



THE CABLE TOW

VOL. 93 NO. 2

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE MOST WORSHIPFUL GRAND
LODGE OF FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS OF THE PHILIPPINES



**MW Gazmin renews
ties with Grand Lodges
from Down Under**



EDITOR'S NOTES

BY VW MARLON M. CASTOR

Lest we forget

I HAVE BEEN FORTUNATE ENOUGH TO BE INVITED TO travel with the Grand Master MW Voltaire T. Gazmin during his recent trip abroad and during such time I have learned two things: First, there is a whole world of Freemasonry outside the

Philippines; and secondly, the brethren from other jurisdiction take pride in preserving their laws, customs and traditions as it is the uniqueness of their masonic culture that defines their brand of Masonry.

A grand lodge such as what we despite being in existence for more than a hundred years is relatively young and inexperience compared to those of other jurisdiction. And despite the vibrancy of the Craft in the Philippines as well as the considerably growing membership and public interest in our ancient and honorable institution, it appears we have much to learn from our brethren from the other parts of the world. Indeed, my brethren, we have only begun to scratch the surface of what a grand lodge can and should do. Its time to consider our options for the next few years, don't you think?

On the other point, a conversation with our foreign friends reveal that grand lodges abroad adopt a somewhat sedentary attitude in masonic governance; changing as

little as possible in terms of their laws, regulations, customs and traditions as possible and when in utmost need. What brethren in lodges are doing, they have been doing for ages and this fortifies their masonic identity in the field of global Masonry. However, with respect to other aspect---especially those in non-masonic activities and endeavors, these grand lodges have managed to evolved with the times and have even reached outside their walls for assistance in the fulfillment of these tasks which are more commercial in nature than masonic.

We have jampacked issue this time, brethren. Aside from the latest news and trends from your GLP, we have received a wealth of information from some of our distinguished contributors. We hope to receive from others soon.

The Cable Tow has also been working closely with our webmasters to synchronize our printed issues with those of the digital kind which you can now download at www.grandlodge.ph (just don't forget to register!).

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OUR COVER:

In this issue's cover, we feature Grand Master MW Voltaire Gazmin with MW Jamie Melville, Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory with WB Troy Gara, newly-installed Worshipful Master of Blacktown-Kildare Lodge No. 393 of Sydney, Australia. WB Troy is just one of many Filipino masons slowly rising among the ranks in Australia.

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TWO GRAND MASTERS: MW Voltaire Gazmin sits beside MW Jamie Melville (to his right), Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory during a photo session during his recent visit to Sydney, Australia.

The Lodges Down Under

MW Gazmin visits Sydney and Melbourne

In his first official visit overseas as Grand Master of Masons of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the Philippines (GLP), MW Voltaire T. Gazmin led a lean GLP contingent to the country-continent of Australia to visit the grand jurisdictions of New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory (Freemason NSW & ACT) and that of Victoria (Freemason Victoria) from August 18 to 24, 2016.

Accompanying the Grand Master on his trip were GLP Assistant Grand Treasurer and Chief of Staff VW Manuel Luis Idquival, Grand Bible Bearer VW Emil Dela Rosa, Sydney-based Junior Grand Lecturer for Overseas VW Ricardo Idquival and Cable Tow Editor In-Chief VW Marlon Castor, who joined the rest of the party a day later.

DAY ONE

The Grand Master's team arrived in Sydney on the morning of August 19 where they were met by a small contingent of Australia-based Filipino masons led by VW Ricky Idquival where they were led to their hotel in preparation for the trip's first event which is to attend the Installation of Lodge Blacktown-Kildare No. 393,

in the suburb of Blacktown in Great Western Sydney, which is 34 kilometers west of the Sydney central business district whose incoming Worshipful Master hails of Filipino roots. Installed on such an auspicious occasion was WB Troy Gara.

Making the event more special was the rare attendance of two incumbent Grand Masters from two grand jurisdictions with MW Voltaire Gazmin bringing his party and MW James Melville of Freemason NSW & ACT accompanied by the rest of his ceremonial entourage.

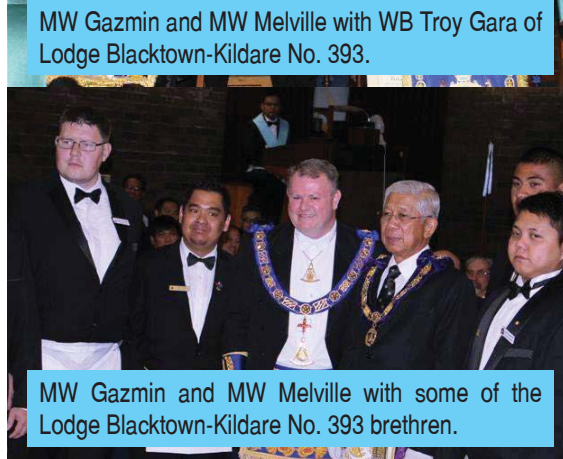
The celebration went deep into the night and spilled into the early hours of the morning characterized by hours of merriment and camaraderie. For his part, MW Gazmin was impressed by the involvement of Filipinos in Freemason NSW & ACT with some rising among the ranks in their subordinate lodges as well as to the grand lodge itself. He also cited how these Filipinos have contributed to the vibrancy and energy of their respective lodges.

DAY TWO

Still reeling from the night before, the MW Gazmin decided to reacquaint himself with the bustling city of Sydney—once heralded as the most livable city in the world. Accompanied by his party and some of the Australia-based brethren, he visited among others the Royal Botanical Gardens and the iconic Sydney Opera House and ended



MW Gazmin and MW Melville with WB Troy Gara of Lodge Blacktown-Kildare No. 393.



MW Gazmin and MW Melville with some of the Lodge Blacktown-Kildare No. 393 brethren.



MW Gazmin receives a token from the outgoing Master of Lodge Blacktown-Kildare No. 393

his short tour with sumptuous buffet lunch at the Sydney Tower, where they were joined by VW Marlon Castor of The Cable Tow, who just then arrived from Manila.

As the hours melted away, the group then realized it was time to return to the hotel and prepare for the evening's event which is the 3rd Degree Conferral of Bro. Roy Limpiado—another craftsman of Filipino roots. The raising will be under Lodge of Education No. 814 who is then governed by WB Ferdinand Pandes, who himself was raised as a master mason at Isarog Lodge No. 33 of the GLP. The lodge is also predominantly composed of Filipino masons and holds its meetings at the Royal Arch Masonic Temple in Petersham, New South Wales whose famous Egyptian Room is the toast of Freemasonry and tourism in the area.

The Egyptian Room was originally incorporated in 1927 in the Royal Arch Temple built in College Street Sydney. This building stood until late in the 1960's and after being sold and before demolition the focal point of the Egyptian Room, the frieze, was dismantled and stored until re-erected at the new Royal Arch centre at Petersham in 1977.

The frieze depicts certain scenes or vignettes from the Scroll of Ani dating from the 18th Dynasty. Another feature in the Egyptian Room is the funerary stele which dominates one of the walls

of the room and dates from the 20th Dynasty.

The Filipino brethren of Lodge of Education as well as nearby lodges were delighted to see and rub elbows with Grand Master Gazmin and took every opportunity to have a picture taken with the highly-respected Grand Master. This happiness and excitement poured into the Festive Board were a delicious banquet was held in honor of the newly-raised brother as well as the visit of the Filipino Grand Master.

In his message to the brethren, MW Gazmin thanked the brethren for their warm reception and urged them to “continue the good thing that Filipino masons in this part of the globe have accomplished and soon, through efforts at forging deeper ties with Freemasons NSW & ACT.”

The Grand Master also hopes that we may be able to bring Filipino-Australian Masonic ties to greater levels of understanding. He is confident that by the grace of God, the two jurisdictions will be able to create a mutually-beneficial avenue of cooperation and understanding that will further foster a vibrant Masonic intercourse between Filipino and Australian freemasons.

Day THREE

Since August 21 fell on a Sunday, the Grand Master encouraged his party to accompany him to attend mass at the St. John XXIII Catholic Parish in

RIGHT: MW Voltaire Gazmin poses for a photoshoot with the Filipino brethren in Australia together with some of the District Grand Inspector of Workings. BELOW: MW Voltaire Gazmin receives a gift from the Worshipful Master, WB Ferdinand Pandes of Lodge Education No. 814. WB Pandes is also a member of Isarog Lodge No. 33.



ABOVE: MW Voltaire Gazmin poses with some Filipino and Australian brethren while waiting to enter the famed Egyptian Room on the occasion of the 3rd Degree Conferral of Lodge Education No. 814. BELOW: To cap off a merry and fruitful fellowship, MW Voltaire Gazmin joins in a photo session with the Filipino masons under the jurisdiction of Freemasons NSW & ACT.



Kellyville, New South Wales. After mass, the group proceeded to the residence of VW Ricky Idquival in Kellyville where a delectable lunch was prepared by the Idquival couple for the Grand Master and his party. After which, the group returned to the hotel to prepare for another fellowship this time with the Australian chapter of the Grand and Glorious Order of the Knights of the Creeping Serpent (GGOKCS).



The Red-Bellied of GGOKCS Australia with their

Aside from the fun fellowship, the Red-Bellied (as they are commonly called) also turned over to MW Gazmin, who is also the incumbent Royal King Cobra of the GGOKCS a donation of a portable defibrillator for the use in the medical missions of the GLP.

MW Voltaire Gazmin looks on as MW Jamie Melville sign a book to be given to the Filipino Grand Master.

With the food pans emptied and whisky bottles bereft of their contents, the brethren parted knowing that will again share the festive board in days to come.



Day FOUR

On the fourth day of his trip, the Grand Master and his team made its official courtesy call to MW James Melville at the Sydney Masonic Center in downtown Sydney. There, they were toured around by MW Melville and his Grand Secretary RW Chris Craven to see the impressive lodge halls in the building as well as the relics and displays of their museum.

They were likewise invited to a fraternal



RKC, MW Voltaire T. Gazmin.



ABOVE: MW Voltaire Gazmin receives a donation of a defibrillator from the Red-Bellied of the GGOKCS Australia thru their CKC VW Ricardo Idquival. LEFT: MW Voltaire Gazmin listens to the explanation of MW Jamie Melville, Grand Master of the Freemason NSW & ACT during his visit to the museum and exhibits of the Sydney Masonic Center in downtown Sydney. The museum houses an impressive collection of Masonic artifacts.



MW Voltaire Gazmin thanked the officers and members of Freemason NSW & ACT for the warm hospitality extended to him and his party during a fraternal luncheon at the Sydney Masonic Center.



The GM's party's arrival in Melbourne.



TWO JURISDICTIONS: The two pa



Dinner meeting Freemason Victoria.



MW Gazmin talking to RW Peter Henshall, Grand Secretary and CEO of Freemason Victoria.

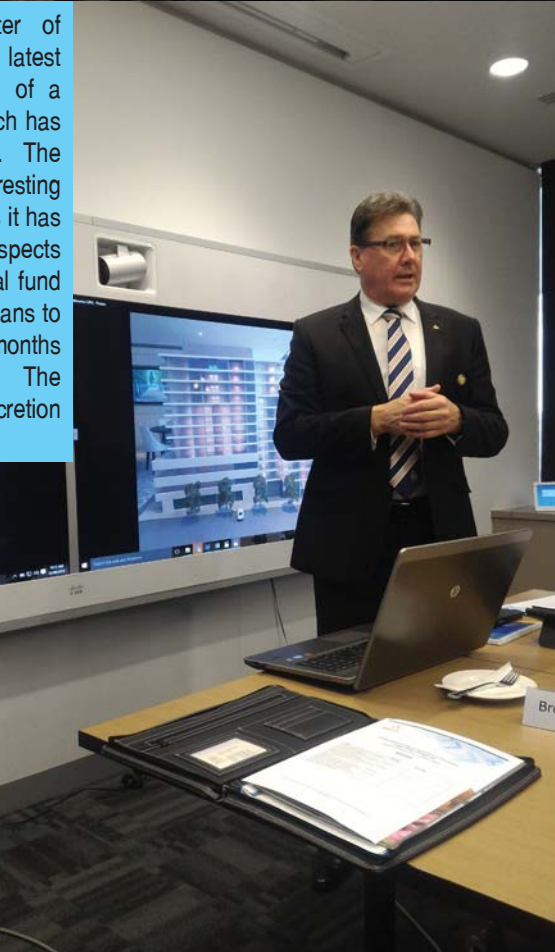
RIGHT: MW Don Reynolds, Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Victoria explains their business undertaking which the construction of new headquarters for Freemason Victoria, which has been successful in its ventures in real estate. The Grand Lodge of Victoria enjoys a rather interesting approach in running a masonic organization as it has successfully segregated the non-masonic aspects of its operations and had it run by professional managers. Their new CEO is a woman who plans to attract more members to the organization in the next few months. The Grand Master on the other hand retains full discretion over all masonic activities.



Lunch with the brethren of Freemason Victoria.



Parties pose at the conclusion of their business meeting.



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lunch hosted by Freemason NSW & ACT, where they were joined by other grand lodge officials such as Deputy Grand Master RW Antoine Georges, Assistant Grand Master RW Bill Driver, Grand Director of Ceremonies Zaldy Angeles and the brethren from Blacktown-Kildare No. 393 and Lodge of Education No. 814.

After the fraternal lunch, the Grand Master's team departed for Melbourne, Australia to answer the generous invitation of Freemason Victoria to hold a meeting and discuss important matters that concern the relations of the two jurisdictions.

The invitation was borne out of the recent visit of Freemason Victoria led by their incumbent Grand Master MW Donald Reynolds during the 100th Annual Communications held in Tagaytay City last April 2016. As one of the biggest foreign delegations in attendance, the brethren of Victoria, Australia were overwhelmed by the vibrant and healthy culture of Freemasonry that prevails in the Philippine jurisdiction and hopes that through bilateral relations and constant communications with the GLP as well as the involvement of Melbourne-based Filipinos, they may be able to have the same expressive form of Freemasonry in their jurisdiction as well.

On their arrival in Melbourne, MW Gazmin and his party were greeted by Bro. Felix Pintado, Honorary Philippine

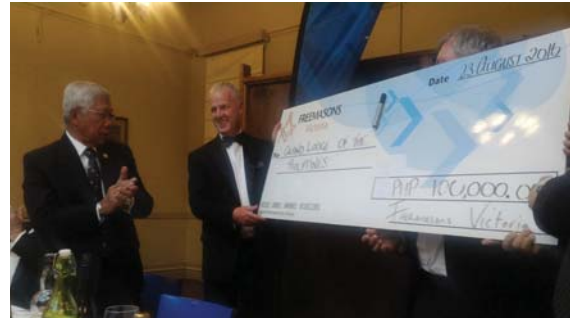
Consul to Victoria and Chief Executive Officer of Royal Freemason—the charity arm of Freemason Victoria. Bro. Felix Pintado also traces part of his ancestry to the Philippines. After settling in at their accommodations, the Grand Master’s party proceeded to a dinner meeting arranged by Freemason Victoria with its Grand Master MW Don Reynolds, Grand Secretary and Freemason Victoria CEO RW Peter Henshall, and Bro. Felix Pintado in attendance.

As the two groups will hold a meeting the following day, the fellowship ended with a few more stories on Freemasonry. Despite the near freezing weather outside, the warmth of brotherhood of brethren from different grand lodges prevailed over the rest of the evening.

Day FIVE

With a full day ahead, the MW Gazmin’s team, in their corporate suits set off for the meeting with Freemason Victoria at the Royal Freemasons Ltd. Office

Over dinner, the two Grand Masters thanked each other for the reciprocal visits that they have made to each other’s jurisdictions and in effect, opened a wider channel of communications between Victoria and the Philippines. The two Grand Masters believed that there is so much that the two jurisdictions can learn from each other especially in terms of marketing, public relations and corporate governance.



RW Keith Murray, Deputy Grand Master of Freemason Victoria presents MW Voltaire Gazmin with a check donation for P100,000 for the Grand Master’s charity of choice.



MW Gazmin poses with RW Keith Murray, Deputy Grand Master of Freemason Victoria and the brethren of Middle Park Lodge No. 206.

located in Middle Park, Melbourne. In attendance were MW Don Reynolds, RW Peter Henshall, Deputy Grand Master RW Keith Murray, Bro. Felix Pintado and Bro. Dave Angeles.

As a continuation of the previous night's discussion, MW Reynolds discussed how Freemason Victoria evolved from a conventional Masonic organization to a growing Masonic-based, sustainable corporate organization. He also showed plans on the new home of Freemason Victoria and how through the prudent and ingenious investments and asset management, they were able to create a financially-viable environment where their grand lodge can exist—something which MW Gazmin hopes to incorporate in Philippine Masonic governance.

The outgoing CEO RW Peter Henshall reiterated that the transformation of Freemason Victoria was a long and arduous process which involved changing the mindset of the Victorian brethren, particularly the more senior members of the fraternity. However, through a sincere and detailed campaign, they were able to make a paradigm shift in the management of their funds.

Before ending their meeting, the two jurisdictions agreed to create a technical working group that will explore common avenues of cooperation and friendship between the two grand lodges. Likewise, appointed

as representatives to the two Grand Lodges were Bro. Felix Pintado (for Freemason Victoria) and VW Ricky Idquival (for the GLP).

