge above where the Supreme Architect of the Universe forever presides."

The noted American Masonic scholar Albert G. Mackey informs us that the Masonic alphabet or basic symbols consist of the apron, the working tools and others that may be found inside the Lodge room, but foremost of these is the apron because it has multiple significance unlike the others which have only one or two symbolical meanings.

In most grand jurisdictions, for obvious reasons, Lodges make use only of white linen to represent the lamb-skin apron

but retaining the original significance.

During the early years of the transition from operative to speculative Masonry, an innovation was made on the design of the apron, thereby adding more symbolical meanings to it. From a rough cut-out from the animal hide as protection for the operative Mason, the upper part being smaller and the lower part wider, the apron as re-designed formed two geometrical figures, an equilateral triangle forming the top and a perfect square forming the main body, with two cords or string used to gird the body around the waist. This has resulted in the formulation of more significance.

Let us take a closer look at the parts and their significance.

The equilateral triangle symbolizes the sovereignty of the Supreme Architect of the Universe over the lives of Masons; it should remind us that He governs the life of every one of us. Masons symbolized by the perfect square

The Cabletow

(beneath the equilateral triangle), and that He is considered the Master of every Mason's conduct and morality.

The three angles or corners of the equilateral triangle represent the three Great Lights of Masonry – the Holy Bible, Square and Compasses; the three Great Pillars of Masonry – the Master, the Senior Warden and the Junior Warden, who in turn represent Wisdom, Strength and Beauty, "it being necessary that there should be wisdom to contrive, strength to support, and beauty to adorn all great and important undertakings." These three pillars also remind the Mason that the Master and Wardens deserve to be respected and that the members of the Lodge must pay due obedience to all their biddings, "as some, of necessity, rule and govern so must others, of course, learn to submit and obey."

The three equal sides represent the three principal tenets of Masonry, namely, Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth, the noble meanings of which are vividly explained in the Monitor.

The perfect square forming the main body of the apron, on the other hand, symbolizes the individual Mason wearing the apron. Its four right angles or corners remind the Mason of the foundations of morality – specifically, purity of heart and soul, truth as a divine attribute and the foundation of every virtue, honesty in words and deeds, and sincerity of interest in any undertaking. These qualities remind the Mason of his relation to God and to his fellowmen. The four equal sides represent the cardinal

virtues; they remind the Mason to practice temperance in words and deeds, fortitude in noble purposes, prudence to judge wisely, and justice to the humbles and the greatest alike. They therefore remind the Mason to strictly observe the four perfect points of entrance, which are likewise vividly explained in the Monitor.

What do the two cords of strings represent? They represent Faith and Love. Taken together, they remind the Mason wearing the apron never to lose his trust in God and to see to it that Love, which binds mankind into a brotherhood, must never be broken, ever remembering that Charity "extends beyond the grave, through the boundless realms of eternity."

When tied around the waist, the two cords or strings form a circle, which is, in turn, emblematic of the Spirit of God. They therefore remind the Mason wearing the apron of God's omnipresence, omnipotence, unity and infinity; for no more perfect symbol of Spirit can be found than the circle whose center is everywhere and its circumference nowhere.

Lest we forget, dear brethren, we wear the apron to constantly remind ourselves of the purity of life and rectitude of conduct so essentially necessary to our gaining admission into the Celestial Lodge above.... We wear the apron even in public Masonic functions to show to all and sundry that the apron is a mark of distinction from other men because we are supposed to have become better persons after receiving the Divine Light the Craft has to offer.

We also wear the apron as a reminder of our sworn obligations to our brethren, their widows and orphans. When we wear the apron, we are reminded to demonstrate, by word and by deed, that our lives are guided by the Masonic teachings in our relationships with God, our families, our fellowmen, and country.

When we Masons therefore wear the "spiritual apron" outside the Lodge, we will always be reminded to faithfully perform our sworn duties to the Deity, our respective families, our fellowmen, and our country. The apron, in a word, serves as a constant monitor to us that duty is the one great law of Masonry.

SA LUNGSOD NG LIPA, NUNG NAKARAANG ARAW NG KALAYAAN



Ang mga Kapatid sa Lohiyang Mabini-Kalaw Blg. 195, at kasapi ng Lipa Chapter No. 31, Order of the Eastern Star, ay nakiisa sa idinaos na mga seremonya sa Plaza Independencia, sa pagkataas ng watawat, at sa palatuntunan kung saan ang isang Choir ng mga Kapatid ay umawit ng "Bayan Ko" na talagang ikinagalak ng Punong Lungsod, Kgg. Vilma Santos Recto at Bise-Alkalde Fernando "Boy" Manguera. Ang mga Mason at OES Ladies ay pinangunahan nina WB Benedicto P. Parumog; Sis. Evelyn I. Palacio; VW Servando Lara, DDGM; Bro. Feliciano Pacifico; VW Jaime M. Tolentino, PJGL; Inocentes D. Gaitana; Edelito C. Dimailig; VW Celso B. Sarmiento, PDDGM; VW Irineo P. Goce; Virgilio T. Inhumang, Jr.; WB Norman B. Averion, PM; WB Alfredo M. del Castillo, PM; Bro. & Mrs. Danilo Mayo; Bro & Mrs. Crispin Sabiniano; Sisters Estelita P. Goce; Evangeline Sarmiento; Susan Magana; at Ms. Alma Pacifico at isang petisyoner na si G. Misael C. Vasquez.

Worshipful Brother Asiong Illenberger, Past Master of Labong Lodge No. 59, recently attended a meeting of the brethren of Quintin Lodge No. 231 in Iloilo City. The Master of this Lodge requested him to give a short talk and, obliging, he discussed....

CLOTHING, TIME AND HARMONY: THEIR INTERRELATIONSHIP

He started his talk by inviting the brethren to join him in recollecting the scene of the second section of the 3rd degree of Craft Masonry. He then reminded them that there were two kings who presided over that fateful meeting of the craftsmen when the chief architect, Hiram Abif, was found missing; they were Solomon, king of Israel, and Hiram, king of Tyre, who accompanied the contingent of master craftsmen and fellowcrafts from his kingdom in order to comply with his contract to help build the temple of his chief ally and trading partner, the king of Israel.

"Although the Masonic ritual makes mention only of the men from Tyre," WB Illenberger continued, "biblical accounts relate that there were also Hebrew craftsmen involved in the building of King Solomon's temple – probably with minor responsibilities. This explains why the Hebrew king was always present during the transaction of business by the lodge. With this setting, the Grand Master Hiram Abif (GMHA) was entrusted with the difficult job of presiding over two groups of craftsmen. Although he was of the Hebrew tribe of Naphtali, he was a long-

time resident of Tyre, where he learned the fabled artificer skills of the Phoenicians. He was a most qualified superintendent of the craftsmen from two nations having different and even conflicting cultural traits. He functioned not only as architect, but also as a construction taskmaster. His job is the equivalent of a modern-day contractor exercising administrative supervision over foreign contract workers employed by a project in a third country."

WB Illenberger further pointed out, "The Hebrews were a conservative, doctrinaire and potentially violent people. This was evidenced by their manner of dressing, their piousness, and their single-mindedness in waging a forty-year war to win over what they believed was the promised land. They had not much regard for timeliness, except when associated with prayer. The Phoenicians from Tyre, on the other hand, were traveling professionals; they were a worldly people, more sophisticated in ways and in dressing. They were less pious but, as engineers and craftsmen, they were scientific in their outlook and regarded timeliness or promptness as essential to their profession. There were

other differences between the two groups of craftsmen. All these differences contributed to a potentially confrontational atmosphere." Then he added:

"If we are to rearrange the contents of our 3rd degree ritual with regard to the duties of the three Lights, we can see the administrative character of that situation more clearly.