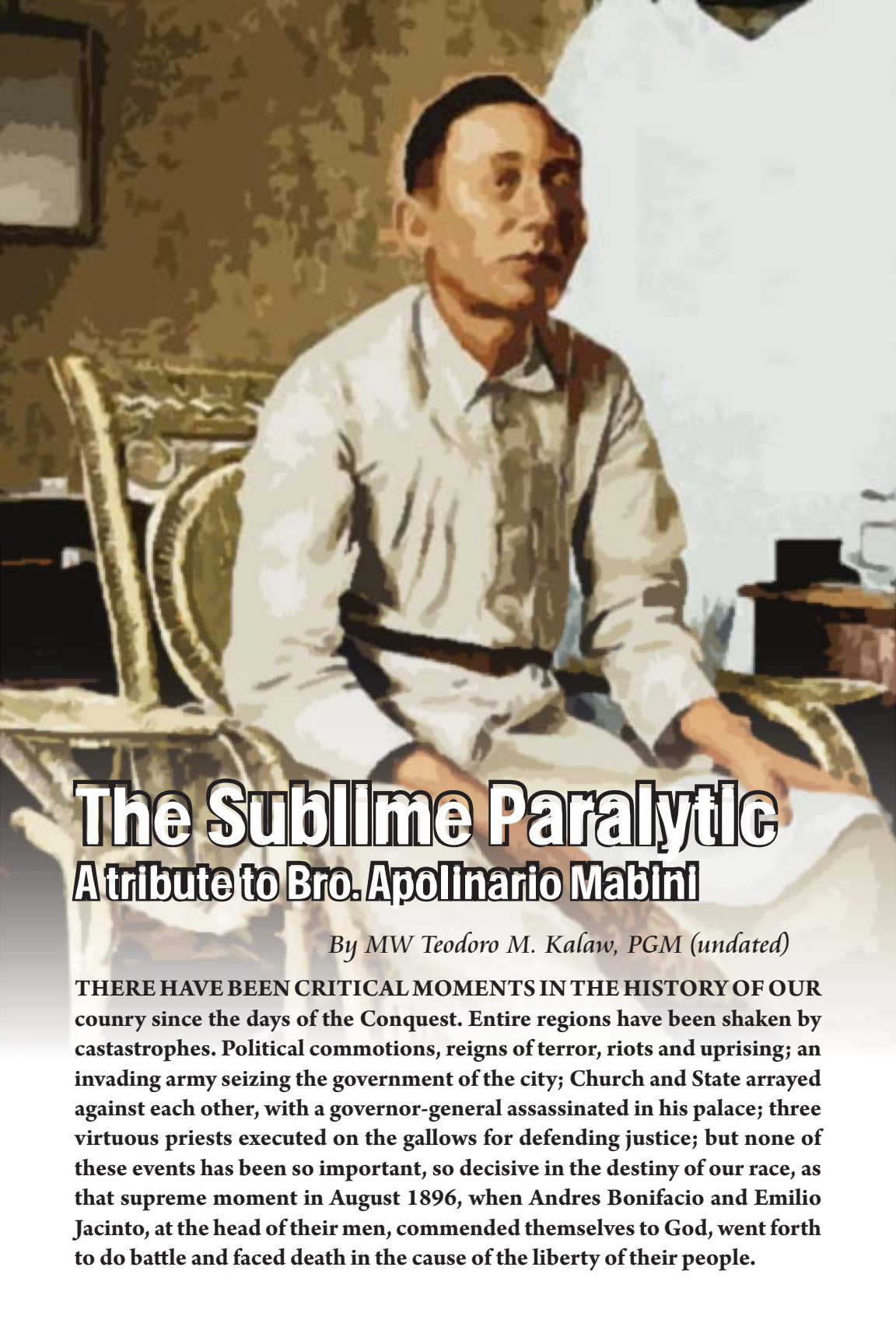
In moving to the next half of the day, the group prepared to attend the 1st Degree Conferral of Middle Park Lodge No. 206 governed by WB Chris White later that evening. MW Gazmin's team was joined by a contingent from Freemason Victoria which was led by its Deputy Grand Master RW Keith Murray.

During the festive board, RW Keith Murray again thanked MW Gazmin for making the quick yet fruitful detour to Victoria and in token thereof, doubled the amount they pledged to the GLP and handed MW Gazmin a P100,000 check to be given to a charity of his choice.

In his message to the brethren of Middle Park Lodge No. 206 and those of Freemason Victoria, MW Gazmin said that "despite the disparity in forms, there is one universal truth in Freemasonry—which is the principle of brotherhood." He hopes that we may see more Victorian brethren on Philippine shores soon and vice versa.

Day SIX

Early the next morning, the GLP entourage headed by MW Voltaire returned home. Despite the hectic and blistering schedule, MW Gazmin was able to visit two grand jurisdictions in less than a week.



The Sublime Paralytic **Atribute to Bro. Apolinario Mabini**

By MW Teodoro M. Kalaw, PGM (undated)

THERE HAVE BEEN CRITICAL MOMENTS IN THE HISTORY OF OUR country since the days of the Conquest. Entire regions have been shaken by castastrophes. Political commotions, reigns of terror, riots and uprising; an invading army seizing the government of the city; Church and State arrayed against each other, with a governor-general assassinated in his palace; three virtuous priests executed on the gallows for defending justice; but none of these events has been so important, so decisive in the destiny of our race, as that supreme moment in August 1896, when Andres Bonifacio and Emilio Jacinto, at the head of their men, commended themselves to God, went forth to do battle and faced death in the cause of the liberty of their people.

Jacinto's was an intellectually superior part in those first days. He prepared the organization. He synthesized the political ideal. He laid down the rules of conduct. He legitimized bloodshed by the saving grace of aspiration. Take the Cartilla away from the Katipunan and you have nothing left but a mere uprising. But, take the two together and judge the movement by its purpose, by its ideal, such as Jacinto conceived it, and you have a struggle for freedom, a political and social movement portentous in the history of the world, a scheme for an ideal organization seemingly transplanted from the minds of the reformers of old, and based on the dignity of labor, the recognition of women, the morality of private life, social equality, brotherhood of men, humanity, patriotism, and freedom of the country.

Neither Jacinto's literature nor his mentality was original. He received his inspiration from Jose Rizal and Marcelo H. Del Pilar, who were the forerunners of the Revolution; from Freemasonry, of which he was an ardent disciple; and from the French Revolution, his model. He was a man moulded by the circumstances. He knew how to take advantage of the political doctrines he was reading and the sad lesson of his people. That was all, and it made of him a beautiful democratic figure which the tide of the revolution bore aloft to serve as a spiritual torch to the restless masses. And when he assumed the part of a mentor he did it in so worthy a manner

that he saved the Venerable Society from the criticism of the profane and the slanders of the detractors.

The movement so worthily initiated grew and ended in an equally worthy and noble manner. Several months elapsed. Emilio Aguinaldo replaced Bonifacio. Apolinario Mabini replaced Jacinto. The scattered hosts resumed their stations. It was no longer the Katipunan, confined to the Tagalog provinces, flying its red flag with the sun and the lone K in the center; it was now the Revolution of an entire people rising like one man, with the leadership of a president and the moral guidance of a legislature. It was the ephemeral republic founded in the frenzy of victory to give to the new citizens a law, a fatherland, a nationality.

It would be difficult to point out in the history of human accomplishments so great a mission in a situation so pregnant with reverses and perils. The bonds which had bound the country to Spain for centuries had been suddenly broken; the Spanish government was being destroyed piecemeal; the laws which had so long been governing the customs, were suspended or at least disputed; the communities went without firmly established authority; the people were in arms against visible or invisible foes; war was threatening, acid everywhere the newly emancipated were celebrating with unbridled joy the liberty they had just won. A chaos, a catastrophe, seemed

imminent. Then the creative genius of Apolinario Mabini came to the rescue as if Providence had called him to bring order out of chaos, light out of darkness, harmony out of confusion, in order to guide us with the light of his writings on the path beset with death, to steady our vacillating courage, to restrain unbridled enthusiasm, to appeal to reflection and sense of responsibility, in short, to prepare that simple, but efficient administration which was noteworthy on account of its thorough adaptation to the requirements of those critical times.

It is, therefore, not strange that some have christened Mabini the Brain of the Revolution, while others have named him the Sublime Paralytic, and that all consider him the greatest civil glory of our Republic. It would not be astonishing, either, if some day a more careful historian will compile his articles of faith and his organic plans and decrees, group them together into a Code of Liberty and show to the world the type of a Malay statesman of gigantic mentality, attained without previous experience, without academic political culture; great because of his sagacity and foresight, and powerful because of his strength, his firmness and his patriotism.

There is none, perhaps, among the great figures of our Revolution who was more prominent, one who excited either anger or admiration, implacable enmity or unconditional support. Neither the

Spaniards nor the Americans ever had a more formidable foe and at the same time a more loyal friend. In Aguinaldo's counsels he represented indomitable tenacity, open fierceness, supreme authority. He had his own view of the situation and presented his program of government thus: a president with absolute powers; a representative Congress acting in an advisory capacity; a local government to suppress anarchy; a diplomatic service abroad working for the recognition of independence; a disciplined army in the service of the Revolution; strict morality; and ultimately independence or death.

He followed this dogma to the letter while he was with the government. He was charged as an absolutist, while others called him Aguinaldo's black cabinet. Many pointed him out as an enemy of individual liberty and many more blamed him for the failure of the diplomatic negotiations. But the fact is that both in and out of the government, the people continued to listen to him as if he were their oracle, and Filipinos, Americans and Spaniards alike rendered tribute to him as the eminent spokesman for the cause of the Revolution.

True, we may say he was rather an absolutist in those days; but, who would not establish an imperative rule under abnormal circumstance? Who would not conceive of a plan of unity when classes swayed from discipline to anarchy, from concerted action to

Then the creative genius of Apolinario Mabini came to the rescue as if Providence had called him to bring order out of chaos, light out of darkness, harmony out of confusion, in order to guide us with the light of his writings on the path beset with death, to steady our vacillating courage, to restrain unbridled enthusiasm, to appeal to reflection and- sense of responsibility, in short, to prepare that simple, but efficient administration which was noteworthy on account of its thorough adaptation to the requirements of those critical times.

dispersion? This reveals to us why his unshaken firmness stood like a Gibraltar in the midst of the hopes and fears and troubles of his time. But when he traced his program for the times of peace, when he theorized on fundamental points of political philosophy, as he did in his admirable essay on the three powers of the State, nothing remained of the absolutist Mabini, for we see instead the most decided champion of popular government and democracy.

He had the gifts of frankness, sincerity, and loyalty, something which seems impossible in a statesman of his type. He therefore encountered many adversaries with whom he had heated contests on the field of polemics. In this class of struggle he distinguished himself by his peerless dialectics, a deadly weapon which he wielded with skill and precision, displaying simultaneously solidity of argument, simplicity and clearness of diction, and gentlemanly pulchritude. And, while incidentally speaking of his literary style, let me state that although his words were uttered during epochs rife with impassioned disputes and political and religious hatred, he never lost the virtues of serenity of tone, simplicity of form, and purity of intention, as contrasted with other writers even of our time, whose effusions, "decked out in beads and war-paint like Apaches," resemble far more a philippic than a prayer to Liberty.

Mabini bequeathed to posterity a

few prophecies nearly all of which have come true. He predicted that the theory of annexation would be a myth, an impossibility. He predicted that the ideal of independence would become more and more firmly established in the hearts of the people, crowding out the dream of annexation. He predicted that a government of Filipinos aided by Americans would be a provisionally satisfactory plan until the recognition of independence. And finally, he

memory will endure in all hearts so long as we have a country to love. And if the Filipinos of the future, especially in case the Islands should then still be under foreign tutelage, ever seek a source of supreme inspiration in the moral greatness of an iron will, in the ardent zeal of a revolutionary, or in the omnipotence of a victorious constructive genius, let them gaze at the figure of the Sublime Paralytic, the irresistible, the colossal, the triumphant.

And if the Filipinos of the future, especially in case the Islands should then still be under foreign tutelage, ever seek a source of supreme inspiration in the moral greatness of an iron will, in the ardent zeal of a revolutionary, or in the omnipotence of a victorious constructive genius, let them gaze at the figure of the Sublime Paralytic, the irresistible, the colossal, the triumphant.

predicted, that the independence of the Philippines was not the aim, but only the means of the Revolution, the aim of the Revolution being the social emancipation of the whole Malayan race.

Mabini's name has been chiselled and engraved in stone and bronze in the province he adored. His name has been given to streets and squares and his picture is seen everywhere side by side with Rizal's and Del Pilar's. His

SOURCES:

Gems of Philippine oratory; selections representing fourteen centuries of Philippine thought, carefully compiled from credible sources in substitution for the pre-Spanish writings destroyed by missionary zeal, to supplement the later literature stunted by intolerant religious and political censorship, and as specimens of the untrammelled present-day utterances, Austin Craig, Fajardo Press, Manila, 1924.



A 50-year Masonic Awardee.

Sierra Madre 181 celebrates 50th year

For 50 years, the brethren of Sierra Madre Lodge No. 181 has been promoting the principles of Freemasonry in the province of Laguna. Last July 23, 2016, they celebrate half a century of masonic labor at the La Carmelita Cafe and Bar in Santa Cruz, Laguna.

Representing the Grand Master MW Voltaire Gazmin on this momentous occasion was Senior Grand Lecturer VW Abelardo Aportadera.



By VR Sammy P. Fernandez, PGC and VW Flor R. Nicolas, PSGL

Born in 1850 in Kupang, Bulacan, Bulacan, Marcelo Hilario del Pilar, after attending early classrooms in his hometown, studied at the Colegio de San Jose and then at the University of Sto. Tomas. At the age of 30, he qualified as a law practitioner. He married his cousin, Marciana, by whom he had four sons and two daughters.

CRUSADING JOURNALIST

As a young man, Marcelo showed singular delight in reading European classics. This fondness for letters made him leave his legal career for a libertarian cause and, consequently, became a crusading journalist.

As founder of Ang Diariong Tagalog, Marcelo H. del Pilar came to be known, deservedly, as "Father of Philippine Journalism." In his writings, which were marked by clarity of style, he

courageously expressed his progressive ideas, deeply deploring the backward condition of his country and his countrymen. Dexterously using satire and parody as weapons, he directed his aim at his pet peeves: the friars. In fact, he authored inflammatory pamphlets, and these were distributed inside the church and openly sold in the churchyard - right under the noses of his friar-targets!

He, moreover, wrote *Dasalan At Tocsohan*, which included the following:

ANG AMAIN NAMIN

Amain namin sumasacumvento ka, sumpain and ngalan mo, malayo sa amin and kasakiman mo, quitlin ang liig mo ditto sa lupa para ng sa langit.

Saulan mo cami ngayon nang aming

kaning iyong inarao-arao, at patauanin mo kami sa iyong pangungal para nang taua mo kung cami nacucualtahan; at huag mo coming ipahintulot sa manunukso at iadya mo cami sa masama mong dila. Amen.

ABA GUINOONG BARIA

Aba ginoong Baria, nakapupuno ca nang alcancia, ang Fraile sumasaiyo, bukod ca niyang pinagpala't pinahiguit sa lahat, pinagpala naman ang kaban mong mapasok.

Santa Baria, Ina nang Deretsos, ipanalangin mo kaming huwag anitan ngayon at cami ipapatay. Siya naua.

Using as pseudonyms Dolores Manapat, Piping Dilat, L.O. Crame, Carmelo, and Plaridel, Marcelo H. del Pilar produced a great many pieces of biting prose, so that he, in turn became the target of persecution by the targets of his satirical pen.

On October 22, 1888, as a consequence, he left hurriedly for Spain. Once in Barcelona, he quickly joined a group of Filipino intellectuals who were then publishing *La Solidaridad*, under the direction of Graciano Lopez y Jaena.

INTENSE PROPAGANDIST

In November 1889, or nine months after its maiden appearance, *La Solidaridad* passed from the hands of Graciano Lopez y Jaena to those of Marcelo H. del Pilar. From then on, it came out regularly and the name "Plaridel" and

La Solidaridad became interchangeable until Marcelo H. del Pilar's death.

In the hands of "Plaridel," *La Solidaridad* not only served as a revolutionary paper, but also as a medium for education and reform. It strove to secure reforms in the government and in the judiciary; representation in the Spanish Cortes; removal of the friars from the Philippines; secularization of Philippine parishes; freedom of speech, press, association and assembly; and greater individual and social liberty.

In spite of hunger, financial stress, lack of personal and other constraints, "Plaridel" devoted his time and energy to the publication of *La Solidaridad*. Seeing his intense determination, other propagandists sent in their contributions. But, of course, for reasons of security, they had to use pseudonyms, too. Marcelo himself used not only "Plaridel," but also "Kupang," his Masonic code name. Jose P. Rizal wrote as "Laong-Laan" and "Dimasalang;" Mariano Ponce, as "Ninang," "Tikbalang," and "Kalipulako;" Antonio Luna as "Taga-ilog;" Jose Maria Panganiban, as "Jomapa;" Dominador Franco as "Ramiro Franco;" and Clemente J. Zulueta, as "Juan Tatoo."

Del Pilar was able to write, among others, many letters, approximately 150 essays and 66 editorials.

The following are among his outstanding

essays:

1. La Soberania Monacal en Filipinas, 1888;
2. Ante el Odio, 1889;
3. Los Frailes en Filipinas, 1889;
4. El Dios Omnipotente;
5. Essays on Rules of English Syntax;
6. Outlines of International Code; and
7. Cuestiones de Sermo.

His well-known editorials included the following: (1) "Las Filipinas Se Pierden," (2) "Asimilacion de Filipinas," (3) "Regimen Parliamentaria para Filipinas," (4) "La Redencion de Filipinas," and (5) "Autocracia Brutal." Masonic Activities

Marcelo H. del Pilar was one of the charter members of Logia Revolucion, which was constituted in 1889 under the Gran Oriente Español. He was also a charter member of Logia Solidaridad No. 53 in Madrid, which was actually a revival of the Logia Solidaridad in Barcelona; it was likewise under the Gran Oriente Español. This Lodge got its new charter on May 15, 1890. On May 21, no less than Grand Master Miguel Morayta installed the new officers of the revived Lodge. Julio Llorente was Worshipful Master, and Marcelo H. del Pilar, Senior Warden. It was in Lodge Solidaridad No. 53 that Jose P. Rizal was raised to the sublime degree of Master Mason on November 5, 1890. It was in the same Lodge

where Marcelo H. del Pilar, assisted by Rizal and other outspoken members, conceived the idea of establishing Masonic Lodges in the Philippines. Hence, del Pilar came to be known as "Father of Philippine Masonry."

Because he occupied high positions in the Gran Oriente Español, such as Grand Counselor of the Order, President of the Grand Commission of Justice, Assistant Grand Orator, and member of the Award of Masonic Perfection, Marcelo H. del Pilar was instrumental, to a very great extent, in the establishment of the first Philippine Masonic Lodge, namely, Logia Nilad, which was constituted on January 6, 1891. When the Lodge was given the official number 144 on March 20, 1892, Rizal was made its honorary Worshipful Master.

From then on other Masonic Lodges were established in the country, including Labong, Masala, Majestad, Dampulan, Bathala, Walana, Balagtas, Taliba, Dalisay, Lusong, and Modestia.

FILIPINO MASONS BECOME VIRTUAL ENEMIES OF FRIARS IN THE PHILIPPINES

Del Pilar and other Filipino Masons, both in the country and abroad, became virtual enemies of the friars in the Philippines. This was understandable because of the Reform Movement, particularly its publication, La Solidaridad, was composed mostly

of Masons. The avowed program of the Movement and therefore of its official publication was “to combat all reaction and all backward steps; to applaud and accept every liberal idea and to defend progress; in a word, to be a propagator first and foremost of all democratic ideals, hoping that these may reign in all nation...”

The situation was, indeed, ironic. The Spanish Constitution guaranteed the environment by the citizens of Spain of all the “modern liberties,” such as freedom of speech, of the press of association, and of religion. But the indios were not considered citizens of Spain! Any indio criticizing the government and the church was dubbed a filibuster—a sobriquet that could, and did, send the person concerned to jail, to exile, or even to death.

Del Pilar, Mariano Ponce, and other leading members of Logia Solidaridad No. 53 pinned their hopes for the redemption of their country on Freemasonry because the preamble of the Constitution of the Gran Oriente Español read in part thus: “In the Philippines, where clericalism controls all power and is terrorizing the inhabitants, must organize a Council of the Masonic Order that will free the people there from the crushing yoke imposed upon them - a Masonic body that will be the advance guard of civilization and progress, prepared to give battle to these grim specters from out of the medieval past who walk side

by side with ignorance, fanaticism and superstition.”

Del Pilar played a key role in the establishment of the Gran Consejo Regional by Filipino Lodges. The first Grand Master of this Council was Ambrosio Flores.

The Gran Consejo Regional having been established, more Masonic Lodges were granted their charters in 1894. Among these were, according to MW & III. Reynold S. Fajardo, Pilar, Luz de Oriente, Intergridad Española, Binhi, and Minerva.

In early 1895, however, del Pilar was saddened by the news relayed to him by Apolinario Mabini that the Spanish government, instigated by the Friars, had ordered the arrest of Masons taking part in meetings, and that this development caused Masonic Lodges to suspend their labors. Yet in the same year, two other Lodges, Villaruel and Parpaw, were established. In the same year, too, Marcelo H. del Pilar and Mariano Ponce were made 33o Masons and members of the Supreme Council of the Gran Oriente Español.

DISILLUSIONMENT, ILLNESS, DEATH

Marcelo H. del Pilar became disillusioned when he received the news from Apolinario Mabini that the source of funds for La Solidaridad was dried up, and that Masons had turned from

being reformists to revolutionaries. This disillusionment, plus his lingering illness due to tuberculosis, led to his death in a free ward of a hospital in Barcelona weeks before the breakout of the Philippine Revolution against Spain.

Here is a comment which the Spanish periodical *La Political En España* made: “Del Pilar had not the culture and intensity of purpose of his countryman, Rizal, but he had a subtle power of instilling his thoughts into the minds of his followers. More correct in form than any other, skillful in debate, tenacious in maintaining his conclusions, the personality of Marcelo H. del Pilar as propagandist is doubtless the greater produced by the Filipino people.”

And the eminent scholar Epifanio delos Santos said, “If Del Pilar’s articles, essays and monographs scattered through newspapers and reviews and the writings published independently were gathered, properly classified, and published in several volumes, Del Pilar would make at least four volumes of 400 pages each, and would have no equal in Philippine bibliography so far as wealth of local and international information and serenity and fearlessness of journalistic controversy are concerned.”

A FINAL WORD

We are, indeed, proud that the “Father of Philippine Masonry” is considered “the greatest propagandist of his time.”



RIII-Bulacan DDGM VW Fernando Garcia III joins other local officials in celebrating M.H. Del Pilar Day.



VW Fernando Garcia III, DDGM for RIII-Bulacan joins the brethren as well as the members of the Bulacan Bodies, A&ASR during the parade.



VW Fernando Garcia III reads the message of the Grand Master MW Voltaire T. Gazmin.



The brethren of RIII-Bulacan throws their support behind their DDGM VW Fernando Garcia III.

RIII-Bulacan joins in M.H. Del Pilar day festivities

THE MASONIC DISTRICT RIII-Bulacan joined the rest of the province of Bulacan as it celebrated Marcelo H. Del Pilar Day last August 30, 2016 at the M.H. Del Pilar Shrine in Cupang, Bulacan.

Organized by Cupang Lodge No. 295 and led by its DDGM VW Fernando Garcia III, the brethren joined the local officials in giving tribute to one of its more illustrious sons ----- national hero, Marcelo H. Del Pilar. Regarded as the Father of Philippine Masonry, Marcelo

H. Del Pilar or “Plaridel” (masonic name), is part of the triumvirate (together with Jose Rizal and Graciano Lopez-Jaena) that initiated the propaganda movement against the Spanish colonial government from the 1880s until his death in 1896.

Del Pilar used the pen names “Plaridel” and “Pupdoh,” to write essays, articles, and satirical pieces (like “Dasalan at Tocsohan”) which highlighted the abuses of Spanish government officials and even by members of the clergy.

PHOTOS BY VW FERNANDO GARCIA III



THE YORK RITE OF FREEMASONRY

BY **DANILO C. DATU, SR.,** **EVARISTO A. LEVISTE,** AND **JOEY A. VILLEGAS**

Did you know that the form of Freemasonry we have here in the Philippines is that of the American York Rite system? That's right. The York Rite is not just an appendant body that one optionally joins after becoming a Master Mason. It is actually the type and form of Freemasonry that we all have come to know in our jurisdiction to be regular.

Many people mistake the York Rite to mean only those degrees that succeed the first three degrees of Freemasonry. That is because the first three, also called Symbolic or Ancient Craft degrees, are controlled by the governing body called the Grand Lodge. The succeeding degrees of the York Rite system, however, are controlled by separate individual governing bodies of their own.

Many Master Masons choose to continue their York Rite journey by eventually applying for the degrees

officially under the umbrella of these separate York Rite bodies, the primary intent of which is to broaden their Masonic knowledge and understanding. Knowing that certain things were lost in the third degree of the Ancient Craft storyline, the succeeding York Rite degrees pose to reveal in the most impressive manner the discovery of that which was lost, thereby completing the whole of the Temple story, culminating in what is known as the Royal Arch degree. After the Royal Arch degree, new doors begin to open for the York Rite candidates as they progress to receive more degrees and even join the chivalric orders of knighthood – all meant to bestow further Masonic knowledge.

In Freemasonry, additional degrees meant further knowledge, yet do not necessarily correspond to higher authority within the Fraternity, which is why when many Master Masons argue that “there is no degree higher

than the third degree,” they are actually emphasizing the authority of the Grand Lodge (which controls only the first three degrees) over all of the Masonic Fraternity. They therefore deem the use of the term “higher degree,” to be politically incorrect for it does not mean a higher rank or position within the Grand Lodge or within any of its subordinate Blue Lodges.

If such is the case, then why even bother joining the succeeding York Rite bodies at all? If you are one to ask or ponder on such a question, then perhaps you are among the many misguided Masons who have come to value rank, position, distinction, privilege, merit, and award as being more important than Masonic Education itself, as if such were imaginary medals meant to be collected and displayed. If you are such a Mason, then you are advised to read no further from here, for the York Rite is not for you. The York Rite is a calling – a commitment to work without the hope of fee or reward.

BEYOND THE LODGE

The seeking of further light beyond the first three degrees somehow gives the impression that the Blue Lodge is inferior to the succeeding York Rite bodies. Such is a mistaken line of reasoning, for the York Rite does not, in any way, pose to replace the Lodge as the center of one’s Masonic priority, consequently taking time and effort away from it. What it does is simply add

more knowledge to the seeking Master Mason, teach him more life lessons, and provide him with more opportunities for friendship and Masonic endeavors outside of the Lodge.

As such, only those who believe they could manage to spare and devote that extra time and effort, without interfering with their allotted time for their own respective Lodges (including their time for work and family, of course), are encouraged to proceed further in joining the succeeding York Rite bodies. Otherwise, they would just end up receiving the degrees without hearing from them ever again. Needless to say that such has become common practice these days, as Master Masons take the York Rite without an actual intent to devote the time to learn its lessons, but rather to merely acquire its degrees in order to be able to legitimately use its emblems as car decals that supposedly show off their so-called “Masonic achievements.” Again, it cannot be emphasized enough that the York Rite is no place for those simply seeking personal glorification.

Who then are the ideal candidates for taking the succeeding York Rite degrees? Preferably, those who have already spent enough time laboring in the Lodge should qualify, for they have already weighed, measured and proven their own capabilities to be able to assess if they are truly ready to take in more Masonry. Those who feel they have much to give and more

to contribute are likewise welcome to discover what lies beyond the Lodge. Also, those who believe that they have already satisfactorily learned the lessons of the Ancient Craft and are willing to advance to further improve themselves are the perfect candidates for the succeeding York Rite degrees.

which supposedly originated in York, England. The York Rite, therefore, though owing to degrees which may have originated in York, is collectively

THE YORK RITE BODIES AND DEGREES

The York Rite is not exactly a “Rite” in the strictest sense of the word, for it is not controlled by a single governing body. Each of its three succeeding bodies – the Chapter of Royal Arch Masons, the Council of Royal and Select Masters, and the Commandery of Knights Templar – works and functions independently from one another. They have been collectively called THE YORK RITE in the US simply because of the origin they share with the existing Ancient Craft degrees therein to the type of Freemasonry



The Chapter of Royal Arch Masons, also called Capitular Masonry, works four degrees.

an American initiative. It is for this reason that the “repackaged” York Rite is also sometimes called the American Rite.

The first body of the York Rite is actually the Blue Lodge, which works the first three Ancient Craft degrees. However, since this body is controlled exclusively by the Grand Lodge, we shall then refer to York Rite bodies, throughout the remainder of this article, to mean only the Chapter, the Council, and the Commandery.



The first body of the York Rite is actually the Blue Lodge, which works the first three Ancient Craft degrees.

The Chapter of Royal Arch Masons, also called Capitular Masonry, works four degrees which tell a series of stories involving the construction of the Temple of Solomon, its completion, and the eventual discovery of the Lost Word. Upon completion of these

degrees, a candidate is said to have been “(1) regularly advanced to the degree of Mark Master; (2) inducted to the oriental chair as a Past Master [Note that the Past Master degree was merely inserted to satisfy a previous ruling that only those who had already presided as Masters of the Lodge may qualify to receive the Royal Arch degree]; (3) received, accepted and acknowledged a Most Excellent Master; and (4) exalted to the supreme and most sublime degree of Royal Arch Mason.” Members of the Chapter are addressed as Companions and their meetings are called Convocations.

The Council of Royal and Select Masters, also called Cryptic Masonry, works two degrees which tell the story of how the Lost Word had been hidden and “preserved” in the first place, awaiting to be discovered. To qualify for the Council, the candidate must first be a Royal Arch Mason. Upon completion of these degrees, the



The Council of Royal and Select Masters, also called Cryptic Masonry, works two degrees.

candidate is said to have been regularly greeted or “(1) admitted to the rights and honors of a Royal Master; and (2) permitted to penetrate the secrets of a



The Commandery of Knights Templar is actually a series of three chivalric orders, not degrees, where a Royal Arch Mason may seek membership.

Select Master.” Another degree called Super Excellent Master is sometimes given as an honorary degree. Members of the Council are also addressed as Companions, as in the Chapter, and their meetings are called Assemblies.

The Commandery of Knights Templar is actually a series of three chivalric orders, not degrees, where a Royal Arch Mason may seek membership. Because of the themes and imageries utilized by these orders, it is recommended that candidates should be of the Trinitarian Christian faith, not for the purpose of exclusivity, but rather to avoid possibly offending candidates who belong to religious denominations that regard such imageries as offensive. A sword-wielding Crusader Knight, for instance, may be viewed by some

to be particularly offensive, however unintentional it might be. Upon acceptance to these orders, a candidate is said to have been “(1) constituted and created a Companion of the Red Cross by the Council of the Illustrious Order of the Red Cross; (2) made, constituted and admitted as a Knight Hospitaller of St. John of Jerusalem or Knight of Malta by the Priory of the Order of Malta and the Mediterranean Pass; and (3) dubbed and created a Knight Templar by the Commandery or Preceptory of the Valiant and Magnanimous Order of the Temple.” Note that, similar to the Council, a candidate for the Commandery must first be a Royal Arch Mason. Members of the Commandery are addressed as Sir Knights and their meetings are called Conclaves.

Within and beyond these three York Rite bodies are other side degrees and sub-orders in which a York Rite Mason may later join, either by choice or by invitation, all being predicated by the Royal Arch degree as their minimum requirement. The Royal Arch, therefore, is regarded by the York Rite as its central and fundamental degree that takes precedence over all other succeeding degrees and orders, the reason for which has something to do with the history of the York Rite itself.

DESCENDED FROM THE ANTIENTS

The history of the York Rite covers

the entire history of Anglo- (English, Scottish, and Irish) American Freemasonry itself and is therefore too long and complex to completely fit in this article. We will therefore be as brief and concise as possible, skipping details and documentary references, and mentioning only those instances relevant to the York Rite as we know it today.

During the early years of Freemasonry, while it was still transitioning from Operative to Speculative, even up to the time after the formation of the first Grand Lodge in London in 1717, there were only two Masonic degrees – the Apprentice and the Fellow. The third degree, called Master Mason, was created much later in time and was reserved only to those who were and had presided as Masters of the Lodge, hence the name. Along with the Master Mason degree were other similar degrees created in other parts of Great Britain but were not controlled by the newly-formed Grand Lodge in London. The most notable and considered most important of these was the Royal Arch degree. [There were also other degrees, like the Mark Master degree, which claimed to be as old as or even older than the Master Mason degree.]

In a move to standardize the Fraternity, the Grand Lodge of London then decided that only three degrees were to be officially worked – the Apprentice, the Fellow, and the Master Mason – disregarding all other existing degrees.



Many old Lodges which were not part of the Grand Lodge system became unhappy with the decision, as most of them regarded the Royal Arch as the pinnacle degree of Freemasonry itself. Their opposition came to such a point that they set up their own Grand Lodge of the Most Ancient and Honourable Fraternity of Free and Accepted Masons according to the Old Constitutions at York in 1751, calling themselves Athol Masons, Ancient York Masons [after the Ancient Society of Freemasons in the City of York which supposedly existed as early as 1705 but only formally established as the Grand Lodge of All England Meeting at York around 1725], or simply the Antients. They later took the other “disregarded” degrees under their wing, most especially the Royal Arch degree, which they considered to be of utmost importance and deserved the recognition of being the highest fundamental degree in all of Masonry.

Years later, in 1813, the two competing Grand Lodges finally decided to merge

to form what is now the United Grand Lodge of England (UGLE). They settled their differences over the issue of the Royal Arch degree by mutually agreeing to declare that “pure Ancient Masonry consists of three degrees and no more, namely those of Entered Apprentice (first degree), Fellowcraft (second degree), and Master Mason (third degree),” but continued by adding “including the Supreme Order of the Holy Royal Arch.” They further stated of their declaration that such was “not intended to prevent any Lodge or Chapter from holding meetings in any of the degrees of Chivalry,” pertaining to the then developing Templar and Rose Croix (Ne Plus Ultra) Masonry.