"The Master intones, 'Brother Junior Deacon, call the brethren in and close the door. The brethren will c l o t h e

Disrespect for norms of clothing and timeliness (or punctuality) are not trivial; rather, they are constant reminders of disharmony that threatens the continued good health of any Lodge.

themselves. The officers shall approach the East to receive their jewels.' This order speaks of the deference given to the Hebrew sensitivity on dressing properly inside a temple or during meetings of similarly religious import. The pictures shown in the book Clausen's *Commentaries on Morals and Dogma*, which have been judged by biblical societies as authentic, show that the temple builders wore the same clothing when meeting and were differentiated in rank only by their aprons and their office only by their jewels. This was more a Hebrew dictate, to which the Tyrians deferred. Clothing norms, therefore, contributed to harmony.

"The duties of the Master are reiterated during the ritual, as follows: 'to set the craft at work and give them the necessary instructions whereby they

may pursue their labors'. But, given the bi-racial make-up of the ancient workforce, this authority was easier said than done; if the conditions were not conducive to operations, labor would be extremely difficult to pursue. Hence, to ensure that the working environment was set properly, the Master delegated two important tasks to the Wardens.

"The Senior Warden is charged 'to assist the Worshipful Master in opening and closing his lodge, to pay the craft their wages if any be due, that none may go a w a y

dissatisfied, harmony being the strength and support of all societies, especially of ours'. The ancient Lodge had to ensure that there was fairness in wages and equitability in tasks, lest harmony be lost. A less skilled Hebrew could not be assigned the tasks of a master craftsman; he was simply not equipped for it. During the early periods of the construction, only the craftsmen from Tyre possessed the skills for the more difficult tasks – although the Bible tells us that the Hebrew later on acquired the artificer skills from the Phoenician master craftsmen and, much later, held their own as master builders. Thus, the Hebrews had to be made aware of this, and the Phoenicians had to be taught to be careful with their attitudes about their superior skills, lest this be misconstrued as arrogance. This would result in disharmony and therefore jeopardize the

completion of the temple.

"Finally, the Junior Warden intones, 'As the sun at meridian height is the beauty and glory of day, so stands the Junior Warden in the South, the better to observe the time, to call the craft from labor to refreshment and from refreshment to labor again at the will and pleasure of the Worshipful Master'.

"The ritual narrates that logs were hewn from the forests of Lebanon and floated down in rafts and transported to the construction sites in Jerusalem. The fellowcrafts and the apprentices had to be at the places the logs were floated at the precise time. They had to meet the rising and falling of the tides, or they would lose a day of work. The master masons, on their part, had to set in place their dehydrated expansion pegs into the holes carved into the boulders in time for the sun at meridian height when the angle of the sun's rays was exactly over the pegs. When the water was poured over the pegs and into the holes, the pegs would expand with a powerful force that would crack the boulders in straight lines, making it easier for the ashlar to be shaped. Should the master masons pour the water in any other time than at meridian height, the cracks would be uneven, and they would lose days of valuable work. This scientific utilization of time was ensured by the Junior Warden; it was a dictate of the Phoenician master masons, and the Hebrews dutifully conformed to it. The Hebrews who hauled water to the quarries and fabricated the expansion pegs unquestioningly obeyed the behest of the Junior Warden. Respect for time,

therefore, ensured harmony in the workplace.

"The story of Hiram Abif, the widow's son from the tribe of Naphtali, serves as a warning to all Lodges on how seemingly trivial motives can cause the loss of harmony. Hiram Abif, the Grand Master from Tyre and the administrator who practiced balanced diplomacy between the two groups of craftsmen, was misunderstood by his own adopted people and was slain. The three Tyrian fellowcrafts who killed him clearly disregarded the injunction to circumscribe their desires and allowed their passions to burst out of bounds.

"So concerned were the ancient Lodges over harmony, which was signified by clothing and due regard to time, that our ancient brethren immortalized this through the prayer 'Wilt thou be so pleased as to grant that this meeting, thus opened in order, be conducted in peace and closed in harmony.'"

WB Asiong Illenberger concluded his talk by pointing out that the Philippines is not much different from the cultural make-up of Israel during Solomon's time. Said he: "We are a melting pot of several racial stocks, and we maintain small pockets of preserved original cultures. As Masons, we become one in our common belief in our creed. Just the same, disharmony lurks just below the veneer of calm. Disrespect for norms of clothing and timeliness is not trivial; rather, such norms are constant reminders that disharmony threatens the continued good health of any Lodge."

ON CRITICIZING OTHERS

by V.W. Bro. Rene S. Ramos, PDGL

- *Suffer others to be praised in thy presence, and entertain their good and glory with delight; but at no hand disparage them, or lessen the report, or make an objection; and think not the advancement of thy brother is a lessening of thy worth. (Morals and Dogma, p. 120)*
- *We should either be more severe to ourselves, or less so to others, and consider that whatsoever good any one can think or say of us, we can tell him of so many unworthy and foolish and perhaps worse actions of ours, any one of which, done by another, would be enough, with us, to destroy his reputation. (Ibid.)*
- *Masons must be kind and affectionate one to another. ... There needs to much more of the spirit of the ancient fellowship among us; more tenderness for each other's faults, more forgiveness, more solicitude for each other's improvement and good fortune; somewhat of brotherly feelings, that it be not shame to use the word "brother". (Ibid., p. 122)*
- *You are to be true unto all men. You are to be frank and sincere in all things. You are to be earnest in doing whatever it is your duty to do. And no man must repent that he has relied upon your resolve, your profession, or your word. (Ibid., p. 176)*
- *Truth, a Mason is early told, is a divine attribute and the foundation of every virtue; and frankness, reliability, sincerity, straightforwardness, plain-dealing, are but different modes in which Truth develops itself. (Ibid., p. 184)*

A story has come down to us about a ship captain and his chief engineer. One day the latter suddenly commented, "Anybody can stand on the bridge and run a ship." Resorted the captain: "Any man can sit in warm quarters in the engine room and keep the power plant running." The two disputed loud and long, each exceedingly stiff in his own opinion. Finally, they decided to exchange places. The chief engineer went up to the bridge and tried to keep the vessel on its course, while the captain went below and took charge of the engine room. Before long, the captain had the engine in disorder. Realizing the danger, he called out to the engineer, "Come down and take over!" And the engineer replied, "Come up to the bridge, Captain! We have just run around, anyway."

The spoken word is one of the things that do not come back, the three others being the sped arrow, the elapsed time, and the neglected opportunity. Yet many persons have not learned to control their tongues, or they have not observed the pun "Look before you lip," thereby failing to adjust their words to right reason and justice. That is why I have decided to put down some of my ideas on criticizing others.

When you, Brother, criticize somebody else, you are actually praising yourself in an indirect way. That is why many people love to engage in criticizing others. What they do not know is that their habit of finding fault with others produces undesirable effects on themselves and not on the persons they are criticizing.

Every time you, my Brother, judge "Ang pangit, palpak o mali 'yan," what you really want to say is "Tama ako" or "Mas magaling ako sa iyo." But, of course, you do not say this aloud, for it may evoke very negative reactions. You just say it silently to yourself; this produces desirable effects on your being — effects which you will not earn if you criticize another aloud.

No, I am not talking of teaching others a better way of doing things or pointing out to them what is wrong with them or with their work, for this is instructing, not criticizing. What I am talking about is the act of saying things unpleasant or unfavorable about other people who are not around. The act falls on the level of slandering or maligning the reputation of

The obvious benefit of membership in the Craft -- respectability, reputation and mutual reliance -- have diminished in society generally and are currently dismissed by many as naive and idealistic. This actually means that although people would like to live in such a world, they have given up hope.

others. If you do this, you are robbing another person of his good name. Are you, likewise, prepared to be robbed of your own good name, in one way or another?