When Anglo Freemasonry was brought to the New World (the colonies that would soon become the US), way before the union of the UGLE, they were either of “modern” origins (Free & Accepted Masons or F&AM), i.e., those who adopted the constitution of the former Grand Lodge of London, or of those that would eventually call themselves Antient (Ancient, Free & Accepted Masons or AF&AM), i.e., those who supposedly derived their rituals from the former York Grand Lodge. Either way, whatever the preference, both would eventually have mutual recognition as a result of the union of the two systems. However, it was actually on September 14, 1797, when a certain Thomas Smith Webb authored the *Freemason’s Monitor or Illustrations of Masonry*, that

American Masonry was given what was to become its locally-adopted rituals. The said rituals were arguably based more extensively upon those of the Antients or Ancient York Masons. This was evident in the prominent inclusion and highlight of the Royal Arch degree which the Antients were known to have held in the highest esteem.

Incidentally, Webb became instrumental in the establishment of general governing bodies in Masonry. On October 24, 1797, he presided over a convention of committees which eventually formed the General Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons on January 24, 1798. The General Grand Chapter is now considered the oldest national Masonic body in the US. It is for this reason that Webb has been affectionately referred to today as the “founding father of the York Rite.” He foresaw the need for strong national and state organizations in order to preserve, invigorate, and propagate the then detached and uncontrolled ceremonies of Royal Arch Masonry, even Templar Masonry.

On June 21, 1816, the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar was organized, and on August 25, 1880, the General Grand Council of Cryptic Masons International was likewise established, completing what we now simply call today as THE YORK RITE.

HISTORY OF THE YORK RITE IN THE PHILIPPINES



Thomas Smith Webb became instrumental in the establishment of general governing bodies in Masonry.

The seeds of the York Rite of Freemasonry were brought to the Philippines in 1905 by American sojourning Masons in Manila who petitioned to the General Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons in the US to establish a local chapter. They first met March 16 that year, forwarded their petition April 8, and had their first stated convocation “under dispensation” on September 4. Then, on June 22, 1906, a charter was formally granted to the first ever Royal Arch chapter to operate on Philippine soil, assuming the name Luzon Chapter, RAM, and opened its first stated convocation “under charter” on June 10 the following year.

During the Commonwealth period, the local chapter consisted almost exclusively of American Masons. It however became the driving force that

paved the way for the establishment of other local Masonic organization including, most notably of course, the Grand Lodge of the Philippine Islands itself in 1912. Others were the Scottish Rite, the Shrine, the Order of Amaranth, and the Red Cross of Constantine which was chartered on June 4, 1915.

Luzon Chapter, RAM also survived the controversies of its time, such as the delicate relationship with the Supreme Grand Chapter of Scotland which also set up its own Royal Arch chapter in the country, called Keystone Chapter. Thankfully, because of their Treaty of Amity, both still maintain mutual and friendly relations to this day, in the same manner as mutual harmony exists between the Lodges of the current Grand Lodge of the Philippines and the sole locally-existing Lodge under the Grand Lodge of Scotland, called Lodge Perla Del Oriente No. 1034.

For the particular advancement of the York Rite in the Philippines, Luzon Chapter, RAM became responsible for the establishment of Far East Commandery, KT as the first Commandery of Knights Templar in the country, chartered July 15, 1910. In 1912, it was also instrumental in the founding of Oriental Council, R&SM as the first Council of Royal and Select Masters in the country, which was issued dispensation on December 19, 1914 and chartered August 31, 1915 by the General Grand Council of Cryptic

Masons International.

These Masonic bodies, however, became dormant when World War II broke out in 1942. Much of their records and belongings were lost due to the Japanese occupation. It took years of painstaking reorganizations to try and reconstruct from the damages. Added to the fact that most of the American Masons have returned to the US during and after the war, much of what needed to be rebuilt were left in the hands of the Filipino Masons and the few American Masons who were left behind.

Years passed and, amidst terrible and innumerable odds, York Rite Freemasonry in the Philippines managed to survive and even flourish. On December 15, 1952, the General Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons in the US issued the charter for the Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of the Philippines. Not long after, on October 1, 1957, the General Grand Council of Cryptic Masons International issued the charter for the Grand Council of Royal and Select Masters of the Philippines. Eventually also, on December 31, 1963, the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar of the US issued the charter for the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the Philippines, thus completing the establishment of all the local governing bodies of the York Rite of Freemasonry in the country.

Other Masonic organizations under the wing of the York Rite of the US were likewise locally established, such as the Order of High Priesthood (1954), the Order of the Silver Trowel of Thrice Illustrious Masters along with the Council of Anointed Kings (1959), the Knights of the York Cross of Honor (October 7, 1961), the Holy Royal Arch Knight Templar Priests (April 21, 1990), the York Rite College (July 29, 1995), the Societas Rosicruciana In Civitatibus Foederatis (February 11, 2010), the Allied Masonic Degrees (February 12, 2010), the Knights Crusader of the Cross (October 22, 2011), and the Order of Knights Preceptor (February 10, 2012). They all showcase what a grand and magnificent view it is, for a York Rite Mason, to gaze into the vastness of the Masonic universe and admire the wonders that lie beyond the third degree.

FURTHER LIGHT IN MASONRY

The labeling of the York Rite degrees beyond those of the third as “higher degrees” raises eyebrows because the word “higher” somehow gives the

notion of being better. Though each of the succeeding degrees of the York Rite has its own separate lesson to impart, all are together considered important parts of Freemasonry itself and not one presumes to be better or superior than the other. As such, the York Rite degrees do not, in any way, undermine or undervalue the fundamentality of the third degree.

Every Master Mason is therefore highly encouraged to seek further light in the York Rite, but only for the right reason – not under the delusion to seek for a better Masonry, but rather to improve one’s self further by adding to his Masonic knowledge; continuously appreciating the advance without depreciating the basics; and all without the selfish hope of personal gain, but rather the desire to use whatever knowledge learned for the service of others and to the glory of God. Then, and only then, can all the degrees and orders of the York Rite deliver their value and purpose to the seeking Master Mason.

So the next time somebody tells you



THE THREE GOVERNING BODIES IN PHILIPPINE YORK RITE: The Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons, the Grand Council of Royal and Select Masters, and the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar.

Every Master Mason is therefore highly encouraged to seek further light in the York Rite, but only for the right reason - not under the delusion to seek for a better Masonry, but rather to improve one's self further by adding to his Masonic knowledge

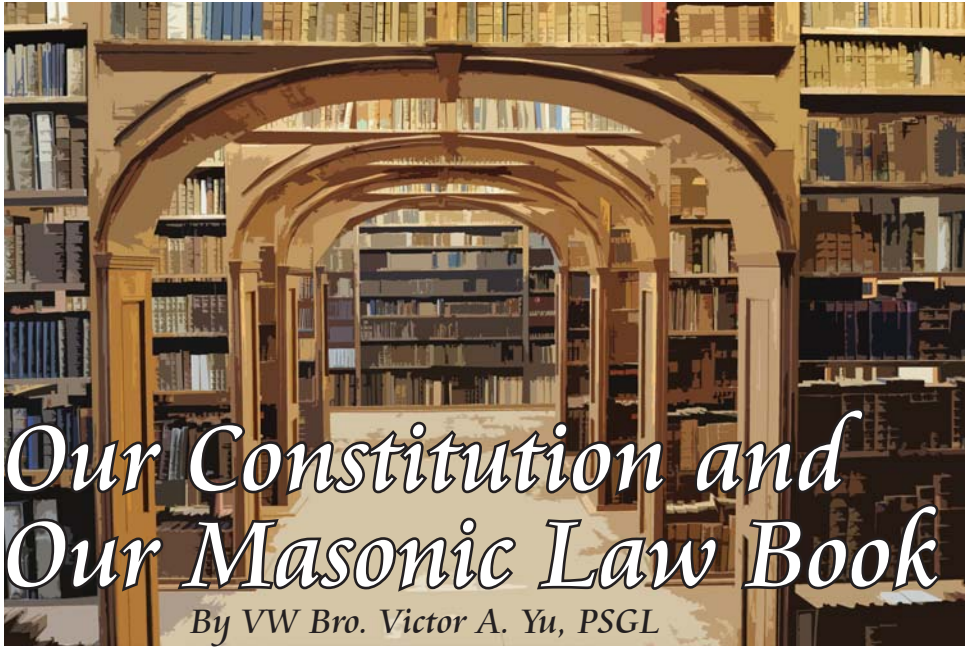
to the point of nausea that “there is no degree higher than the third degree” – using such declaration to erroneously imply that there is nothing beyond the third degree worth taking, or under the deliberate intent of condescending those who have already taken degrees beyond the third – be warned, for these may be brethren who are still committed to darkness, and would do anything – even mock you to the point of ridicule – in order to just prevent and dissuade you from seeking further light in Masonry. Bear in mind that until they have taken the York Rite and discover its true nature, they are in no position to form any kind of opinion or judgment about it. And when they finally do take the York Rite themselves and correctly understand its lessons, rest assured that they will no longer speak irreverently of these great and most beautiful ceremonies that any Master Mason would ever have the pleasure to PARTICIPATE.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS:

BRO. DANILO C. DATU SR. is an influential and highly motivational leader of the York Rite in the Philippines, considered by many to be the driving force behind its continuing success. He has served as the Grand High Priest of the Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons and as Eminent Grand Commander of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar. He is currently the Illustrious Grand Master of the Grand Council of Royal and Select Masters of the Philippines.

BRO. EVARISTO A. LEVISTE is one of the most respected pillars of the York Rite, both here and the US, and has become the key proponent in the formation, chartering, and stewardship of several Masonic Orders which he and his contemporaries have brought to the Philippines in recent times – a legacy that will endure throughout the history of Philippine Masonry.

BRO. JOEY A. VILLEGAS is a York Rite Mason and researcher specializing in the academic study of the different Rites and Orders of Freemasonry, particularly their histories, customs, and degree rituals. Some of his works and papers had already been featured in Masonic publications both here and abroad, such as the Far Eastern Freemason magazine and The Journal of the Masonic Society, USA.



THE STUDY OF “MASONIC JURISPRUDENCE” OR THE body of Masonic laws is certainly a challenging endeavor. It is demands much time, patience and perseverance because our laws consist not only of written laws but also those that are unwritten, both having been in existence for many centuries. So brethren who are interested to deeply study this subject should consult the history, tradition, customs, ancient laws and rituals of Masonry and not confine themselves to our present written laws and regulations.

For instance, our mystic circle refers to the word “constitution” as Masonic law or regulation. It is totally different from the concept of “Constitution” as used in public law which pertains to the fundamental law of nations. Masonic scholar, Bro. Albert G. Mackey, defined “Book of Constitutions” as the book that contains the written landmarks, rules, regulations, ancient charges, and fundamental principles of the Order, a detailed exposition of the duties of officers of Grand and Subordinate Lodges, and the

rights and privileges of members”. In the same context, the forerunner of Grand Lodge Constitutions written for the first Grand Lodge (England), Anderson Constitution of 1723 was named as “The Constitutions of the Free-Masons, Containing the History, Charges, Regulations, &c. (etc.) of that most Ancient and Right Worshipful Fraternity, For the Use of the Lodges”. At present, it is known as the “Constitutions of the Antient Fraternity of Free and Accepted Masons under the United Grand Lodge of England

containing the General Charges, Laws and Regulations, etc. etc.”

Similarly in our jurisdiction, our present Masonic Law Book may lead us to think that “The Constitution of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the Philippines” consists only of a single part (Part I). One of the reasons is because the provisions laying out the procedures for amendments for Part I – Relating to the Grand Lodge and Part II – Ordinances have different thresholds for the votes required to approve (2/3 and Majority respectively). Adding to the confusion, the words “Constitution”, “Ordinances” and “Regulations” are used liberally and inconsistently in several provisions contained therein.

However, examination of the previous revisions of our Constitution in 1980, 1984, 1994 and 2005 would show that it is otherwise. In the 1980 edition, provisions pertaining to the Grand Lodge, Subordinate Lodges, Individual Masons, Miscellaneous Regulations, Ancient Laws, Landmarks and Forms were divided into Chapters and not in several Parts as we have it now. The major revision in 1984 by a Committee headed by respected jurist and Masonic scholar, MW Reynato S. Puno, PGM, started the first division of our Constitution into several Parts. Thereafter such format was retained and our latest Centennial Edition still contains such division:

- 1) Relating to the Grand Lodge (Part

- I); 2) Relating to Subordinate Lodges (Part II); 3) Uniform Code of By-Laws (Part III); and 4) Edicts and Miscellaneous Regulations (Part IV). From institutional memory, MW Puno remarked that their Committee purposely placed a lower threshold of votes required for those provisions in Part II of our Constitution containing the Ordinances or Regulations of Subordinate Lodges but our Constitution definitely consists of Parts I to IV.

Further, the Masonic concept of “constitution” is also continually used in our installation ceremony in Subordinate Lodges when we present the Master with our Masonic Law Book and charge him that “That Book of Constitutions you are expected to diligently search and from time to time cause its contents to be read in your Lodge, that none may remain ignorant of the precepts it enjoins, or of the ordinances which it promulgates”.

The Committee on Revision of the Constitution was renamed as Committee on Revision and Updating of the Constitution by several Grand Masters in the exercise of their prerogatives over the Craft during their respective terms since 2011 up to now. Such name is most appropriate as our Constitution definitely needs further refinements to include recent laws and edicts approved by the Grand Lodge. Importantly also, its several provisions need also to be rewritten that they

may lessen confusion to the brethren interested in studying Masonic jurisprudence.

However, there is no doubt that our quest for further light in Masonic Jurisprudence should ideally begin with our present Masonic Law Book (Centennial Edition). Such compilation contains our Constitution and other references such as our Ancient Laws, Landmarks and some peculiar regulations. All such shows the distinct character of our fraternal institution and teaches us to avoid the application of conventional legal concepts in matters relating to our Craft.

With the vastness of Masonic law sources and differing opinions at times amongst Masonic scholars, it is hoped that Masons will not be overwhelmed and discouraged to seek further light in Masonic jurisprudence. Armed with a sincere heart, any Mason can ably study several Masonic references and discern for himself. As modern technology has now given us more access of references from old documents up to recent writings and researches, our exercise of Masonic tolerance is extremely necessary. As Masonic scholars in the past have disagreed on certain subjects on the Craft so should we also expect the same to happen in the present. The most important working tool in this study is to ingrain in our minds that no single person has the monopoly of Masonic knowledge.

Armed with a sincere heart, any Mason can ably study several Masonic references and discern for himself. As modern technology has now given us more access of references from old documents up to recent writings and researches, our exercise of Masonic tolerance is extremely necessary.

Despite its heavy toll on readings and intellectual reflections, Masonic jurisprudence is more of the heart than that of the brain. In our jurisdiction, we tend to promote much Masonic education for the intellect but fall short of the lessons for the Masonic heart. We fail to take note of this very place where we were first prepared to become Master Masons. However, let us not be dismayed. As we continue to study Masonic jurisprudence, we shall be humbled by the immensity of Masonic knowledge and the dedicated labors of the brethren who have gone before us. With such deep appreciation, we will be better enabled to circumscribe our passions and prejudices and become better Men and Masons; and Together Brethren, we can be better in Thinking, Acting and Speaking the Mason's Way.

From the Grand Secretary

MW Danilo D. Angeles, PGM, GMH



Electing Honorary and Other Members

IT'S A GREAT TO BE A LODGE HONORARY MEMBER. ONE enjoys the esteem of his brothers with freebies of good treatment and pleasant company to go. But it is a title that ought to be earned—not purchased, demanded, haggled over, or imposed, even.

So, it came to me as shock one day when I visited a lodge down in the South. The Worshipful Master announced me before the lodge as its honorary member. Everybody knew it except, who else but, me.

But nothing can be more depressing than a case which has landed on my desk lately. A Worshipful Master proposed before the lodge the admission of Brother X as a Dual Member. The lodge opposed it.

But the Worshipful Master never gave up. He further pushed for Brother X's admission by declaring him "honorary member", instead. Expectedly, the lodge rose up in arms and trooped to the Grand Lodge to complain.

You see, not every Jose and Pedro can become a lodge honorary member. The status—both as a position and prestige—is given by a lodge to a non-affiliated Mason as "a reward for his exemplary service." (Ordinances, Art. XVII, Sec. 1, item f). *Quid pro quo*. The candidate must have done something good or uplifting to the lodge for its members to be convinced, inspired, to keep him for good in return.

But that is just the start. The idea or proposition of making one an honorary member must find its way next to the lodge business. In a stated meeting, the Worshipful Master opens the issue up to the floor. It's time to feel the membership's pulse, fish out never-heard-yet information, or see to the

build-up of a lodge consensus.

A worthy candidate will smoothly sail past the deliberations in no time. If he has really delivered valuable or immense service to the lodge, who will complain in the first place? But a candidate who is notch or two below the lodge expectations or sentiments will surely encounter resistance. Where opposition rises, it's time to shelve the issue.

Therefore, must the lodge decision be unanimous in conferring an honorary membership status? Yes, it must; lest, he will never get past the ballot.

Will a viva voce vote, or show of hands, make do for the election of a candidate to an honorary member position? No. Never. In admitting new members to the lodge—be it in the Ancient Craft Degrees, Dual Membership, or Honorary Membership—the ballot is the Masonic way of voting.

These are practices of “immemorial usages” which the Grand Lodge of England has instituted in its Grand Regulations of 1721. “immemorial” because they are in use presumably even prior to the historic Grand Assembly of York in 926 A.D. where the Masonic Grand Lodge, as we know it today, has first come into shape.

And from the Grand Regulations, the Masonic way voting is set. Bro. Robert Ingham Clegg, in his lucid commentary

on Mackey's Masonic Jurisprudence (1927), explains: “Three things are to be observed in the consideration of this subject: 1. The ballot must be unanimous. 2. It must be independent. 3. It must be secret.”

Even in the 19th century, the manipulation and forcing of contestable candidate's admission to a lodge already pester both English and American Masonries. They found the rule of unanimity too severe to comply with so that a couple of grand lodges have devised one or two shortcuts. Troubles grew from bad to worse. This finally compelled them to rethink and return to the old ways.

Hence, Bro. Clegg writes the reason behind the rule of unanimity in the chapter on “Balloting for Candidates”—

“Unanimity in the ballot is necessary to secure the harmony of the Lodge, which may be as seriously impaired by the admission of a Candidate contrary to the wishes of one member as of three or more; for every man has his friends and his influence. Besides, it is unjust to any member, however humble he may be, to introduce among his associates one whose presence might be unpleasant to him, and whose admission would probably compel him to draw from meetings, or even altogether from the Lodge. Neither would any advantage really accrue to a Lodge by a such a forced admission; for while receiving a new and untried

member into its fold, it would be losing an old one.” {Emphasis added.} expectedly absent.

The rule of unanimity goes by the way of the popular motto “One for all and all for one.” For the one candidate, all lodge members must cast one vote for positive result. Just as all lodge members must care for the sentiment of one brother, first and foremost, before one candidate in question.

It makes a mockery of brotherhood to a favour a newcomer—regardless of wealth, prestige, power or familial

That’s why any voting must be announced ahead of a meeting. It is the right of every Mason to come and cast his vote on membership issues, whether consenting or dissenting. No Mason must bar or prevent another even on the grounds of non-payment of dues. He ought to have a say on whether he can live with the guy, standing up for election, in the many years to come.

It is also every Mason’s duty to vote. Nobody leaves the lodge or sinking

While a Mason is answerable to no man for his vote, yet he must ever remember that the ballot box is on the Altar. Seeing into the hearts of men, God alone will dispense the karma appropriate to everyone’s motive, fair or foul.

relations—while shutting up a complaining brother. A Master, or any brother, who trifles with brotherly love is an unfaithful husband who dumps his O.B. to the trash can, screws every dressed-up electric post that comes in sight, and makes a lodge of Masons a lodge of whores. Sorry for the metaphor but that’s it.

As the lodge readies to vote, the Senior Deacon prepares the ballot box and presents it to the Three Pillars for inspection. The Secretary calls out next each member in the roll, present or absent, to come to the altar and cast his vote—just like the roll call in the Tragedy where the “ruffians’ are

deep into his seat once his name is called out.

The practice of calling out the members one by one, and casting the vote alone before the Altar distant from the rest, are measures to protect the secrecy of the vote. No brother nearby will be craning his neck to see what another drops into the box. The setup sees to it that the voter is free from fear or favor, uninfluenced by pressure or threatening gesture from warring factions on the lookout.

No Mason can be called to account for the vote he has cast. Or even wilfully disclose his own; lest, his friends

While a Mason is answerable to no man for his vote, yet he must ever remember that the ballot box is on the Altar. Seeing into the hearts of men, God alone will dispense the karma appropriate to everyone's motive, fair or foul.

At the announcement of the ballot results, the Lights must declare the outcome right there and then as how they see it—no matter even if one grows dim to proclaim the contrary. A couple years ago, a Worshipful Master up in the North declares "bright" when the balloting result was actually "dark". Stymied, the Wardens kept mum and followed the East. Until one of the Lights whispered around, during the Fellowship, the flimflamming of the balloting. Big trouble broke out in the lodge.

If the candidate passes the balloting the Worshipful Master sees to it that the proceedings go into the minutes and monthly membership report and duly submitted next to the Grand Lodge.

After the submission of documents to the GLP, he buys and readies a Certificate of honorary Membership

available at our Masonic Supply Center.

In the next meeting, he calls the newly-elect honorary member to come before the altar and take the Oath of Membership.

The same steps apply to dual membership. Conferring an honorary membership is like a spot promotion. It is based on the merit of lodge service alone. Dual membership, however, requires a longer period of observation and evaluation of the candidate, a year at least or more. After all, a dual member can speak out during stated meetings and cast vote in lodge elections. Honorary members cannot.

That's why the wiser class of honorary members step out of the lodge when discussion heats up in the lodge floor. It's not mandatory but courtesy.

It doesn't hurt to hand a newly-affiliated Mason with a lodge certificate of dual membership. It not only spices up the occasion. Moreover, it helps in recalling who's who in your lodge after many years as future Worshipful Masters reconstruct the membership roll.

Our Masonic predecessors have been faced no doubt with the same admission issues that we grapple with today. But time and again, they revert to the wisdom buried deep in our ancient customs, no matter how severe, that sadly escapes the dull-headed and trifle-hearted Masons of today.

By VW Oliver V. Yabut, AGS

The lessons of our rituals



Brethren, we always say that as free and accepted masons, our duty is to become better men. The question is, how does Freemasonry make us better men? Let me count some of the ways. First, the craft gives us obligations to keep and charges us to practice steady obedience to the tenets, concepts and philosophies of Freemasonry.

Next, the brethren are constantly presented and bombarded at every opportunity with powerful, time tested, tried and proven tools designed to impart upon them important lessons for an ideal and correct way of life. These powerful lessons are contained in our various symbols and rituals. And the failure by an individual mason to fully understand these lessons often lead to his failure to act in a truly Masonic manner.

Masonic ritual is the very basis of Freemasonry. Without ritual, we would not have Freemasonry as we know it. Yet it is incorrect to say that our fraternity is the only organization that has a ritual system because ritual seems to be part of all human experience. College fraternities have their own ritual; all church denominations have theirs; private clubs have them; the military has them too. But the rituals of Freemasonry have a much deeper significance which will not be readily apparent to strangers.

Picture this if you will, brethren. If a stranger happens to eavesdrop on us doing the ritual, he will not understand it at all. It would be meaningless to him and he would probably think our rituals as silly movements with strange recitals of words and phrases. But we do our

rituals because we know that they have deep meanings.

However, some of us merely take our rituals for granted; some of us merely accept them as essential routines of freemasonry without actually understanding them and thus they just go through the motions without knowing their significance.

It is high time for us to completely change our attitude and view our rituals with the highest importance that they deserve. There are specific meanings behind our rituals which we should understand and master. Freemasonry seeks to make good men better, simply by exposing them to important principles and symbolic teachings through our rituals. And it is when masons ponder upon these principles, teachings, and symbols and other truths as illustrated by constant repetition thru our rituals; it is when masons consciously apply them to their daily lives that help turn them into better individuals.

Let me just discuss with you some common rituals which we did just now. First, we performed the Rite of Opening a Lodge of Master Masons

The formal opening and closing ceremonies of all our lodges signify orderliness and the seriousness we place upon our business. It reminds us to treat our rituals and fraternal duties with the dignity and respect that

they merit. It marks our dedication to the Craft and to making the Lodge a place to work out the true purposes of Masonry. Our lodge is not only a temple of peace but a sanctuary.

In it, we pray to acknowledge our subservience to a Divine Being because nothing can be achieved without the blessing of God. In it, we walk in square to remind us to always square our actions in all walks of life. In it, we pay homage to the flag to instil in us the allegiance and duty we owe to our country. In it, we observe equality among men – one man, one voice - yet still maintain the rules of subordination. And inside the lodge, we speak with civility and act with decorum.

Next, we did The Rite of Salutation

In open lodges, it consists of saluting the Master, a recognition of the authority of the Master of the lodge and likewise a manifestation of the member's submission to the will and pleasure of the Master. It also emphasizes a Mason's respect for and obedience, not only to lodge officers, but to all just and duly constituted authorities. You will recall the charge given during our installation ceremonies – to always maintain respect to civil magistrates, etc. And each time we salute, we execute our signs. And each time we do the signs, it is to manifest that we have sworn duties, obligations to perform and promises to keep - all of which we are reminded never break on pain of

self-imposed penalties.

And following the Rite of Being Invested with the Apron, we wear our apron at all times while inside the lodge.

The wearing of apron is to signify to you that you are committed to a life of purity and a rectitude of conduct. By wearing it, you are always reminded to practice loyal obedience to the laws of the craft and observe sincere good will to the brethren; as the badge of a mason, it signifies that Masons are workers and builders and not destructionists. Please cultivate the idea that you wear the apron not only in the lodge. A mason and his apron are one. Know that you

represent the craft even in your private dealings as well so you must act as if the apron is always girded in your person.

Brethren, it really takes time, effort, dedication and constant practice to perfect our ritual – the floor works, the movements, and the dialogues. I say to you that we will be better ritualists if we all seek to realise the significance of what we are doing. When we know that everything we do, everything we say is meaningful, then our ritual will be worthwhile. When we believe that what we are doing is worthwhile, then we will apply ourselves to the practice of our ritual with more vigor and enthusiasm.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

VW Oliver V. Yabut is the current Assistant Grand Secretary. A tax lawyer by profession, he is master mason who is well-versed in the field of Masonic Law and Jurisprudence and served the GLP in various capacities and in various standing and special committees. He was a Past DDGM of MD NCR-G and is a Past Master of King Solomon Lodge No. 150.

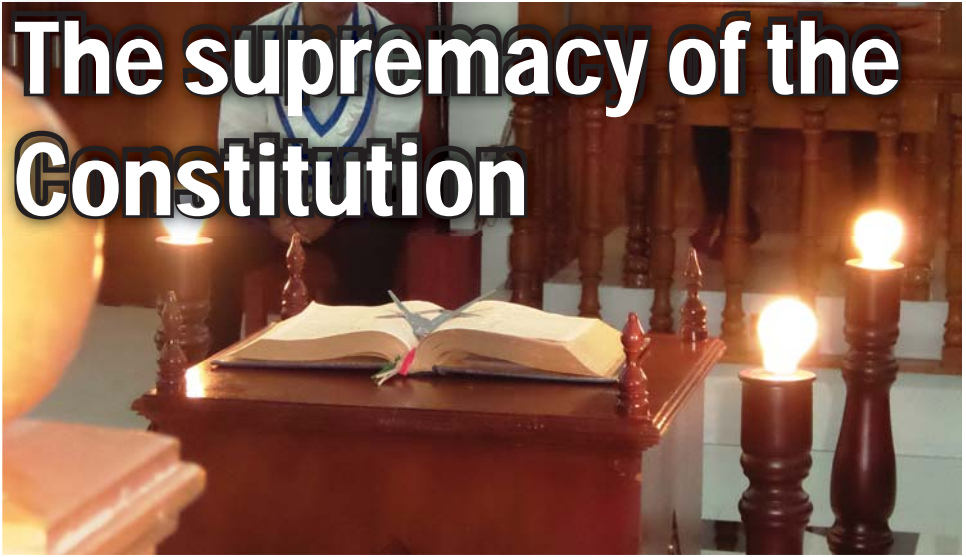
HOW EDICT NO. 290 CAME INTO EFFECT

THE ENACTMENT OF EDICT NO. 290 OF GRAND MASTER MW Voltaire Gazmin last August 30, 2016 drew mixed reactions from various sectors of the grand jurisdiction as it suspended the effectivity of Edict Nos. 272, 276, 277, 279, and 280 which according to the 100th Annual Communication held last April in Tagaytay City, were to be referred to the corresponding GLP Committee for further review and recommendation insomuch as it amends the provisions of the Masonic Law Book.

While some brethren received the mandate of the Edict No. 290 with open arms in conformity with the age-old principle that edicts are the ultimate expression of the commands of the Grand Master to whom all brethren under such jurisdiction owes utmost fealty and obedience to, certain groups have strong opposition to such edict. We now look into the supervening events and circumstance that occurred prior to the enactment of Edict No. 290-Gazmin.

1. JUNE 23, 2016: The GLP issued Circular No. 6 appointing members to the GLP Standing Committees.
2. JULY 14, 2016: In conformity with the proceedings of the 100th AnCom, the Grand Master directed the Committee on Revision of the Constitution to take cognizance of Edict Nos. 272, 276, 277, 279, 280 and 268-B.
3. JULY 19, 2016: The Committee on Revision of Constitution, realizing that a review of the aforementioned edicts requires a revisit of masonic jurisprudence, through a letter requested assistance from the Committee on Jurisprudence.
4. JULY 26, 2016: The two Committees met.
5. AUGUST 9, 2016: The Joint Committee submitted their Joint opinion on Edict Nos. 272, 276, 277, 279, 280 and 268-B to the Grand Master.
6. AUGUST 11, 2016: The Grand Master met with the Board for General Purposes to discuss important matters among which, the opinion of the Joint Committee.
7. AUGUST 26, 2016: The GLP issued Circular No. 13 publishing the full text of the opinion and recommendation of the Joint Committee.
8. AUGUST 30, 2016: The GLP issued Edict No. 290 suspending the effectivity of Edict Nos. 272, 276, 277, 279, and 280 as well as recommending the review of Edict 268-B as it contravenes the manner as to how amendments to the Masonic Law Book should be made and enjoining the brethren to submit proposals and recommendations to such effect.

The supremacy of the Constitution



Publishing the full text of the Joint Committee Report on Edicts 272, 276, 277, 279, 280 and 268-B

Dear MW Gazmin:

The Committee on Revision of the Constitution and Committee on Jurisprudence most respectfully submit this Joint Report in line with your directive to render an opinion on the above stated matter. The Joint Report shall examine the various processes involved in introducing amendments to the Constitution of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the Philippines. More specifically, the report shall attempt to clarify whether the Edicts referred to the Committee on Revision of the Constitution can still be enforced even after their referral to such committee.

BACKGROUND

During the 100th Annual Communication held in Tagaytay City, Edicts 272, 276, 277, 279 and 280 (“Edicts”) and Edict 268-B (see separate discussion below) were presented to the General Assembly for its deliberation. The discussion began when MW Santiago T. Gabionza, Jr., PGM, and chairman of the Committee on Grand Lodge

Officer’s Reports moved to refer the Edicts to the Committee on Revision of the Constitution for further study and review. The referral was made with the understanding that the Edicts at their current state had the effect of amending several provisions of the Constitution, thus necessitating the observance of certain procedures related to constitutional amendments before being considered for approval and ratification. In the meantime, it

was initially agreed by the General Assembly that the effectivity of the Edicts was “stayed”, pending such referral.

The controversy arose when several brethren inquired as to the definition of the word “stayed” vis-a-vis the effectivity of the Edicts pending the result of the evaluation and appropriate recommendation by the Committee on Revision of the Constitution.

Debate in the plenary ensued with the sole issue being whether the effects brought by the Edicts were temporarily suspended upon referral or, in contrast, whether they remain in effect until and unless they are deemed void and ineffectual by the Committee on Revision of the Constitution.

When pressed to amend and or clarify his motion to include the various interpretations of the word “stayed”, Chairman Gabionza maintained that his Motion is merely to refer the Edicts to the Committee on Revision of the Constitution for further study.

However, the presiding officer, MW Tomas G. Rentoy III, PGM, in summing up the motion and the voting that transpired, made the following pronouncement:

“Ganito, kahit ma-calendar yan for submission to the Committee on Revision of the Constitution, the edicts will still be in effect, the edicts will still

be in effect. We now have a motion and duly seconded that these edicts be referred to the Committee on the Revision of the Constitution, but these edicts will still be effective. Do I hear an objection? There being no objection, the same is hereby approved.”

Because of the unique circumstances surrounding the abovementioned pronouncement, the brethren are divided in their interpretation of the effects of such referral and the continued effectivity of the Edicts mentioned.

In line with the ANCOM’s mandate for the Committee on Revision of the Constitution to review the Edicts, this Committee humbly requested the Grand Master’s consent to coordinate with the Committee on Jurisprudence, as some crucial issues relate to the exercise of that Committee’s power to render an interpretation of masonic laws and jurisprudence. This request was subsequently granted.

Thereafter, the Committee on Revision of the Constitution and Committee on Jurisprudence (hereinafter referred to as the “Committees”) were jointly constituted to shed light and determine the true state of the Edicts in question.

DISCUSSION

Before delving into the heart of the matter, the Committees deem it proper to discuss some basic principles that

have guided our Fraternal Order since time immemorial.

I. In between each Annual Communication, the Grand Master exercises executive, judicial, and legislative powers otherwise granted to the Grand Lodge. His exercise of legislative powers, however, is limited in that he may only enact laws, which are harmoniously complementary to the Constitution. He cannot amend the Constitution by mere enactment of an edict.

Part I, Article IX, Sec. 1 of our Constitution, provides:

“the Grand Master, between Annual Communications of the Grand Lodge, shall exercise all its executive power except the granting of Charters, all its judicial powers, and such legislative powers as may provide needed legislation that shall be harmoniously complementary to this Constitution. His actions are effective immediately”. (emphasis supplied)

Upon organization, a Grand Lodge can exercise supreme authority over its respective Grand Jurisdiction. Part I, Article III, Sec. 1 of the Constitution also provides for the same authority. Said provision states:

“The MW Grand Lodge of F. & A.M. of the Philippines is the Supreme Masonic Power and Authority within its Grand Jurisdiction, possessing all the attributes

of sovereignty and government – Legislative, Executive and Judicial – limited only by strict adherence to the Landmarks of the Order and to its Constitution, Uniform Code of By-Laws for Subordinate Lodges, Edicts and General Regulations.” (emphasis supplied)

The Grand Lodge is composed of Past Masters, incumbent Masters and Wardens of all Subordinate Lodges, Past Masters of Lodges of another Grand Jurisdiction who are residents of the Philippines and members of subordinate Lodges, and those who have been granted honorary membership or honorary Grand Titles (Part I, Article II, Sec. 1 of our Constitution).