No, you are not prepared? Then, next time you have disagreeable observations and conclusions about another person, say them straight to his face. Test your sense of fairness or kindness. Remember, you ought to give the person concerned a chance to defend himself; for, certainly, you would like to be treated that way. If somebody else felt the same way about you, if he has disagreeable observations and conclusions about you, you would rather that he tell you straight to your face than deride you at your back.

More often than not, some people criticize others, believing as they do that they can do so with impunity provided their criticism will not reach the people they are criticizing. But even if your criticism is constructive, you would do well if you go directly to the person/s you are criticizing and express yourself to him/them.

Suppose you heard unflattering remarks about somebody you know who was not around to defend himself. What could you do about it? You should gently tell the one making the remarks something like this: "Would you like to speak about other things because that person is my friend?" Suppose your interlocutor would not stop. Then you could tell him a bit more firmly, "Tomorrow my friend will know about what you are saying." Suppose your interlocutor still persisted in uttering the unflattering remarks about your friend. Then you could say to your interlocutor, "I will be a willing witness for my friend in case he decides to sue you for slander."

Every time you, dear Brother, are tempted to criticize another person, remember that whatever it is you say about that person, someone somewhere in the universe may be saying the same thing, or perhaps something nastier, about you – justified or unjustified. How important it is, therefore, that we follow the Golden Rule: Don't do unto others what you would not like others to do unto you. Or, to put it in other words, what you do to others, others will also do unto you. This rule is, indeed, a fulfillment of

the universal law of sowing and reaping.

I want to leave with those brethren who have the tendency to criticize others, including leaders of the Craft, these statements of Ill. Bro. Albert Pike:

- *Let the Mason never forget that life and the world are what we make them by our social character; by our adaptation, or want of adaptation to the social conditions, relationships, and pursuits of the world. (Morals and Dogma, p. 193)*

- *In the long run, the mind will be happy, just in proportion to its fidelity and wisdom. When it is miserable, it has planted the thorns in its own path, it grasps them, and cries out in loud complaint; and that complaint is but the louder confession that the thorns which grew there, it planted. (ibid., p. 195)*

Let us, therefore, refrain from giving lip service to our avowal that while influenced by the twin principle of goodness and truth, "hypocrisy and deceit are unknown among us; sincerity and plain dealing distinguish us; and with heart and tongue, we join in promoting each other's welfare and rejoicing in each other's prosperity."

Before we criticize others, particularly our Brothers in Masonry, we must observe the pun "LOOK BEFORE YOU LIP."

JUSTICE AND MASONRY

Very Worshipful Brother Santiago "Sonny" Turingan, Regional State Prosecutor of Region V, Department of Justice, focused on Justice and Masonry in his talk during the Installation of the officers of Ma-Bu-Ti Lodge No. 329, which was held at the famous Bitoon Beach in Mobo, Masbate recently.

He started by reminding the brethren that Masons are not only dependent on one another for aid, security and protection, but are also duty-bound to promote justice and equity. "As votaries of liberty and justice," he said, "we are obliged to reconcile disputes and dissensions, restore amity and peace, soothe dislikes and soften prejudices.... We ourselves do wrong when we do not punish an act of wickedness. The wheels of justice may be turning slowly, but surely, they are grinding exceedingly fine, and although our thoughts, words and actions may be hidden from the eyes of men, yet that all-seeing eye will reward us according to our merits, and will overtake the wicked in their flight."

Then he urged them to emulate the example set by men who have lived their Masonry, stressing that young men sought out Masonry because of such men, and that young men would seek out Masonry still if we work in unity and proudly live our Masonry. "In our own measure," he stated, "we can administer God's great laws of mercy, humanity and compassion to all men without any distinction."

Next he specified three ways of promoting justice and equity in our country, namely, (1) enlisting active and

vigilant support of the community, (2) institutionalizing an assertive justice system, and (3) eliminating political interference.

ENLISTING THE ACTIVE AND VIGILANT SUPPORT OF THE COMMUNITY

V.W. Bro. Turingan pointed out that trust and confidence are vital for uniting our people into one sacred band or society of friends, as well as for cementing their support for our government institutions. Said he: "That cementing support should be the ultimate gauge and gavel for justifying the fervency of our justice system equally measured and applied, and divested of all vices and superfluities of life, and thereby fit to grace as a living stone for that spiritual building, that house not made by hands, eternal in the heavens. For it is the quality of the justice system that defines a state, by which it acquires legitimacy, by which it wins the loyalty and allegiance of its people."

He continued, "The community should, therefore, be vigilant and forceful in exposing up to irrevocable dismissal from service public prosecutors and judges who are inefficient, incompetent and corrupt. The community should, in

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IN OUR COUNTRY BY
ENLISTING ACTIVE
AND VIGILANT
SUPPORT OF THE
COMMUNITY,
INSTITUTIONALIZING
AN ASSERTIVE
JUSTICE SYSTEM,
AND ELIMINATING
POLITICAL
INTERFERENCE.**

complete disregard of political *padrinos*, nominate and support prospective prosecutors and judges, up to their appointment and advancement in the professional ladder, who have the right mind-set, the right attitude, the right credentials, and therefore can be trained for skills and techniques as professional prosecutors and judges, always mindful of their duties to know and do right, to administer justice to every person without fear or favor, without mental equivocation, without any secret evasion of mind whatsoever."

Next he pointed out that the Justice Department needs the involvement of the people in the community in the present administration's new morality and leadership by example because "your active, decisive, dynamic and infectious involvement in the overall framework of our justice system can

be an effective social defense. Elements in the community, such as the citizens crime watch groups, the drug abuse foundations, the civic leaders serving in peace and order councils, the people's monitoring councils against graft and corruption, the people's law enforcement boards, the barangay justice bodies, the barangay tanods, the NGOs and academic communities, the religious groups, the business sector, the mass media, the victims of, as well as witnesses to, various crimes, and Masons, should mobilize and energize to help authorities in weeding out the prosecution service and the judiciary of scalawags and misfits and in neutralizing, if not eventually terminating permanently, the vexatious lobbies of interest groups and the powerful influences of political personalities and loose connections."

INSTITUTIONALIZING AN ASSERTIVE JUSTICE SYSTEM

V.W. Bro. Turingan likened the structural delineation of justice to a human chain. "In the criminal justice system," he explained, "we have the five pillars – law enforcement, prosecution, judiciary, corrections, and community. These are interdependent and obligated to respect and support one another. That respect and support should be demonstrated more in actions and less in words. And it can be demonstrated by all of us here present by transforming ourselves into pioneers. As pioneers, we must have vision or the ability to see what no one else sees; faith or the power to believe what no one else believes; initiative or the drive to be the first one to try it; courage or the guts to see it through; and laughter or the ability

to laugh at ourselves and our own silly mistakes."

He pointed out that Masons who are wise and well informed would not fail to be the votaries of liberty and justice and would be ready to exert themselves in the defense of these principles wherever and whenever they exist.

"We lawyers in particular, as members of the noblest profession, and in furtherance of our Masonic oath and commitment to the rule of law," he said emphatically, "have pledged to be always inspired and driven by idealism and therefore to respect, question and challenge the justice system, should the situation so require; for, as lawyers, we are mandated to fight against authority, the legal system, when it becomes abusive, unjust, immoral, tyrannical, or terroristic. We are at the same time mandated to respect and believe in the legal system. Challenging the system is the ultimate form of respect because without challenge, the legal system may lead to dictatorship. Dictatorship had been our worst nightmare. We cannot, and should never, allow its return. Hence, on this auspicious occasion, we should recommit ourselves to be always inspired and driven by idealism."