The Grand Lodge convenes during the Annual Communication every fourth Thursday of April of each year (Part I, Article IV Sec. 1 of our Constitution) and conducts its business as such, during that time. This is in line with our ancient customs and usages as evidenced by one of the oldest Masonic manuscripts, the Old York Constitution of 926, which provides that:

“The General Assembly, or Grand Lodge, shall consist of Masters, and Fellows, Lords, Knights and Squires, Mayor and Sheriff, to make new laws, and to confirm old ones when necessary. . .”

For proper governance and to preserve

harmony in the fraternity, the actions of the Grand Master are effective immediately and every brother is obligated to abide by his decisions and directives. It is only when the General Assembly is convened during the Annual Communications that the Grand Master ceases to possess his executive, judicial and legislative powers and begins to discharge his duties as the Presiding Officer over such assembly.

In his treatise “Masonic Jurisprudence”, Masonic scholar and legal luminary, Bro. Roscoe Pound opines thus:

“In the beginning edicts were pronouncements by a magistrate of a course which he proposed to take in the administration of his office, to the end that the citizen might know what to expect. In time these pronouncements easily became authority, and had the force and effect of law which governed the administration of the official who made the pronouncement. When the power of the magistrate was delegated to the Emperor, the power of issuing an edict also passed to him. The Emperor was thus given authority to issue general orders governing matters of administration, which had the full force and effect of law. In the Roman Empire an edict was a general administrative law, as distinguished from a judicial order, prescribing the conduct of some matter of administration. The term

was so used in French public law in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and was generally used in this sense at the time when Masonic law was formative. In this same sense we use it in Masonry. An edict is a general administrative, as distinguished from a judicial order, prescribing the conduct of some matter of administration, on prescribing the conduct of Masons in some matter of administrative cognizance. A good example may be seen in the edicts of Grand Masters in different jurisdictions against the use of cipher rituals.” (emphasis supplied)

Following this doctrine, it is clear that Masonic tradition dictates that, given the generally administrative characteristic of edicts, the Grand Master can only exercise such legislative powers that are in line with the Constitution. Logically, therefore, edicts that are administrative in nature or those which merely implement existing provisions of our Constitution are harmoniously complementary while those that amend, revise or alter existing provisions of the same, are not.

Our Constitution is composed of four (4) parts:

- Part I - Relating to the Grand Lodge
- Part II - Ordinances governing Lodges and Members
- Part III- Uniform Code of By-Laws for Subordinate Lodges

Abiding by our ancient customs and usages and the relevant provisions of our Constitution, the edicts issued by Grand Masters should not be in contradiction with any of the provisions of these parts.

II. The brethren composing the General Assembly, during the Annual Communication, has supreme legislative powers, including the power to make new laws, confirm old ones and/or introduce amendments to the constitution. In the exercise of the power to amend the Constitution, the approval and consent of the General Assembly is absolutely necessary to make such amendments binding and obligatory.

In dealing with the most problematic of questions involving Masonic law, recourse is made to both the Ancient Landmarks as well as to the code of written laws as all legal dictums are established from the principles of law embraced in these sources. (Mackey, A Textbook of Masonic Jurisprudence)

The Constitutions, Charges and Regulations constitute the Written Law of Masonry, and they were at one time co-extensive in authority with the Landmarks of the Order. From these however, the Written Law differs in one respect; that Landmarks are unrepeatable, ever continuing and in

force. On the other hand, the Written Law, having been adopted by the supreme legislative authority of the order (the Grand Lodge) at the time, may be altered, amended, or altogether repealed by the same supreme authority. Accordingly, portions of these Written Laws have, from time to time, been materially modified by different Grand Lodges, as evident upon inspection of these laws with the modern Constitutions in various jurisdictions.

It may, however, be considered as an axiom of Masonic law, that in every Masonic jurisdiction, where any one of its laws has not been formally or implicitly repealed by a subsequent enactment of a new law, the old law will continue in force, and the Craft must be governed by its provisions.

Relevant to the discussion at hand is Regulation XXXIX of General Regulations 1721. It states:

“Every Annual Grand Lodge has an inherent power and authority to make new Regulations, or to alter these, for the real benefit of this ancient Fraternity: provided always that the old Landmarks be carefully preserved, and that such alterations and new Regulations be proposed and agreed to at the third Quarterly Communication preceding the annual grand feast; and that they be offered also to the perusal of all the brethren before dinner, in writing, even of the

youngest Apprentice; the approbation and consent of the majority of all the brethren present being absolutely necessary to make the same binding and obligatory; which must, after dinner, and after the new Grand Master is installed, be solemnly desired; as it was and obtained for these Regulations, when proposed by the grand Lodge, to about 150 brethren on St. John Baptist's day 1721." (emphasis supplied)

- b. The law must be proposed and agreed to prior to the Annual Communication.
- c. The approbation and consent of the majority of all brethren present during the Annual Communication is absolutely necessary to make the same binding and obligatory.

Following this age-old doctrine, before a law - be that a new law, a confirmatory one, or an amendment to a existing law - may be introduced as part of the body of laws governing a Grand Jurisdiction, three elements must be present:

- a. The law must not violate any of

Having laid down these principles, the Committees shall now attempt to determine the state of the Edicts in question.

The Edicts, at their present state, are in conflict with relevant provisions of the Constitution, to wit:

EDICT	Provisions in Conflict With
Edict No. 272 Rationalizing the Number of JGLs and DGLs amending for the purposes Part 1, Article XXVII, Section 2 and Article XXXIII, Section 1, of the Constitution of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Philippines dated April 25, 2015	Part I, Article XXVII – The Grand Lecturers, Sec. 2 – Junior Grand Lecturers Part I, Article XXXIII – District Grand Lecturers, Sec. 1
Edict No. 276 – Requiring members in good standing to have attended an aggregate of six Stated Meetings in the year immediately preceding the balloting of petitioners for degrees or affiliation and lodge election of officers to be able to participate in said exercise.	Part II, Article VI – Degrees and Affiliations, (C) – Balloting Part II, Article XX (B) – Definitions, Sec. 4(f) – Good Standing Part II, Article X – Officers of Subordinate Lodges, Sec. 1

<p>Edict No. 277 - Prescribing additional requirements and instituting new measures in the process of accepting candidates for the Degrees of Masonry and providing penalties for violation thereof, with introduced amendment to increase by one day the number of times a candidate is allowed to report to the lodge.</p>	<p>Part II, Article VI (A) – Degrees and Affiliations</p>
<p>Edict No. 279 – Creating the Masonic Internal Affairs Office (MIAO), defining its powers and functions, and appropriating funds therefor.</p>	<p>Part II, Article XVIII – Charges, Trials and Procedures</p>
<p>Edict No. 280 – Creating the District and Grand Tribunals, defining their respective jurisdictions and providing for the applicable rules of procedures to be observed.</p>	<p>Part II, Article XVIII – Charges, Trials and Procedures</p>

We now come to the meat of our discussion.

The Committees are of the opinion that any proposed amendment to the Constitution should first, ideally, go through the proper procedure before being presented for ratification during an Annual Communication (Part I Article XXXV and Part II Article XX of the Constitution). Otherwise, the Grand Lodge, in its collective wisdom, would be deprived of sufficient time to evaluate and consider the consequences of such amendments.

But as events have unfolded as they

have, the Edicts at hand have been approved for referral to the Committee on Revision of the Constitution.

As explained above, edicts are deemed approved if the same are ratified by the brethren assembled in an Annual Communication. The essential element, therefore, in our analysis is to find out whether there was an approval of these amendatory edicts?

To address this issue, we need to answer this simple question: Did the brethren composing the General Assembly during the 100th Annual Communication exercise their

supreme legislative power and amend the Constitution by approving/ratifying the Edicts in question?

The short answer is they did not. Recourse was made to the transcript of proceedings and after careful review, the Committees found no mention or agreement among the brethren that the Edicts in question were approved and/or ratified. What the General Assembly approved was the motion to refer the Edicts to the Committee on the Revision of the Constitution for the latter's review, as can be gleaned from the precise wordings of the restatement of the motion submitted to the floor by the presiding Grand Master.

In effect, the General Assembly gave no express or tacit approval/ratification of the Edicts such that they would form part of our Masonic laws. Indeed, there was no declaration that the edicts were adopted by the required number of votes of the members present; i.e., three-fourths (3/4) votes for Part I of the Constitution, and Majority Votes for Part II thereof.

As to the propriety of sustaining the effectivity of the Edicts even after their referral to the Committee on Revision of the Constitution, our review of the transcript of proceedings likewise revealed that the matter of sustaining the effects of the Edicts was not properly raised as a motion and consequently not properly voted upon by the General Assembly in

accordance with Part IV – Rules of Order and Order of Business – Grand Lodge of our Constitution. In our Grand Jurisdiction, edicts issued by a Grand Master are temporary in nature. They remain in effect during the term of the Grand Master who issued it. Masonic tradition dictates that edicts must then be presented during the Annual Communication for the brethren's approval or disapproval and their effects dependent on the decision arrived at during the Annual Communication.

The Committees have not found precedence for this case and surmise that this is a first in the history of Philippine Masonry. The Edicts as they stand now, are in a class of their own (*sui generis*).

We now determine the rightful status of the Edicts.

It is the Committees' opinion that the continuing effectivity of the Edicts in question is inconsistent with the provisions of our Constitution and our Masonic customs and usages. As has been the recognized and consistent practice in this jurisdiction, approval of the motion to refer an edict to a standing Grand Lodge committee results in the automatic cessation of the effects of such edict, which is consistent with the termination of the authority of the Grand Master to govern the Craft upon the expiration of his term of office.

Contrary to the interpretation of some brethren, as gleaned from the transcript of the proceedings, edicts issued by the Grand Master during his term are not in the same class as “laws of the Philippines”. Unlike courts of law striking down unconstitutional laws and issuances, the Grand Lodge need not categorically strike edicts down in order to render such edicts ineffective. On the contrary, for edicts to be effective beyond the term of a sitting Grand Master, they need to be expressly approved and ratified by the brethren sitting as the Grand Lodge during the Annual Communication.

It is the Committees’ opinion that had the brethren wished to extend the effectivity of the Edicts pending their review, then the matter should, ideally, have been voted upon through proper motions so that the consent of the brethren could have been determined in accordance with the Rules of Order of the Grand Lodge and consistent with the Constitution.

CONCLUSION

In the hierarchy of Masonic Laws, we are governed primarily by the Ancient Landmarks, secondarily by the Constitution, and occasionally by Edicts. The Landmarks are immovable masonic doctrines, which cannot be amended. On the other hand, the Constitution is the fundamental body of law or rules of governance,

established by the express will and consent of the brethren. The Constitution can be amended, but for greater stability, the change can only be done through the stringent and established process of amendment. It cannot be changed informally, and certainly not through the mere expedience of transitory edicts.

It is clear based on the records of the previous Annual Communication that the brethren only voted affirmatively for the referral of the Edicts to the Committee on Revision of the Constitution. No votes were cast sustaining such Edicts. No votes were also cast confirming the amendment of the Constitution through these Edicts.

The Committees therefore conclude that the five (5) Edicts, having failed to comply with the procedural requirements necessary to have the effect of amending the Constitution, should be discontinued and deemed of no force and effect. At best, they may be deemed proposed amendments to the Constitution and treated accordingly.

RECOMMENDATION

The Committees believe that every Grand Master issues edicts with the primary interest of governing the Craft well, enhancing harmony, and promoting the general welfare of the brethren. Hence, the wisdom behind

the issuance of such edicts is held in very high regard.

However, the provisions of our Constitution obligate us to observe the amendment process provided under Part I, Article XXXV and Part II, Article XX of our Constitution before such amendments may be adopted by our Grand Lodge. Since part of the wisdom behind such provisions is to allow the maximum participation of the brethren in the law-making process of our Grand Lodge, the Committees most humbly recommend the following actions:

1. The Grand Master may consider seeking the brethren’s opinion on these Edicts by promoting vibrant discussions on these issues during the upcoming Multi-District Conventions.
2. In order to enable the participation of all the Subordinate Lodges in our Grand Jurisdiction, the Grand Master may opt to issue a circular encouraging Lodges and Districts to submit their formal resolutions concerning the said Edicts, to be submitted to the Grand Lodge not later than sixty (60) days from the issuance of such circular.
3. For the immediate information of the brethren in this Grand Jurisdiction,

the Grand Master may consider issuing a circular communicating the contents of this opinion, if the same is so approved and duly adopted by him.

EDICT NO. 268-B

As to Edict No. 268-B, the same was also referred to your Committee on Revision of the Constitution but was considered “pre-approved” as per the transcript of the proceedings. Its referral was made only for formality so the proper observance of the procedure for the amendments of our Constitution may be observed. The Committees emphasizes that the process of “pre-approving” an Edict is nowhere to be found in our Constitution. Nevertheless, there was an implied approval of the Edict when the voting process laid down therein was observed during the Annual Communication. Hence, this Edict, which amends Part, I, Article V of our Constitution was separated from the five Edicts in question and was treated as approved in practice by our Grand Lodge.

RECOMMENDATION

The Committees support the referral of Edict No. 268-B to the Committee on Revision of the Constitution and humbly recommend such referral to the latter Committee for the formal revision of the constitution.

www.grandlodge.ph goes online

GLP improves online support systems

WE HAVE A NEW WEBSITE!

The Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the Philippines has a new online domain: **www.grandlodge.ph**.

The new site is now powered by cloud-based platform GMail which allows for a faster and safer download time. Likewise, the new website now features an interactive map of the archipelago which contains the locations of lodges of the jurisdiction. Furthermore, the website also features the latests communications, edicts, and circulars from the GLP. Simply register to enjoy full membership access. In addition, digital copies of **The Cable Tow** are now made available for download via the website.

According to the GLP Web Master, Bro. Miguel Almario, lodge secretaries are requested to provide the GLP with lodge information such as official lodge logo, brief history, a copy of the Charter as well dates of stated meetings, complete addresses of their lodge temple or meeting place, contact information, and lodge website/url (if available).

The website also contains information and the latest new about the GLP, its officers and activities as well as online links to other Masonic resources. The web domain also allows online advanced submission of lodge reports and communications for faster and prompt review.

As part of the GLP online security protocols, access to lodge reports and membership database through the website is withheld at the moment. Inquiries pertaining to matters of utmost privacy and sensitivity may be made in person or thorough the lodge official email to the GLP.

The GLP will provide each subordinate lodge an official GLP email address using the scheme [lodge number]@grandlodge.ph A total of 30 GB of storage space per account across GMail and Google Drive will be provided free of charge. All official communications to the GLP should be sent using the new official email address (e.g. lodge reports, queries, communications, etc.) Secretaries or any designated brother of a lodge are requested to email contact@grandlodge.ph to receive login instructions.



MW Voltaire Gazmin delivers his inspirational message.



Happy guests at the BIRTH induction.



Officers of BIRTH presents a check donation to their favorite charity.

BIRTH induction set of officers Tax masons elect first

of being the first Muslim BIRTH President giving testimony that the organization gives no emphasis to status or creed.

The Grand Master MW Voltaire T. Gazmin, who himself is an honorary member of this organization attended the affair as its Guest of Honor and Speaker.

BIRTH is a masonic organization composed of masons who are former and/or present employees of the Bureau of Internal Revenue. It is engaged in travel and masonic charity.

LAST 29, 2016, the Bureau of Internal Revenue Travellers' Haven (BIRTH) held its annual Induction of Officers at the Celbrity Sports Club along Old Balara Road, Diliman in Quezon City.

Outgoing BIRTH President VW Ed Tolentino has passed the mantle of leadership to Bro. Bong Bandarang, a revenue employee of the BIR who now owns the distinction

acts new ers first Muslim prez

MW Voltaire Gazmin swears in the new BIRTH members.



The new BIRTH President, Bro. Bong Bandarang gives his inaugural address.



The guests during the BIRTH induction.



Cavite MDs conducts joint blood drive



IN CONSONANCE with the theme of National Disaster Conciousness Month of July with the participation of the various Districts of Pinarik, Risk Reduction and Management Office, Cavite East, Robinsons Place IMUS, Cavite East, on July 24, 2016, a joint blood drive was conducted at Robinsons Place IMUS, Cavite.



More than 100 donors participated in the blood drive. The event was organized by the Risk Reduction and Management Office, Cavite East, in coordination with the National Kidney Transplant Institute, Masingao District, IBA - Cavite East & West, F.A.A.M. Robinsons Place IMUS and other response alliance.



INANCE WITH THE NATIONAL DISASTER CONSCIOUSNESS month
the theme "***Dugong Alay Ko, Dugtong ng Buhay Mo 5***", the Masonic
RIV Cavite East and West in cooperations with the Imus City Disaster
and Management Office, National Kidney Transplant Institute,
Place Imus and other response alliance. held a blood-letting activity last
6 from 10 AM to 4 PM at Activity Center, Robinsons Place, Imus City,

one hundred (100) bags were collected from donors coming from
MDs RIV Cavite East and West, Army Reservists and Coast Guards.
as spearheaded by VW Roy V. Castronuevo, DGL MD RIV Cavite West
ordinator and supported by VW Gonzalo Q. Mapili, Jr., DDGM MD RIV
and VW Sebastian C. Siga-an, DDGM MD RIV Cavite West.



THE FORMATION OF THE YORK RITE OF FREEMASONRY



PHOTOS BY: VW HERNANI LOPEZ, SR.

A book review by Bro. Hernani B. Lopez, Grand Historian, GLP, Grand Sentinel, GCKTP

THE YORK RITE OF FREEMASONRY MAY HAVE OCCASIONALLY been dimmed. But it was never been extinguished.

The historical origins of Freemasonry have been subject of much speculation. There is general agreement that it evolved from the Guilds of operative Masons, but just how and when this happened is not known. There is, however, an ancient tradition within the Craft, which sheds some light on the matter.

The York Legend, its esoteric secrets and its Constitution have been the predominant factor in Freemasonry from the year 926 A.D. down through the years when the first Speculative Grand Lodge was formed in London in 1717 and when it expanded across the continent of Europe and to the four corners of the earth. But the basis of the York Masonic Constitutions is the historic Charter of York which was based upon the ancient documents,

laws, and privileges of the Greek and the Roman Colleges of Builders and Constructors.

DAYS OF THE ROMANS

Numa Pomilius organized and founded the College of Roman Builders and Constructors in 715 B.C... Conducting their own means of worship, these colleges were assembled to erect temples and monuments with the following presiding officers: Masters, Wardens, Censors, Treasurers, Keeper of the Seals and Secretaries. It also claimed that Greek artist and architects were employed by the Colleges, with the Greeks bringing to their work both the secrets of their art and the religious mysteries of their declining nation.

As we peer back further back into the dim recesses of time, we see that the

northern city of York has a long record of historical significance. At the time of the Roman invasion in 55 B.C. York was one of the headquarters for the most powerful of British tribes—the Brigantes.

BEGINNING OF THE ORDER

The oldest existing document which is clearly Masonic is the Regius Manuscript, dating from 1390 A.D. In it we read that the Saxon monarch Athelstan convened a general assembly of the Craft in the City of York in the year 926 A.D. at this time fifteen articles and fifteen points were established for the government of the Fraternity, and Athelstan's son, Prince Edwin was appointed as the head of the Order. Of great importance was the fact that King Athelstan granted his Charter to the Craft, thereby establishing it as a legal entity for the first time in history. The significance of this event for Masonry is exceeded only by the actions leading to the formation of the Mother Grand Lodge in 1717.

King Athelstan is described as being a liberal thinker. He was also an architect and in addition to his many acts of the church building and the promotion of learning, he gave charters to several Masonic Guilds. King Athelstan died in 941 A.D.

Every Grand Lodge of today is lineal descendant of the 926 York Assembly of Masons. Every copy of the Ancient Manuscript Constitution reaffirms this

end in 1717, when the first organized Speculative Grand Lodge came into existence, the terms of the York Charter were adopted and used as a basis for its Constitution and Declaration.

Other extant documentation of transition clearly shows that the Royal Arch from the very beginning was a part of Ancient Craft Masonry. We find, for example, in the 15th Century portions of the York Fabric Rolls a numismatic mention of a Second Part of the third Degree, which obviously referred to the Royal Arch Degree. It has been said that if you have not completed the Royal Ach Degree you do not possess the true word which was lost on the untimely death of Hiram Abiff. Only in York Rite Royal Arch Degree one can obtain it back. Do you possess the True Word my Brother?

THE KNIGHT TEMPLARS

At a later date the Templars attached themselves for protection to the Freemasons. This is evidenced by the monumental brass works of early 17th Century Vintage which belongs to the oldest Chapter in the World, Sterling Rock No. 3 of Sterling, Scotland. The brass works clearly depict symbols of the Royal Arch, as they do those of Symbolic Lodge and Knight Templar. The Charter's minutes begin 1743 and it by laws for 1745 set a five schilling fee for exaltation.

**CREDIT: YORK RITE COLLEGE
OF NORTH AMERICA**

Masonic Humor

Jokes and amusement from the world wide web

A mason who had just been installed as Master of his lodge and was duly attending all the functions he could was having a hard time with his wife who said... "All those masters-in-office have to do is click their fingers and you would be there wouldn't you? I wish I was a master!"

After due thought, he said, "So do I dear. We swap them for a new one every year!!"

A Mason was having trouble with his ritual, and was telling a fellow mason in a pub one day, and his friend said i know a bloke down the road who sells Parrots who know the ritual and prompt you when you have any trouble. So the next day off he went to the shop, and the man said "yes i have three", he pulled a curtain across and there were 3 parrots, one with a mm apron on, one with a masters apron, and one with a grand lodge apron on. he said "how much is the one with the masters apron on", "#2000 and he knows all the ritual including the inner workings, and will always prompt you when you get stuck," "No", he said "to expensive", "what about the one with the MM



"I was built by a Freemason!"

apron on", "Well, that one is #1,000 and he knows all the ritual, but not the inner workings, but will always prompt you when you learning it", "no to much, what about the one with the grand lodge apron on", "you can have him for #10", "why so cheap, he must know all the ritual and the inner workings?" "Oh yes, he knows all the ritual, but when you make a mistake all he does is sit there and go, tut! tut! tut!!"

A very old and wizened gentleman arrives on the night of the Lodge's monthly meeting and asks to become a Fellowcraft. When advised that he would have to become an Entered Apprentice first, , the old man nods "I was entered as an apprentice in this Lodge 86 years ago." He gives the date and the records are examined. Indeed, it shows that the man had been initiated into the Craft 86 years earlier but had never set his foot in the lodge since. When asked why he had not been there in 86 years, the old man smiled and said "I've been learning to subdue my passions!"

Source: <http://www.freemasons-freemasonry.com/>

Random Thoughts:

By Bro. Gerard Ceballos, Pinaglabanan Lodge No. 374

Masonry Builds Character

Our journey begins upon that first knock on the door of our lodge. Then, our would-be brothers in Masonry through time, had inculcated in us the character of humility - stripping us of our titles in life and the success that we had reaped in our respective careers or professions. Thus, carving us to be on the level among Masons and worthy to become their brother in the Fraternity.

Through the years, we are expected to better ourselves on how we interact with each other, whether we are inside or outside of our lodge.

Years spent in our fraternity, should show that we had been molded to be more understanding, patient, compassionate, and be open-minded to whatever situation that may come our way. These should be the fruits of our labor as we all ascend in the masonic ladder. Otherwise, we had just wasted

up upon by many. Respected by most and revered by perhaps the majority.

My brothers, in our own right, how do we now act? How do we become respected? How do we become worthy brothers?

I invite you to once again thoroughly read our Obligations and Charges and commit them to memory and put it to heart and apply them in our daily lives and routines. Once we do this, abundant

Remember, our Fraternity is not all about fellowship, drinking merrily until the end of our time.

our time. Remember, our Fraternity is not all about fellowship, drinking merrily until the end of our time. Our exclusive organization is supposed to be having Good Men and building us to become Better Men. We carry much weight on our shoulders as shown by many of our brethren, centuries before us - who were the pillars and leaders in their communities. They were looked

change in our lives will occur.

A great way to measure this is how we will be loved and respected by our family members, brothers in our craft, co-workers, and by society in general, in the years to come.

May we ever meet, act, and part my brothers. Together brethren!

Grand Master MW Voltaire T. Gazmin delivers his inspirational message.

Grand Master graces North Luzon multi-district meet

TUGUEGARAO, CAGAYAN- Last September 10, 2016, the Grand Master MW Voltaire T. Gazmin attended the 4th North Luzon Multi-District Convention at the Greyhounds Gymnasium of the University of Cagayan Valley in Tuguegarao City, Cagayan.

The host district was RII-Cagayan and ably led by its DDGM VW Eduardo Interior. The occasion was attended by a total of nine (9) districts from various parts of Northern Luzon. Aside from delivering his message, MW Gazmin also awarded certain lodges for their impressive and prompt filing of their lodge reports with the GLP.





R4 Rizal holds inaugural District Con



IT WOULD BE ON THE SLEEPY SLOPES OF SAN MATEO where first District Convention of newly-formed RIV-Rizal held held last September 17, 2016 in the province of Rizal.

Despite the relative inexperience in hosting a district convention, the event which was jointly hosted by Bernardo Carpio Lodge No. 359 and Montalban Lodge No. 376 at their San Mateo Masonic Temple Center.

The event kicked off at 8:00am with the Worshipful Master of Bernardo Carpio Lodge No. 359 WB Anwar Chen opening the lodge for the hosting of the district convention. The first to be received was RIV-Rizal District Deputy Grand Master VW Teodorico G. Castor. The next to be received was the Grand Master MW Voltaire T. Gazmin, who on this occasion was represented by VW Marlon Castor, currently The Cable Tow's Editor In-Chief and a member of Ang Tipolo Lodge No. 334.

The invocation was led by Bro. Romeo Manalaysay and the Opening Remarks was given by the Worshipful Master of

Montalban Lodge No. 376, WB Felipe Abigan.

In the Grand Master's address to the district, MW Gazmin reiterated that the GLP and its operations are currently being reviewed and improved in consonance to the plans and programs that he has laid out for the year. He also asked for the support from the brethren for the financial reforms that is being undertaken to ensure the sustainability of the GLP operations. During the nomination for Junior Grand Warden, VW Ayong Lorenzo of Bernardo Carpio Lodge No. 359 emerged as the district official nominee.

MD RIV-Rizal is composed of five (5) lodges which include Marikina Lodge No. 119, Ang Tipolo Lodge No. 334, Bernardo Carpio Lodge No. 359, Montalban Lodge No. 376, and Pasig Lodge No. 409.



The District Officers of RIV-Rizal joins WB Anwar Chen at the East.



Salute to the Philippine flag.



The district is in session.

OES honors founding

father *By VW Hernani Lopez, Sr., Grand Historian*

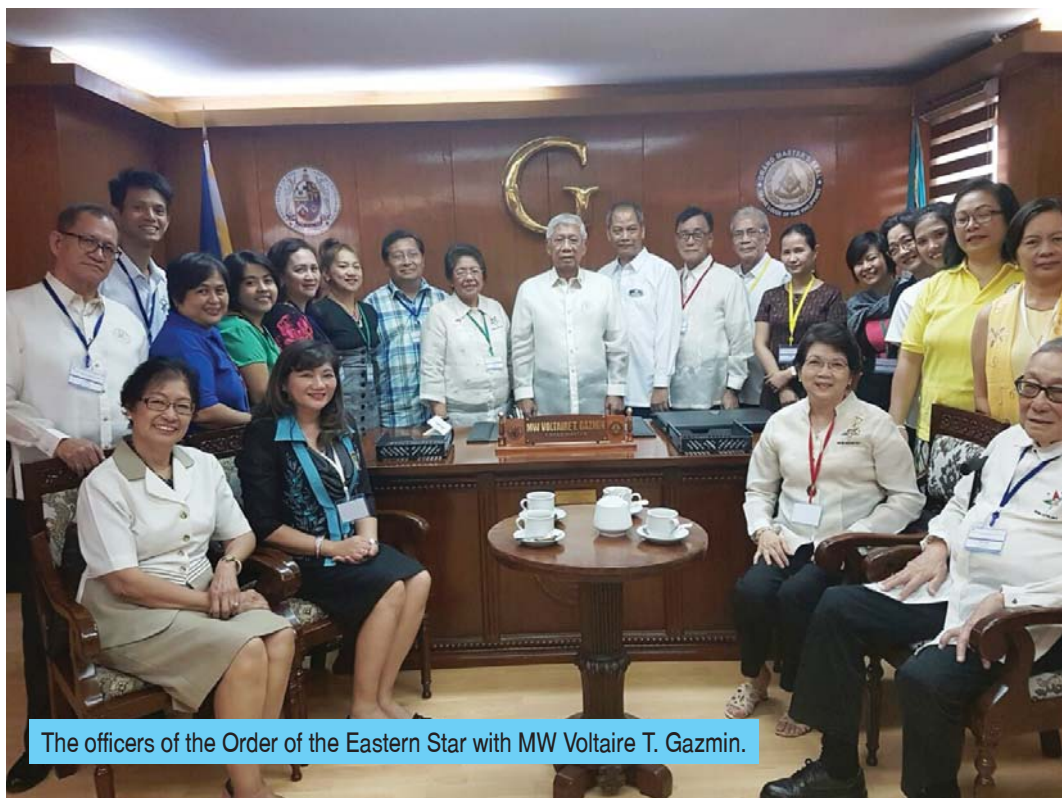
ON THE OCCASION OF THE nation's commemoration of National Hero's Day, the Luzon Jurisdiction of the Order of the Eastern Star (OES) held its Joint Rob Morris Day Celebration and Friendship Day at the Aguinaldo Hall, Plaridel Masonic Temple in Paco, Manila last August 29, 2016.

The Grand Master MW Voltaire T. Gazmin graced the event as its Guest of Honor and Speaker. With the theme,

“Love, Peace and Unity Among The OES Members In Action”, the OES paid tribute to their founder as well as conducted the Flower and Candle Ceremony.

The Order of the Eastern Star is a Freemasonic appendant body open to both men and women. Established in 1850 by lawyer and educator Rob Morris, a noted Freemason, the order is based on teachings from the Bible, but is open to people of all religious beliefs.

PHOTOS BY: VW HERNANI LOPEZ, SR.



The officers of the Order of the Eastern Star with MW Voltaire T. Gazmin.



THE GRAND MASTER HAS SPOKEN (ABOVE): Grand Master MW Voltaire T. Gazmin addresses the members of the Order of the Eastern Star-Luzon Jurisdiction at the Jose Abad Santos Hall, Plaridel Masonic Temple: TOP LEFT: MW Gazmin receives a plaque of appreciation from OES. LEFT: MW Gazmin accommodates the members of the OES during their visit to his office earlier that day.

MD RII-Nueva Vizcaya North and Ifugao holds “Hiramic Legend” Contest

By Bro. Gil Briosos Ablang, Cordillera Lodge # 178

The Free and Accepted Masons of the Philippines under the jurisdiction of Masonic District (MD) RII-Nueva Vizcaya North and Ifugao have showcased through an exemplification the second section of the Third Degree of Masonry poetically dubbed as “Hiramic Legend” during its Masonic District Convention held at the PLT Resort in Brgy. Bascaran, Solano, Nueva Vizcaya on August 20, 2016.

Seeing there is a need to polish one of the basic angles on Masonic proficiency under his jurisdiction, MD RII-Nueva Vizcaya North and Ifugao, District Deputy Grand Master (DDGM) Very Worshipful (VW) Lupo B. Alava has called on Worshipful Masters (WMs) of Nueva Vizcaya Lodge # 144, Mt. Palali Lodge # 420, Villaverde Lodge # 206, Cordillera Lodge # 178 and Ifugao Lodge # 218, purposely to gauge every lodge’s formality on the observance of a masonic ritual to be done through an elimination round on the Hiramic Legend, that was held at the Cordillera Lodge No. 178, in Brgy. Lantap, Bagabag, Nueva Vizcaya morning August 6, fourteen days prior to the convention.

Nueva Vizcaya Lodge No. 144 and Cordillera Lodge No. 178 were adjudged as contenders to the district level contest.

MD RII-Nueva Vizcaya North and Ifugao covers the administrative and operational control over the four blue lodges of Nueva Vizcaya North and the lone Masonic lodge in Ifugao province’s Lamut town in the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR).

The second section of the third degree likewise known as the Tragedy, being the nucleus of the contest, highlighted the District convention’s afternoon affair, was delivered with proficiency by the participants with props and costumes, to better exemplify what could have had happened at King Solomon’s Temple when Grand Master Hiram Abiff (GMHA) has not drawn any design from his trestle board, and that his unexpected absence has caused confusion from the temple causing King Solomon, through Brother Hiram of Tyre to order fellow crafts to make a diligent search of him.

“This would form part in the assessment

of our masonic rituals, we must always endeavour to execute floor works within due bounds of the monitor, strengthening our masonic education on this matter will make us conform to the ancient practice as all our fellows and brothers have done through the ages in preserving the mysteries of Freemasonry where non-masons continue to unearth up to these days”, said VW Alava in an interview.

“More so, it is timely to educate specially our younger brethren, to carry out masonic traditions so essentially anchored on the tenets of brotherly love, relief and truth. Let’s continue to perpetuate, through our collective efforts to live to the glory of masonic rituals passed on to us through our

Masonic forebears”, VW Pepito J. Agaser, Cordillera Lodge No. 178 Secretary, quipped.

Every lodge-participant had dramatized the legend within the bounds of the Monitor, the tradition on actual execution of the floor work was refined in conformity with the Philippine’s Anti-Hazing Law, Republic Act 8049 otherwise known as “An Act Regulating Hazing and other Forms of Initiation Rites in Fraternities, Sororities and Other Organizations and Providing Penalties Therefor” and the Grand Lodge of the Philippines Edict No. 245 (Lim Lo Suy).

“Hazing is an initiation rite or practice as a prerequisite for admission into



HIRAMIC LEGEND CHAMPIONS: The Nueva Vizcaya Lodge No. 144 conferral team.

membership in fraternity, sorority or organization placing the recruit, neophyte or applicant in some embarrassing or humiliating situations such as forcing him to do mental, silly, foolish and other similar tasks or activities or otherwise subjecting him physical or psychological suffering or injury.”