ELIMINATING POLITICAL INTERFERENCE

V.W. Bro. Turingan further stated, "The present administration is committed to

meritocracy, to leadership by example, to the new morality however it is defined. Our experience has irresistibly demonstrated that the single, biggest obstacle to the professionalization of the prosecution service and the judiciary is the uncontrolled, widespread interference of partisan *padrinos*, influence peddlers and corrupt connections in the appointment and promotion processes. How can this malpractice be stopped? Our bureaucratic managers and responsive political leaders should be encouraged to cut cleanly all political influences and connections. They should firmly and scornfully ignore political recommendations, as well as reject applicants whose main qualifications are political connections or powerful influences. Otherwise, they may be liable to impeachment or its equivalent. The community, the fifth pillar of the criminal justice system, can and should assist peacefully and uncompromisingly in taming our adulterating and adulterous political sector in its abusive, costly and perfidious interference in personnel movements in the career service. We did it recently through People Power II. This shows that there is justice when we, the people, the community, the civil society, concertedly show our righteous anger and engage in decisive action ..."

V.W. Bro. Santiago "Sonny" Turingan ended his address by urging the brethren to be united in using proficiently our symbolic Trowel and other working tools.

Let us be united in using proficiently our symbolic Trowel and other working tools.

We Freemasons should avidly study history, especially that of the Craft; for, by so doing, we not only involve ourselves in an enjoyable experience, but we also expose ourselves to a much needed source of wisdom and instruction that is both necessary and beneficial to our future existence. Besides, we can better avoid the mistakes of the past and approach the future with greater optimism. Yes, we must avidly study history, especially that of the Craft, to our advantage, using the lessons history, specifically Masonic history, has to offer to extract every ounce of wisdom it has to teach.

A SIP OF MASONIC HISTORY

by eF.R.eN

On the basis of the foregoing considerations, then, let us take a closer look at one important but little known Masonic personage who, together with his offspring, helped in the struggle for a free and sovereign Philippines. That Masonic personage is...

DON JUAN UTOR Y FERNANDEZ

Our main source of information about him is his own book *Masones y Ultramontanos* (Masons and Those Beyond the Mountains), which was published by Chofre, a printing house at No. 33 Escolta St., Manila, in 1899. By the time Don Juan Utor y Fernandez got his book published, we should note, the Spanish regime in the Philippines had already ended and the North Americans, to the disgust of the Filipino revolutionaries, had already occupied the city of Manila.

In his book, Utor informs us, first of all, that he was an old friend and colleague of Prim, Castelar, Ruiz Zorilla and other liberals involved in the events

of 1868 in Spain; that he was a "fervent Mason," having served as the Venerable Master of the Lodge Porvenir No. 2 in Madrid under the Grand Oriente de España, the Lodge in which Graciano Lopez y Jaena was initiated, for about 20 years and as the Secretary General of the Gran Oriente de España (Grand Orient of Spain) for approximately 12 years prior to his "flight" to the Philippines; and that during his term as Secretary General the Grand Orient of Spain was enjoying its most splendid period in the 19th century since it was successively headed by such preeminent figures as Sagasta, Romeo Ortiz and Becerra.

Utor does not mention in his book why he came to the Philippines in the 1880s. He suggests, however, that he keenly observed, if not participated in, the Masonic initiatives in the country that culminated at the end of 1888 against the "abuses, scandals and injustices" perpetrated by certain elements among the clergy. (*Masones y Ultramontanos*, p. 85).

Other sources of information on Don Juan Utor y Fernandez are W. Retana's *Bibliographic Apparatus of the General History of the Philippines* and *Vida y Escritos del Dr. Jose Rizal* (Dr. Jose Rizal's Life and Writings). In *Bibliographic Apparatus ...*, Vol. III, pp. 1702-1704, Retana points out that Utor founded in 1893 in Nueva Caceres, the capital of Camarines Sur, the weekly newspaper *El Eco del Sur* (The Echo of the South), precisely because he deemed that the political stance of Governor General Despujol (whose term of office ended in the same year) was conciliatory. In one issue of the newspaper, according to Retana, Utor wrote an article in which he submitted the thesis that the work of the Lord Jesus should be predicated at the human level. Since the bishop of the place had lodged a strong protest against the article, the

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newspaper was forced to admit the "error."

In the Prologue to *Masones y Ultramontanos*, we learn that Utor found the objectives of La Liga Filipina (The Philippine League), the organization founded by Rizal, to be very constructive, but the exile of its founder to Dapitan in Zamboanga led to the split of the organization into two groups: the Junta de Compromisarios (Council of Compromisers), which wanted to continue the campaign for reforms, and the Katipunan, which had separatist ends. We learn, too, that Utor was inclined toward the former group because he joined a group of Filipinos who did not renounce Spain but were adverse to the friars and their works. We learn, furthermore, that the Katipunan grew in number because of so much injustice and lack of reforms, and that when the revolution broke out on the third week of August 1896, the Katipunan had approximately 30,000 members. We learn, too, that the revolution, which had started in eight Tagalog provinces, resulted in violent deaths in the north of the city of Manila, in the province of Cavite and in some other places of the country, and furthermore that Manila was then in a very precarious military situation because its Regiment No. 70 had been dispatched to the southern part of the archipelago (Mindanao) to help quell a continuing Islamic insurrection.

Elsewhere in Utor's book we learn that on August 27, 1896 he went to see Governor General Ramon Blanco y Arenas, a fellow Freemason, in order to discuss with the latter his written

proposal of profound political reforms for the Philippines. The Governor General, who appeared to be cold, calm and serene, found the proposal relevant and viable. (*Masones y Ultramontanos*, p. 49).

On August 30, Utor further tells us, the Spanish forces won over the Filipino revolutionaries in the battle of San Juan del Monte at the outskirts of Manila. This led to the normalization of the military situation in the city of Manila. On September 2, Utor went to see Governor General Blanco once more. This time the latter showed him a corner in which Masonic paraphernalia, such as sashes, aprons, suns and squares, were mounted. "Look at that," the General said. Utor asked, "But, do you believe, my General?" And the General answered, "No." Utor noticed, however, that doubt was reflected in the General's face. Hence, he concluded that the General had changed and that, therefore, the irremediable catastrophe would soon take place, namely, that the Masons would be hounded by the Spanish authorities. Disconsolate, the old "fervent Mason" decided there and then to embark for Spain on the same day, leaving behind six children, who were, to him, "pieces of my soul." This clearly indicates that his family had taken root in the country many years before. (*Ibid.*, pp. 73-74).

Utor boarded the "Isla de Panay," the ship that was to sail to Aden in order to cross the Suez Canal en route to Cuba, where Rizal would serve as military doctor in the Spanish army. (*Ibid.*)

We should recall, at this juncture, that when he was still an exile at Dapitan, Rizal, at the suggestion of his friend, Dr. Ferdinand Blumentritt, sent Governor General Blanco a request that he be sent to Cuba as a volunteer military doctor in the Spanish army. Being a Widow's Son himself, Governor General Blanco acceded to the request. Thus, from July 31 to October 6, 1896, Rizal was on board several ships "without touching land," and closely watched. He kept a diary throughout his "odyssey."

On the same day Utor boarded the "Isla de Panay" (September 2), Rizal wrote in his diary, "God wills that tonight there will be no more disturbances. Unfortunate are those countrymen who so foolishly rush to death."

On the day following, the ship set sail for Barcelona, leaving the city of Manila in a state of war, in an atmosphere of rebellion and repression. On board tension prevailed. Most of the Spanish passengers believed that Rizal was "the cause of the disturbances." But Don Juan Utor y Fernandez demonstrated his sympathy toward Rizal, who was his brother in Masonry and whom he had profusely extolled as a great polyglot and the brilliant author of *Noli Me Tangere*.

On Friday, September 18, Rizal wrote this entry in his diary: "Today we have made 314 miles, and it seems there are only 870 miles to reach Aden. — Mr. Utor recounted to me an amusing story. It seems talk was spreading among the passengers that I had said on I don't

know what occasion the following words: 'The most beautiful day for the Philippines will be that in which we can drink wine in Spanish skulls!' And several are ... so intelligent that they believe it! It has made me laugh aloud, at first, but it is sad that the Spaniards swallow such foolish, absurd things."

Like other informed or enlightened passengers, as well as the political and military authorities, Utor knew that Rizal had not pronounced those words because he was far too intelligent for such a thing. The truth was that Rizal was opposed to the bombing incidents in Manila aimed at destabilizing the political situation.

In his book *Vida y Escritos del Dr. Jose Rizal* (1907, p. 349), Retana informs us that in 1906 Utor would write the following:

◆ *Rizal and I spent many hours together – alone! – on the deck of the "Isla de Panay." I became deeply convinced that he desired for the Philippines what I desired for Spain: the welfare of the greatest number of the people.*

◆ *In the misty afternoon of September 27, 1896, when the "Isla de Panay" entered the Mediterranean sea, after leaving the bay of Port Said, the order was received that Rizal be arrested and held incomunicado in his cabin. At the Captain's behest, I had to convey the fatal news to Rizal. Upon hearing the news, Rizal cried in my arms.*

On Tuesday, September 29, Rizal jotted down in his diary, "I am going to be legendary passenger."

On the day following, the ship's Captain personally told Rizal about the content of the telegraphic order he had received, namely, that Rizal be not allowed to go out of his cabin. Rizal asked what the motive was. The Captain responded that he wanted to avoid the risk of Rizal remaining in Malta. And Rizal retorted that he did not have the least intention of doing so.

The truth of the matter was that the Tagalog rebellion – as well as the subsequent campaign in Cavite and Nueva Ecija, which would end in December 1896 – was blamed on Rizal. In fact, the military judicial machinery had already been put into motion. The Council of War eventually declared that Rizal was responsible for having "promoted the rebellion." (*Ibid.*, p. 412).

In spite of the pressure exerted on Rizal, Utor remained a true friend and Brother, in whose fidelity Rizal could with the utmost confidence rely. Both men and Masons had common political ideas and religious beliefs. According to Rizal himself, Utor was one of the few passengers who acted "to elevate me." (See *Documentos Rizalinos*, pp. 38-64).

Don Juan Utor y Fernandez was able to return to his native land, while Rizal was shipped back to the Philippines.

On December 3, 1896, the conservative

and authoritarian Polavieja arrived in Manila. Right away he discharged the duties of the office of Governor General. On the same day, the special judge on Rizal's case began to act. On December 20, General Ramon Blanco y Arenas embarked for Spain, pretending not to see, hear or understand anything that had happened.

The proceedings on the case of Rizal were fast. The sentence was given on December 27, and Polavieja confirmed

effort of "my lost friend Don Francisco Cañamaque." (p. 47).

It is interesting to note that Rizal, too, showed his hostility toward Cañamaque in *Noli Me Tangere*. He described Cañamaque as "that man so near the dome of Masonic power." In his annotations of Antonio Morga's *Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas* (Paris, 1880, p. 315, note 1), similarly, Rizal sarcastically attacked Cañamaque.

In the supplement to the December 15,

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that of the Craft, we can better
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greater optimism.

it on the 28th. On the 30th, Rizal was executed on Bagumbayan field.

Don Juan Utor y Fernandez returned to the Philippines either in 1897 or in 1898. He was determined to play a prominent role in Masonry under the new regime.

In 1899, as was mentioned earlier, he published the book *Masones y Ultramontanos* and founded, as well as directed, *La Patria*, a newspaper with a Hispano-Filipino, and even Rizalist, orientation.

In his book, Utor pointed out, among other things, that the politician Escosura had committed many errors relative to dates in his book, *Recuerdos de Filipinas* (Memories of the Philippines), which was published in Madrid in 1879 through the

1889 issue of *La Solidaridad*, likewise, Rizal published data on a long incident, then widely known in the Philippines, between a combative Filipino and an anarchical journalist of Barcelona named Cañamaque.

In 1902, Utor dedicated an entire issue of *La Patria* to Rizal. In the same issue, he reprinted in toto "Junto al Pasig," the musical comedy Rizal wrote when he was 13 years old. The comedy was once presented at the Ateneo de Manila, but subsequently it was not made public anymore.

In 1906, Utor also collaborated in the publication of another newspaper, *El Grito del Pueblo* (The Shout of the People).

In both newspapers, according to

Don Juan Utor y Fernandez was, in his own measure, a Mason by name and by nature because he did not only practice the teachings and principles of Masonry, but he also disseminated them as widely as he could.

Retana, Utor lengthily referred to Rizal and to the sympathy that linked them together while on board the "Isla de Panay." (*Vida y Escritos del Dr. Jose Rizal*, p. 349).

Also according to Retana, when Utor died in 1907, the newspaper *La Patria* also ceased to exist. (*Ibid*).

The old "fervent Mason" did not fail to imbue his children with Masonic values and principles. We say this because, as mentioned in several newspapers, his eldest son, Juan Utor, Jr., played a prominent role in the revolutionary struggle in Camarines around 1900.

We should recall, at this point, that the revolutionary government of Emilio Aguinaldo, another Mason (in fact, a Past Master of Pilar Lodge in Imus, Cavite), had designated General Vicente Lucban, still another Mason, as the commander of the province of Camarines, in 1898. General Lucban is said to have told his command: "My brother, Don Juan Utor, is my other self (alter ego), and perhaps even more than myself, and therefore deserves to be respected." Accordingly, he put Juan Utor, Jr. in charge of some 20 Spanish friars who were "prisoners of war" from October 1896 to 1900. When the North Americans were advancing towards Camarines, Juan Utor, Jr.

decided to set the friars free.

One of the friars, Fr. Marcos Gomez-Almonacid of Tembleque, Toledo wrote down in four notebooks his impressions and observations during their captivity. His original account, together with its English translation, was published in a volume by the Franciscan Friary of St. Gregory of San Francisco del Monte in Quezon City. The account speaks highly of Juan Utor, Jr., the eldest son of the old "fervent Mason" who founded a Lodge in Camarines sometime in 1894 or 1895.

The other children of that old "fervent Mason" than Juan Utor, Jr., according to the Hon. Pedro Ortiz Armengol, former Ambassador of Spain to the Philippines, in the paper he read before the delegates to an international conference on Spanish Masonry held in Madrid, Spain in 1998, took active part in the struggle of the Philippines for independence.

All this shows that Don Juan Utor y Fernandez did not only practice the teachings and principles of Masonry, but he also disseminated them as widely as he could. He was, in his own measure, a Mason by name and by nature.

Only God Can Destroy Freemasonry

by: Bro. Restituto C. Basa
Pangasinan Lodge No. 56, Dagupan City

Freemasonry arose from the ashes of the Knights Templar, the Religious Order of the Church which the Church itself destroyed. The Church condemned the Order as allegedly heretical.

The Church dissolved the Order of the Knights Templar (KT) in 1312. The Order was founded in 1118. When the Church dissolved the KT, its remnants went underground.

To survive, the Templars evolved into a brotherhood pledged to help one another when in distress. Underground, they put up a safehouse, which they called the Lodge.

The Lodge provided work for two weeks and lodging to a brother on the run. He was given financial assistance for his travel expenses to move from one Lodge to another to evade capture by agents of both the Church and the State.

It was their unwavering faith in God, their protector, which sustained them. Underground, they fashioned the principles of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity. These three Masonic principles are the foundations of what we now call human rights.

These three Masonic principles are the foundations of democracy and constitutional governments.

It was in Great Britain (composed of England, Scotland and Ireland) where the principles of Liberty, Equality and

Fraternity first gained widespread acceptance among the populace, and especially among the ruling classes.

It was after these three Masonic principles had gained widespread acceptance in Great Britain that the Templars, now transfigured into Freemasons, came to the surface.