Though the parenthetical instructions were synonymously interpreted with hitches by the participants, judges and critiques say that there should be a uniformed interpretation on the Tragedy’s floor work while diction is a vital element to make the drama more impressive and realistic to spectators in order to showcase without horseplay the tragic death of GMHA wherein his life was taken after he thrice persisted not to give the secret word of a Master Mason to the ruffians whom he had met in the gates of the temple where he works.

“Exact interpretation would likewise reveal the true story of the Hiram Legend. Exemplified masonic floor work, not just in the Tragedy, reveals the beauty of Masonry, we must always make good use of our masonic rituals progressively, to improve our worth as regular Masons”, VW Alava added.

In adherence to the Hazing Law, the participants, specifically the ruffians, have employed more voice than action to gradually exemplify correcting the tradition of inflicting psychological or emotional pain to the candidates passing through the rigorous degrees of Freemasonry.

Nueva Vizcaya Lodge #144 defeated Cordillera No. 178 in the contest. The Masonic District had given the ages of their corresponding labors likewise with the other lodges under its jurisdiction.



HIRAMIC LEGEND RUNNER-UP: The Cordillera Lodge No. 178 conferral team.



IN HONOR OF THE MASONIC HEROES: Members of MD NCR-G recently honored the heroes after whom some of its component lodges were named after.

MD NCR-G honors Mason heroes

By Bro. James Buno, Hadji Butu Rasul Memorial Lodge No. 393

IN A FITTING TRIBUTE TO GREAT Craftsmen who in one way or another have elevated the honor of Freemasonry---particularly in the Philippines, Masonic District NCR-G commemorated National Heroes Day last August 29, 2016 at Jacobo Zobel Memorial Temple.

The Worshipful Masters and Wardens of the district component lodges which were named these after Mason Heroes, had a chance to give honor and allowed to offer wreaths upon the picture representations of these distinguished fallen brethren.

The lead lodge for this auspicious activity was Wenceslao Trinidad Memorial Lodge No. 365 who was named after MW Wenceslao Trinidad. Other masonic heroes remembered were Don Jacobo Zobel Y Zangroniz, Chief Justice Jose Abad Santos, former Senator Hadji Butu Rasul, Gen. Artemio Ricarte, and Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo.

PHOTOS BY: BRO. JAMES BUNO



The Grand Master's 100 days report

... continued from page 80

of the GLP with other parties as well as an accounting and audit of the resources—financial, logistical and administrative, that the GLP holds in its possession.

The accounting and audit that were caused upon the GLP system were not aimed in finding fault or irregularity in previous terms but rather in determining if the GLP can perform its services in a more effective and efficient manner—a standard which I believe every Grand Master owes to the members of the grand jurisdiction.

The review yielded surprising results and exposed certain areas in the GLP's operations that either required updating or new systems. While in some areas, there appears some "blind areas" in the operation which urgently need people or procedures for it to perform better. In answering these deficiencies, I have appointed able and competent brethren whom I believe possess a genuine love for the Craft and will contribute immensely to the financial and administrative reforms I have professed and promised in my inaugural speech. In this line, I have also place key personnel in the GLP standing and special committees who

will conduct their labours under the tone of a whisper and the expediency of a thought.

In the same wise, I have again convened the Board for General Purposes composed of our Fraternity's illustrious Past Grand Masters in the hope of harnessing their collegial wisdom and guidance in order to ensure that the actions I take as Grand Master will be in harmony with the principal tenets of the Craft and the unsullied provisions of our Constitution.

Brethren, I have always placed an uncompromised premium on harmony and punctuality.

In conformity with this year's theme, we will endeavour to do things the Mason's way. This includes a redefinition of what constitutes Masonic time which should be always "on-time". A clear indication to this commitment is the regular and punctual release of our 93-year old publication, *The Cable Tow*, which you might have observed now come out around every two months. Furthermore, I have also directed our webmasters to re-design our GLP website to improve reliability and security and to ensure of the secure and timely release of GLP announcements as well as improve their circulation among the brethren. I have also been told that the new website will soon serve as a vehicle in improving communication and coordination between the subordinate lodges as well

as facilitate online transactions with the brethren.

To expedite and improve supervision over lodges as well as the performance of some of our meetings and events, we have caused the standardization of lodge agendas and reports as well as programs for the holding of district and multi-district conventions. We have also taken in consideration the times and have come out with masonic protocols with regard to conduct of the brethren in online social media.

Likewise, the secretarial staff of the Grand Secretary, which processes voluminous matters and documents by the day, has received a shot in the arm by the addition of a pool of competent brethren to review lodge reports and make comments and observations thereto.

As our beloved Grand Lodge enters the second century of its existence, it finds itself in a transition of sorts and stand at crossroad of maintaining age-old traditions and the need to adapt to the demands of the rapidly-changing times.

The administration and operation of the Grand Lodge is a complex creature in itself, compounded by the ever-growing complication of masonic laws and rituals. In my almost four years of travel to the Grand Oriental Chair, I have come to realize that there may soon come a time when even a

competent and well-meaning Grand Master may soon find his hand full of non-masonic matters which may be better delegated to a more focused and competent personality.

As a century-old fraternal organization, we owe it ourselves to evolve beyond the traditional in aspects that will not affect our rituals and customs. With an ever-growing roster of members as well as subordinate lodges, a Grand Master must be allowed to focus on purely Masonic matters and be freed of stewardship of everything outside that sacred circle, which in my humble perspective is better left in the able hands of grizzled and tested professionals. Even well-established corporations are outsourcing some of their non-aligned yet allied operations so why shouldn't we? I believe that the jurisdiction should start looking into this direction soon.

With a few months left on my term, it is my desire to deliver on the promises I have made for I envision a bright and better Grand Lodge—one freed of petty squabbles among members; one where harmony is constantly practised as a creed. I dream of a Grand Lodge that can withstand the test of time; one where the sustainability of its administrative and financial well-being is ensured.

It is time to realize this dream, my brethren—together, through the Mason's Way.

Summary of GLP Issuance

Edicts, Circulars and Other Communications

GLP ISSUANCE	TITLE
Circular No. 10-MW Gazmin Date Signed: August 2, 2016	Uniform Code By-Laws for Unincorporated Associations, Organizations, Clubs or Association
Circular No. 11-MW Gazmin Date Signed: August 4, 2016	Standardization of the program of the agenda for District Convention
Circular No. 12-MW Gazmin Date Signed: August 4, 2016	Electronic submission of approved reports of Subordinate Lodges
Circular No. 6a-MW Gazmin Date Signed: August 23, 2016	Chairmen, Vice-Chairmen and Members of Subordinate Lodges of the Grand Lodge
Circular No. 13-MW Gazmin Date Signed: August 26, 2016	Circulating the approved opinion of the Joint Commission of the Jurisprudence Committee and the Commission on the Constitution on the status of Edict Nos. 272-A and 268-B (Rentoy) and enjoining all lodges, I.O.O.F. to adopt appropriate resolutions thereon as the Commission may deem proper
Edict No. 290-MW Gazmin Date Signed: August 30, 2016	Suspending the effectivity of Edict Nos. 272, 273 and 268-B
Edict No. 291-MW Gazmin Date Signed: September 1, 2016	Increasing the grouping of Masonic regions and forming one (1) Junior Grand Lecturer each grouping and proposing an amendment of Sec. 2, Article XXVII, Part I of the Constitution of the Worshipful Grand Lodge of the Philippines

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ions from the GLP from Aug-Sept 2016

	PARTICULARS
Allied Masonic	Requires all unincorporated allied Masonic organizations, clubs, or associations to make use of a standard
For the regular Multi-	Prescribes a standard format for the staging of multi-district conventions.
Subordinate Lodges	Allows electronic reports to be submitted to the GLP ahead of the printed hard copies to expedite review and processing
Special Committees of	Additional appointments to GLP Special Committees.
Committee Report of on the Revision of 272, 276, 277, 279, 280 District Conventions they may deem fit.	Informing the brethren of the contents of the report of the Joint Committee formed to study the repercussions of Edict Nos. 272, 276, 277, 279, 280 and 268-B (Rentoy) on the provisions of the Masonic Constitution.
276, 277, 279, and 280	The effectivity of Edict Nos. 272, 276, 277, 279, and 280 (Rentoy) were suspended for contravening the provisions of the Masonic Constitution.
for this purpose appointing proposing the Constitution of the Most	Informing the brethren of the necessary addition of Junior Grand Lecturers in the jurisdiction

Recently-raised brethren

NAME	LODGE	DATE
Hiroyuki U. Kawashima	Beacon Lodge No. 213	05/27/16
Odysseus A. Lagdameo	Luis J. Reyes Mem. Lodge No. 224	03/12/16
Jheremy Yu Escobido	Luis J. Reyes Mem. Lodge No. 224	03/19/16
Paulo A. Espinosa	Luis J. Reyes Mem. Lodge No. 224	03/19/16
Dominic Allan T. Pongase	Illana Bay Lodge No. 274	06/06/16
Carlo G. Castillo	Victory Lodge No. 116	05/28/16
Francisco L. Mamerga	Victory Lodge No. 116	05/28/16
Edzel S. Dela Cruz	Victory Lodge No. 116	04/16/16
Yuri D. Bermudez	Victory Lodge No. 116	04/16/16
Reynaldo P. Delgado	Zosimo Montemayor Lodge No. 212	01/23/16
Marvin A. Taleno	San Jose Del Monte Lodge No. 357	05/28/16
Carlos Felipe M. Laban	San Jose Del Monte Lodge No. 357	05/28/16
Ernesto C. De Bien, Jr.	Isabela Lodge No. 60	06/04/16
Greg T. Guerrero	Angalo Lodge No. 63	07/16/16
Honesto T. Lazo, Jr.	Angalo Lodge No. 63	05/28/16
Romulo C. Villarta	Mount Matutum Lodge No. 156	04/25/16
Ralph Primo D. Pedro	Cordillera Lodge No. 178	06/25/16
Richard Clifford B. Yap	Cordillera Lodge No. 178	06/25/16
Delfin G. Vargas, Jr.	Cordillera Lodge No. 178	06/25/16
Algeron R. Orquia	Sanchez Mira Lodge No. 233	07/02/16
Ericson V. Pasion	Sanchez Mira Lodge No. 233	07/02/16
Eugenio C. Benedicto	Apolinario Mabini Lodge No. 235	07/09/16
Dexter M. Dollente	Apolinario Mabini Lodge No. 235	07/09/16
Mark Anthony R. Salasac	Apolinario Mabini Lodge No. 235	07/09/16
Allain B. Clamonte	Kitanglay Lodge No. 256	07/16/16
Ferdinand A. Igar	Don Lorenzo Tan Mem. Lodge No. 265	07/06/16
Roel Q. Madera	Cagayan De Oro Lodge No. 298	04/06/16
Marwin S. Mendoza	Palanyag Lodge No. 323	07/08/16
Dean A. Abagao	Apayao Lodge No. 396	05/28/16
Ricardo D. Yerro	Pantabangan Bonari Lodge No. 203	07/02/16
Patrick Neil M. Santiago	Pantabangan Bonari Lodge No. 203	06/11/16
Marvin M. Ursal	Glicerio A. Lim, Sr. Mem. Lodge No. 222	06/06/16
Lorenzo L. Ching	Dr. Sun-Yat Sen. Memorial Lodge No. 398	07/13/16
Mario M. Soriano, Jr.	Magtagumpay Lodge No. 410	07/02/16

NAME	LODGE	DATE
Edmond L. Nocon	Magtagumpay Lodge No. 410	07/02/16
Roberto C. Mangune	Araw Lodge No. 18	08/13/16
Gerald S. Dee	Luzon Lodge No. 57	07/21/16
Je'an-marie Baptiste S. Bertillo	Luzon Lodge No. 57	07/21/16
Jonathan C. Joaquin	Keystone Lodge No. 100	06/18/16
Joseph C. Maquirang	Rafael Palma Lodge No. 147	05/21/16
Edward A. Fernando	Rafael Palma Lodge No. 147	06/18/16
Frederick T. Yu	Tagaytay Lodge No. 165	07/23/16
Joe Elmer V. Mendoza	Gen. Manuel Tinio Lodge No. 167	07/02/16
Eric B. Bartolome	Gen. Manuel Tinio Lodge No. 167	07/02/16
Edgardo L. Ventirez	Gen. Manuel Tinio Lodge No. 167	07/02/16
Arnold C. Ignacio	Gov. L.O. Ferrer Sr. Mem Lodge No. 366	02/20/16
Almus J. Alabe	Isaac I. Puno Sr. Mem. Lodge No. 401	05/18/16
Randolph Q. Hallasgo	Opol Lodge No. 425	08/12/16



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RIGHT: VW Eugene Eugenio, PDDGM, PJGL leads the brethren in giving Masonic necrological services for Bro. Mark Gil Garcia, a police officer killed in the line of duty.



Brethren who recently dropped their Working Tools

NAME	LODGE	DATE
Sotero J. Borja	Emilio Aguinaldo Mem. Lodge No. 31	06/12/16
Rolando M. Pablo	Nueva Vizcaya Lodge No. 144	04/04/16
Eusebio Federico V. Sindandum III	Gen. Manuel Tinio Lodge No. 167	05/28/16
Gary S. Soto	Gen. Llanera Mem. Lodge No. 168	04/05/16
Meliton P. Aglibo	Narra Lodge No. 171	06/11/16
Armesto S. Corpuz, Sr.	Pura Lodge No. 312	01/25/16
Jose L. Yu	Manila-Mt. Lebanon Lodge No. 1	12/01/15
Florito C. Almeida	Makawiwili Lodge No. 55	03/07/15
Bernardo J. Ranjo	Salinas Lodge No. 163	06/09/16
Timoteo N. Bael	Zosimo Montemayor Lodge No. 212	11/01/15
Jose R. Apdujan	Bernardo A. Neri Mem. Lodge No. 214	06/25/16
Abdulwahab M. Tamburani	Bud Bongao Lodge No. 288	no date
Luan S. Ong Kim	Malinaw Lodge No. 25	06/16/16
Pedro T. Tan	Mabini Lodge No. 39	02/16/16
Mauro L. Pe	Mabini Lodge No. 39	02/27/16
Perlito S. Dela Cruz	Bagong Ilaw Lodge No. 97	07/02/16
Godofredo O. Salagoste	Camarines Norte Lodge No. 107	05/28/16
Generoso M. Manahan	Milton C. Marvin Lodge No. 123	no date
Camilo C. Abordo	Daet Lodge No. 247	03/28/16
Roberto A. Enriquez	Illana Bay Lodge No. 274	no date
Emiliano P. Langomez	Palanyag Lodge No. 323	05/26/16
Reynaldo P. Zabata	Pantabangan Bonari Lodge No. 203	07/04/16
Jose Y. Chua	Isagani Lodge No. 96	07/27/16
Cesar L. Romano	Gen. Manuel Tinio Lodge No. 167	07/13/16
Eduardo A. Morales	Gen. Manuel Tinio Lodge No. 167	07/14/16
Juanito T. Suarez	Halcon Lodge No. 249	03/12/16



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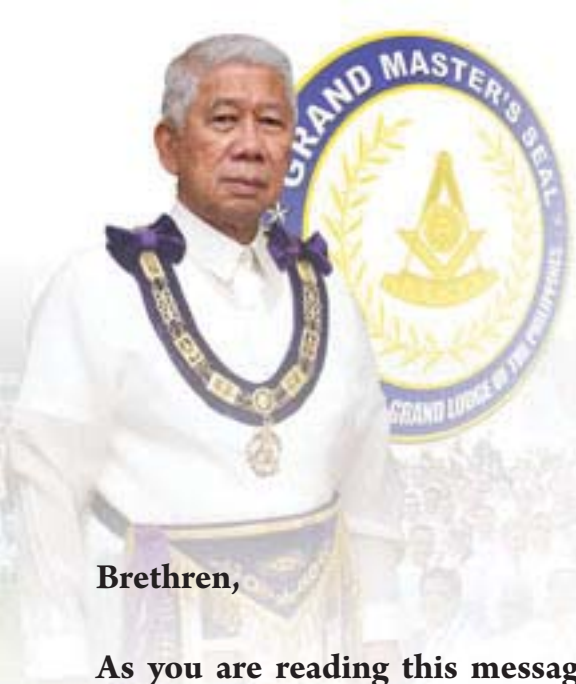
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The Grand Master's Word

The first 100 days

Brethren,

As you are reading this message, we stand at the threshold of the second half of my term as your Grand Master. It is therefore incumbent upon me to share to you what occurred during the first 100 days of my term.

I entered my term as Grand Master like a swimmer dipping into a sacred mountain stream. Though the water may be inviting to move around and swim, I tried to peacefully wade in it so as not to disturb the bed beneath my feet.

My first weeks as your Grand Master were spent attending the numerous district turnovers in various parts of the country, not only to oversee a smooth transition of district leadership but also to meet anew the members of subordinate lodges and orient them on the various plans and programs that my administration has in plan.

Furthermore, I have led the Grand Lodge in the celebration of some of our revered national rites such as the June

12 Philippine Independence Day event in Luneta Park and the June 19 Rizal Birth Anniversary held in Calamba, Laguna.

In addition, I have also caused a thorough inventory of all GLP resources as well as pending matters brought before the Grand Lodge that needs urgent attention or resolution. This is a task that any good manager worth his salt must perform in assuming responsibility of any new position or office as this will determine what he has and what needs to be done further. This activity entails a discerning review of all existing contracts and agreement

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