On June 24, 1717 four existing Masonic lodges united to form the Grand Lodge of London and Westminster. After six years, this came to be known as the Grand Lodge of England.

Thus, Freemasonry, in the form that it exists today, has been in continued existence from 1717 to the present, some 284 long years. All over the world, it has a membership estimated at five million.

Twenty one years after Freemasonry came to the surface (on June 24, 1717) the Pope started to suppress the Fraternity. The first Papal decree to condemn Freemasonry was the *In Eminenti Apostulatus Speculari*. It was issued by Pope Clement XII on April 24, 1738.

This decree provided for the automatic excommunication of Catholics who join

Freemasonry. Two years later, this decree was amended and given more teeth. It decreed that the penalty for any man who joins Freemasonry is death.

From 1738 up to year 2001 is 263 years. So for the last 263 years, the Church has been continuously scheming to destroy the Fraternity. During the days of the Holy Inquisition, Freemasons were burned at the stake.

On December 30, 1896 the foremost Filipino hero, Dr. Jose P. Rizal, was executed at the Luneta, allegedly on the ground of rebellion, but in truth and in fact, for his active membership in the Masonic fraternity.

In their dealings with the Craft, our beloved Bishops should take heed of the counsel of the learned Jewish rabbi, the venerable Gamaliel, under whose tutelage St. Paul, the great missionary to the gentiles, learned.

When the Christian Church was in its infancy, the top religious leaders of Jerusalem wanted to kill the faith. They had wanted to put to death the Apostles.

The Sanhedrin, the Jewish judicial council, was convoked to take a vote. This is recorded in **The Acts of the Apostles**, chapter 5, verses 33-39. Gamaliel voiced a dissenting opinion. His views, because they were sound and well reasoned out, prevailed.

Our beloved Bishops should study the text with an open mind and in deep meditation and prayer and be guided by it. We quote the text:

"When the members of the Council heard this, they were so furious that they wanted to have the apostles put to death. But one of them, a Pharisee named Gamaliel, who was a teacher of the Law and was highly respected by

all the people, stood up in the Council. He ordered that the apostles be taken out for a while and then he said to the Council. Fellow Israelites, be careful what you do to these men. You remember that Theudas appeared sometime ago, claiming to be somebody great, and about four hundred men joined him. But he was killed, all his followers were scattered, and his movement died out. After that, Judas the Galilean appeared during the time of the census; he drew a crowd after him, but he also was killed, and all his followers were scattered.

"And so in this case, I tell you, do not take any action against these men. Leave them alone! If what they have planned and done is of human origin, it will disappear, but if it comes from God, you cannot possibly defeat them. You could find yourselves fighting against God."

The Church, in its mistaken notion that Freemasonry is a heretical organization, has used all means (fire, the gallows, the sword, the bullet, etc.) to kill it. It has been at it from April 24, 1738 to this day, some 263 long years; but rather than die, the Fraternity has grown stronger as the great bulwark of the principles of Liberty, Equality, Fraternity.

Freemasonry has survived in its present form from June 24, 1717 to this day, some 284 long years. It is the oldest and the strongest fraternal Order in existence.

If the Fraternity were not of God, it must have vanished a long time ago. It has survived persecution for close to three centuries.

The fact that it has survived this long is evidence that the Brotherhood must be of God.

ROUND THE DISTRICTS, LODGES

BAGONG BUHAY LODGE #17 CELEBRATES 94TH ANNIVERSARY

by WB Armando C. Dayao, PM

We, the officers and members of Bagong Buhay #17 in Cavite City, celebrated our 94th anniversary as a Lodge in a meaningful, memorable and fun-filled fashion last August 11.

Together with guests from other Lodges, we registered as early as 6 a.m. Rev. Fr. Nilo Ramos of the Philippine Independent Church officiated a thanksgiving mass. The short program that ensued after the mass featured the presentation of the prestigious HIRAM AWARD to VWB Rene Racimo, VWB Francisco Expectacion and WB Arman Quion.

We then conducted a wreath-laying ceremony at the Ladislao Diwa Memorial Monument in our Lodge's premises. The event was graced by Cavite City Mayor and Bro. Leonardo (Totie) Paredes and VWB Ed Lupisan, DDGM, both of whom gave short talks during the program emceed by WB Jaime Bantolo.

Together with our guests, we proceeded, in caravan to Villa Teresa, where we relished foods prepared by one of the best caterers in town. The Sangley Point Naval Base Combo provided the music during the entire

celebration. The children present vied with one another in an impromptu singing contest as well as in parlor games.

Our Worshipful Master rendered two inspirational songs. Following his lead, some Lodge members and guests contributed their singing talents.

The celebration lasted up to 6 p.m....

DATU BAGO CELEBRATES 28TH CHARTER DAY

The brethren of Datu Lodge No. 197, together with members of their families and guests from other Lodges and the District Council, celebrated their 28th anniversary as a Masonic Lodge on June 23, 2001 at the beach resort of VW Nestor Purugganan, PDDGM, in the Island Garden City of Samal.

Thus we learn from the May-June 2001 issue of *Beehive*, the Lodge's monthly newsletter, which also informs us that (1) Bro. Louie Bonguyan was reelected Vice-Mayor of Davao City; (2) WM Wendel E. Avisado was elected Secretary of the Davao Masonic Center Foundation (DMCF) for Masonic year 2001-2002, as well as Secretary of the District Council; and (3) WB Torchie Asuncion Jr., Lodge Secretary, was elected Auditor of both the DMCF and the District Council.

San Pedro Lodge Observes 10th Anniversary

by V.W. Bro. Pyke J. Alibadbab

Led by WM Joel S. Adato, the brethren celebrated the 10th Constitution Day of San Pedro Lodge on June 19, 2001. The auspicious day coincided with the 140th birth anniversary of Bro. Jose Rizal. It was commenced with a wreath-laying ceremony and a short program at the Rizal monument in the town plaza. VW Bert Escultura, incumbent JGL for the Bicol region and an honorary member of the Lodge, delivered the opening prayer. Then WM Adato gave his remarks, delving into the day's twin significance and extolling the exemplary virtues of Bro. Rizal. Soon after, he left for Calamba to join MW Napoleon A. Soriano, Grand Master, and other Masters and brethren of Masonic District No. 6 in the floral offering at the Dr. Jose Rizal Shrine.

In the evening, the brethren, their families and members of the San Pedro Chapter of the Order of DeMolay joined in unity and thanksgiving for the attainment by the Lodge of its 10th milestone. The Lodge Chaplain opened the evening celebration with an invocation. Then WM Adato traced the Lodge history and presented the projects being undertaken by the Lodge. He also read a tribute on the 10th anniversary

celebration prepared by this writer for the occasion.



REGION 12 CENTENNIAL RTC JUDGE IS A MASON

by WB Gerardo B. Padilla

The recipient of the Region 12 Centennial Regional Trial Court Judge Award is WB Valerio M. Salazar of the Maranaw Lodge No. 111 and Presiding Judge of Regional Trial Court, Branch 06, Iligan City. He was chosen by the Committee on Centennial Awards for Judicial Excellence of the Supreme Court. He received a plaque of recognition and P100,000 as prize money during the awards night held at the Luzon Ballroom, Westin Philippine Plaza, CCP Complex, Pasay City, on June 8, 2001.

As an RTC Judge for 15 years, WB Salazar has established a solid reputation in the community for impeccable honesty and professional competence. He is fiercely independent,

beyond bribery and impartial in his decisions. His writing style is exquisite; it is indicative of his excellent grasp of the English language and his clear and exacting mind.

In recognition of his leadership skills, he was twice designated as Executive Judge, first in 1987 and then in 1993.

Not surprisingly, WB Salazar has received numerous awards and citations for being a role model to his colleagues. Among these awards are the Chief Justice Ramon Avanceña Award for Judicial Excellence (2000), the Rajah Kolambu Award (1999), the Presidential Medallion in Public Service (1999), and the Outstanding Judge of the Decade (1999).

(Mabuhay po kayo, Ka Valerio Salazar! Not only have you brought pleasure to yourself, but you have also reflected honor upon your beloved fraternity, Freemasonry. – The Cabletow Staff)

Masonry used to
strive to make
good men better;
our aim today
seems to be to
make anything we
can out of anyone
we can get.

IFUGAO LODGE NO. 218 SPONSORS "LIBRE NGA PANAGPAKUGIT"

Ifugao Lodge No. 218, F.&A.M., in coordination with the LGU-RHU in Lamut, Ifugao, sponsored Operation "Free Circumcision" last April 14.

Below are some of the photos taken during the outreach project.



Masonic District No. 53 officers together with members of Ifugao Lodge No. 218



After the day's hard work, its time to relax... the Medical Team being treated to a gallon of ice cream...

BAGONG ILAW MARKS 76TH ANNIVERSARY

by VW Teddy P. Cleofe, PDGL

Bagong Ilaw Lodge No. 97, F. & A.M., was founded on April 4, 76 years ago. But we celebrated our foundation anniversary this year on April 7 to coincide with our stated meeting. Our celebration was not in the form of music, merriment and foods and drinks, but rather, in the form of civic action.

Led by our Worshipful Master, WB Giovanni G. Bergantin, we, the officers and members of the Lodge, together with those of the XIII Martyrs of Cavite, Chapter No. 6, Order of the Eastern Star, led by their Worthy Matron and Worthy Patron, Sister Cecile and Bro. Dante Valero, respectively, sponsored a free medical-dental clinic plus operation "tuli". Patients served and treated were from

the towns of Noveleta, Rosario, Kawit and Cavite City.

Bro. Donn Anthony L. Miraflor, our newly raised member, assisted WB Bergantin in inviting the medical mission teams of the Lions Club International, Dapitan Lodge No. 21, and the Cavite Naval Hospital.

The foregoing medical mission teams provided the medicines and other medical supplies for the project.

Sisters Virgie Hernandez, Edith Crisostomo, Nelly Umandap, Lea Rostata, Nayda Adriano, and Dra. Jenniefer Bustillo assisted the medical teams in the registration of the patients and in the distribution of medicines.

SW Fernando R. Umandap, JW Aldo G. Olaquer, this writer, WB Aguilino H. Reyel, WB Danilo M. Vilda, and WB Lino B. Gabriel and several others – we all kept ourselves busy to make the civic action verily successful.



The Medical Team in action.

The fellowship social that followed the civic action was attended not only by the brethren and the members of the medical teams but by visitors from sister Lodges as well. During the fellowship social WB and Commodore Jaime C. Bantolo, our GLI, and VW Ronnie Dela Cruz, our DGL, gave inspirational messages.

But, certainly, our 76th anniversary celebration could not have been a success without the contributions – in cash or in kind – of many magnanimous Masons and friends of Masons.

Masonic District No. 47

Young though VW Joey Q. Soriano may be, but he is proving himself to be a dynamic Grand Master's Deputy for Masonic District No. 47.

On June 9, he officially visited Abra Lodge No. 86; he was accompanied by VW Ernesto E. Cua and Bros. Herbert V. Guerrero and Alexander A. Ventura. Assisted by VW Cua, who acted as Master of Ceremonies, he installed WB Lyndon Atmosfera as GLI for Lam-ang Lodge No. 164. In his message before the brethren of Abra Lodge, he stressed his observation that the Lodge was being re-invigorated with the entry of younger, enthusiastic and dedicated members.

On June 16, he visited Angalo Lodge No. 63 and installed WBs Saldy S. Santiago and Enrique I. Que as GLIs for Angalo 63 and Laoag 71, respectively. This time VW Soriano was accompanied by VW Cua, VW Llewellyn M. Santos and Bro. Alex Ventura. On the same occasion, VWBs Soriano and Santos delivered the charge and the lecture, respectively, to the newly passed brethren.

It should also be mentioned that, together with Bro. Romeo Espiritu, PNP Provincial Director of Ilocos Norte, the brethren of Laoag Lodge No. 71 and the honored ladies of the Order of the Amaranth, led of course by VW Soriano, visibly participated in the celebration of Independence Day in Laoag City. The DDGM and his lady, Sis. Mae, hosted the fellowship social that took place at their residence after the Independence Day festivities.



The delegates to the District Assembly with the Grand Master and guest lecturers

On July 21, as reported by VW B.J. Torres, M.D. No. 47 held a very fruitful assembly, participated in by Angalo, Laoag, Abra and Lam-ang brethren. Present during the assembly, aside from VW Torres, were VW Mags Nuevo and the Grand Master himself, MW Napoleon A. Soriano, who lauded the district leadership for a job well done and the delegates for attending despite the havoc wrought by typhoon Feria. The enjoyable South lasted until the wee hours of the morning. The brethren, specifically Bros. Romeo Espiritu and Orly Mangapit, escorted the Grand Master and VWBs Torres and Nuevo on their way home out of Laoag City and Ilocos Norte.



GM Nap Soriano with District Officers. At extreme left is VW B.J. Torres, guest lecturer-demonstrator.

THREE HECTIC DAYS FOR THE GRAND MASTER AND HIS PARTY

May 4-6, 2001 were hectic days for M.W. Napoleon A. Soriano, Grand Master, and his party, composed of R.W. Bro. Roberto Q. Pagotan, Junior Grand Warden, and the following brethren: V.W. Bro. Alfredo Bihis, Administrative Assistant to the Grand Master; V.W. Bro. Rodolfo Cardona, Asst. Grand Secretary; V.W. Bro. B.J. Torres, Past Asst. Grand Secretary; and Bro. Elias Laberinto.

They left the Grand Lodge at 2 p.m., Friday May 4, and arrived at Tarlac City at 8 p.m. V.W. Jesus B. David, PDDGM, some officers of District No. 35 and the officers and members of Cosmo P. Antonio Memorial Lodge No. 339 received the visiting dignitaries at the lobby of Jacsons Hotel, where a sumptuous dinner cum fellowship was tendered by the hosts.

At 9 a.m. the following day, M.W. Bro. Soriano presided over laying of the cornerstone of the proposed temple of Lodge No. 339 at Brgy. Baras-Baras in the outskirts of the city. He was assisted by V.W. Bro. B.J. Torres, who acted as Grand Marshal; R.W. Bro. Pagotan, JGW; V.W. Bros. Edgar Cuenco, Antonio W. Perez and C. Erundino M. Cajucom, all PDDGMs; and other officers of District No. 35.

Then the entire group motored to the Tarlac National High School Multi-Purpose Hall for the constitution of

Lodge No. 339. Grand Master Soriano exhorted the officers and members of the newly constituted Lodge to ever keep the flame of Masonic principles and tenets burning in their lives, so that they would attract more young and intelligent men to join the Craft.

The officers of the Lodge were installed by M.W. Bro. Danilo D. Angeles, PGM, assisted by V.W. Bro. Daniel Ferrer, PDGL, and Wor. Bro. Emiliano Perez, MC and Asst. MC, respectively. The Grand Master and his party, however, did not attend the installation ceremony anymore since they had to hurry back to Manila, whence they would proceed to San Pablo City.

After a brief stop-over at the Grand Lodge, the Grand Master and his party headed for San Pablo City; due to the heavy traffic, they arrived there at 8 p.m.

The turn-over ceremony of the leadership from V.W. Bro. Romulo P. Alcala, outgoing DDGM of District No. 6, to his successor, V.W. Bro. Victorino Javier,



GM Napoleon A. Soriano presiding over cornestone laying of Cosmo P. Antonio Mem. Lodge No. 339, to be constructed in Brgy. Baras-Baras, Tarlac City

GM Napoleon A. Soriano, assisted by Asst. Grand Secretary Rodolfo H. Cardona, constituting Cosmo P. Antonio Mem. Lodge No. 339.



DISTRICT NO. 23 TENDERS GRAND MASTER'S NIGHT TO MW SORIANO

Masonic District No. 23, led by VW Vicente Garcia, Jr., DDGM of the District, ably assisted by VW Rene Henson, PDDGM, and the officers of the District and Lodge officers, tendered a Grand Master's Night in honor of MW Napoleon A. Soriano last August 3, 2001 held at the new Leonard Wood Lodge in Angeles, Pampanga.

was simple but very lively because of the performance of the lovely dancing ladies of the officers and members of the district.

Grand Master Soriano commended the outgoing district officers for their dedication to the Craft and exhorted the new set of district officers to keep the Masonic light burning and to give due substance and meaning to the theme "Harmony and Progress Through Freemasonry."

The Grand Master and his party did not stay long during the fellowship; for, once more, they had to proceed to Los Baños for a well-deserved respite.

Fully rested and refreshed after a night's rest, they then hied back to Manila in the morning of Sunday.

The past three days were grueling. But the Grand Master and party were happy that they had rendered service to the Craft. The spirit of the Fraternity is, after all, service – service without counting the cost, service without expecting any other reward than the satisfaction arising from having done something for the well-being of the Craft and humanity.

After the official reception, MW Soriano and his party were ushered into the Lodge hall. Most Worshipful Soriano, the only designated speaker of the night, gave a very comprehensive update about the official business of his administration, emphasizing on the new system of purchasing supplies using the bidding method to cut down expenses, and citing the soon-to-be finished temporary dormitory for transient brethren located at the back of Plaridel Masonic Temple, on the third and fourth floors. Said dormitory would accommodate at least thirty brethren.

The Grand Master's party consisted of VW Hermogenes Ebdane, WB Reynaldo Berroya, Bro. Voltair Gazmin, VW Rudy Cardona, AGS, VW B.J. Torres, PAGS, VW Alfredo P. Bihis, Administrative Assistant to the Grand Master, and others.

After a sumptuous repast, the Grand Master and his party were brought to one of the housing units inside the former Clark Air Base to spend the night there. They would have another official visitation the following day in Cabanatuan City.

TXT NEWS

SPF

- Labong Lodge No. 59 Jaime S. Palmares. Raised to the Sublime Degree, May 5, 2001.
Labong Lodge No. 59 Ramon C. Cristobal. Raised to the Sublime Degree, May 5, 2001.
Dapitan Lodge No. 21 Robert M. Tiu. Raised to the Sublime Degree, May 17, 2001.
Shangri-La Lodge No. 196 Gilbert S. Mambulao, Feliciano A. Yamas. Raised to the Sublime Degree, May 19, 2001.
Makahambus Lodge No. 315 Kevin R. Ching, Ian Glenn L. Chiu. Raised to the Sublime Degree, May 30, 2001.
Biak-na-Bato Lodge No. 7 Leonard D. Salvador. Gone to his reward, May 20, 2001.
Maranaw Lodge No. 111 Glicerio Lim Jr. Gone to his reward, June 9, 2001.
Cordillera Lodge No. 178 Hilario A. Laya. Gone to his reward, May 8, 2001.
Pangasinan Lodge No. 56 Alberto R. Ubando. Raised to the Sublime Degree, June 2, 2001.
Mabini-Kalaw Lodge No. 195 Crispin M. Sabiniano. Raised to the Sublime Degree, May 5, 2001.
Samboangan Lodge No. 310 Joel L. Tipoe. Raised to the Sublime Degree, May 17, 2001.
Samboangan Lodge No. 310 Aldrin Patrick T. Lee. Raised to the Sublime Degree, May 11, 2001.
Samboangan Lodge No. 310 Reynaldo C. Berania. Raised to the Sublime Degree, May 23, 2001.
Indang Masonic Lodge No. 115 Pedro R. Agapito, Sr. Gone to his reward, May 30, 2001.
Iligan Lodge No. 207 Rizal I. Reyes. Gone to his reward, June 6, 2001.
Cosmos Lodge No. 8 Henry I. Montoya. Raised to the Sublime Degree, May 18, 2001.
Kasilawan Lodge No. 77 Filipino O. Amoguis. Raised to the Sublime Degree, July 3, 2001.
Pinatubo Lodge No. 52 Camilo G. Pablo, Victorio V. Vizcocho, Jr., Eleodoro C. Ocampo. Raised to the Sublime Degree, May 19, 2001.
Manila Mt. Lebanon Lodge No. 1 Arthur R. Cummings. Gone to his reward, May 14, 2001.
Sarangani Lodge No. 50 Edmund A. Piatos, Joselito Rosauro J. Cembrano. Raised to the Sublime Degree, May 12, 2001.
Nueva Vizcaya Lodge No. 144 Robert A. Yuhmo. Raised to the Sublime Degree, May 23, 2001.
Jose Abad Santos Mem. Lodge No. 333 Peter S. Uy. Raised to the Sublime Degree, June 8, 2001.
Cabanatuan Lodge No. 53 Pantaleon S. Sarmiento. Gone to his reward, May 27, 2001.
Nueva Vizcaya Lodge No. 144 Nemesio J. Estabillo. Gone to his reward, May 27, 2001.
Rio Chico No. 182 Pablo O. Wangdali. Gone to his reward, July 8, 2001.
Malolos Lodge No. 46 Harold Anthony F. Pascua. Raised to the Sublime Degree, May 24, 2001.
Malolos Lodge No. 46 Albert G. Aniag. Raised to the Sublime Degree June 2, 2001.
Malolos Lodge No. 46 Marish S. Madlangbayan. Raised to the Sublime Degree, June 9, 2001.
Malolos Lodge No. 46 Carlo Pacifico J. Aniag. Raised to the Sublime Degree, June 16, 2001.
Palawan Lodge No. 99 Raymond Val V. Padua. Raised to the Sublime Degree, June 16, 2001.
Palawan Lodge No. 99 Oscar L. Evangelista. Raised to the Sublime Degree, June 23, 2001.
Zambales Lodge No. 103 Roberto L. Correos. Raised to the Sublime Degree, May 5, 2001.
Mt. Musuan Lodge No. 155 Joseph Nathaniel A. Paggao. Raised to the Sublime Degree July 14, 2001.
Pampanga Lodge No. 48 Juan V. Valbuena. Gone to his reward, June 21, 2001.
Batangas Lodge No. 35 Vhodick K. Santos. Raised to the Sublime Degree, June 16, 2001.
Batangas Lodge No. 35 Roland Allan S. Arce, Allan D. Buquid. Raised to the Sublime Degree, June 23, 2001.
Marikina Lodge No. 119 Richard M. San Juan. Raised to the Sublime Degree, July 7, 2001.
A.R. Lamson Mem. Lodge No. 290 Francisco N. Magno, Jr. Raised to the Sublime Degree, July 21, 2001.
St. John's Corregidor Lodge No. 3 Rodolfo L. Salvacion. Gone to his reward, July 25, 2001.

The brethren,
including
M.W. Bro.
Napoleon A.
Soriano,
implore God's
blessing on
the success of
the 4th South
Central
Mindanao
Multi-District
Convention.





Grand Lodge of the Free and Accepted Masons of the Philippines

**PLARIDEL MASONIC TEMPLE 1437 GEN. LUNA ST.
PACO, MANILA, PHILIPPINES D-2801**



M.W. Napoleon A. Soriano with members and guests of centennial Lodge Manila-Mt Lebanon No. 1 on the occasion of the dedication of the Lodge's Centennial Marker at the Grand Lodge premises.

**RE-ENTERED AS SECOND CLASS MAIL MATTER
AT THE MANILA POST OFFICE ON JUNE 16, 1962**