

10th ANNUAL ADDRESS OF  
**M. W. JOSEPH T. SIMMS**  
MOST WORSHIPFUL GRAND MASTER

My Brethren: Graciously favored by the Supreme Grand Master of the Universe we, the representatives of the craft, are gathered together once more, assembled in the Tenth Annual Communication of the Most Worshipful United Grand Lodge of the State of Washington and Jurisdiction.

To us the year just passed can boast of no spectacular ceremonies. The accomplishments of the year are signalized by the earnest discharge of duties that have devolved upon the officers and members of this Grand Lodge and its constituent lodges.

Situated in this State, into whose lap "Mother Nature" has poured an unequaled diversity of her products as an inducement for man to enlarge his power of dominion in their unfoldment, embracing within its borders innumerable valleys whose fertility responds in a manner unsurpassed to man's intelligent and honest toil, surrounded by natural attractions that are a joy to the eye, entrancingly beautiful and sublime to the mind, giving inspiration to the soul, favored with a healthful and invigorating climate, with a bountiful supply of God's sunshine, our hearts should be gladdened and we should have joy in life.

The progress of the age, with its new discoveries, new and improved inventions, new ideas and new methods in all lines are making possible greater achievements and furnishing an incentive to men to combine energy and brain to bring forth more abundantly the rich treasures and to use more fully all of Nature's bounties. This must enhance our material prosperity and draw many desirable new people into our midst. From this element we may reasonably expect our ranks to be largely increased with helpful material. In this connection let us rejoice that through the merciful ministration of a Divine Providence we still have with us some of the brethren who first held aloft the true light of Masonry in this community; as of yore, they are now among the most earnest workers in the fraternity, always encouraging by their presence, wise counsel and advice those whose privilege it is to be associated with them.

We are happy to say that tranquility and good will exists throughout the jurisdiction and as we assemble here hands are clasped in hearty fellowship, eye looks into eye with love shining through, and we rejoice in our fraternal ties.

Amid such scenes and associations I bid you welcome.

We are convened for the purpose of reviewing the transactions of the past year, to place the mark of approval upon those thought to be good and to make an effort to correct those considered unwise, to advance such ideas and to take such prudent action as may be deemed useful in promoting the welfare of our institution, uplifting our lives and those of our fellow men.

### **Foreign Relations**

Continual harmony and fraternal good will exist between this .and the respective bodies of all other Grand Jurisdictions, I having received expressions of good will from Grand Master S. P. Dougless of Colorado; Bro. Robert A. Brown, Grand Representative of Indiana, and Grand Master R. T. Coles of Missouri. A detailed report of this subject will be given, however, by our Committee on Foreign Correspondence.

### **State of the Craft**

From my knowledge and observation, I believe that I am safe in reporting that, as a whole, the condition of the craft in this jurisdiction is being bettered each year. There has been a substantial growth in numbers during the past year and the financial affairs of the lodges are shown to be in a fairly good condition, barring the fact that many of the lodges report entirely too large an amount outstanding for dues, in proportion to their membership.

If examined into, it will probably be found that those lodges making the best showing in this respect can easily trace their satisfactory condition to the persistent efforts of their secretary in reminding the delinquent members to pay up. The lodges blessed with such an officer are to be congratulated and the secretaries themselves to be complimented.

It is apparent that some of the lodges are not very strictly adhering to the meaning of the By-Laws on the subject of "suspensions" or "non-affiliation," rather. The law is so framed that no worthy brother need be injured. If there are any who through sickness or inability can not pay, their cases should be considered according to their merits. But it is not the intent, nor is it for the best interests of the lodge that unreasonable time be granted those who ought to pay but do not. It is to be hoped that the lodges which fall under adverse criticism at this time will realize the necessity of more closely observing the provisions of the law on this subject. The growth and financial condition of the lodges will be fully particularized in the Grand Secretary's report.

This, it seems to me, should be emphasized: It is no doubt too frequently the case that committees on "petitions" do not exercise that thoroughness in the investigations which they should. It is therefore incumbent upon a Worthy Master to use great care and discretion and discrimination in selecting committees, appointing only those whom he is confident will faithfully perform the services required. It is true, the "black ball" is the safeguard of our lodges, so perhaps you can render no higher service for your lodge than to stand ready, armed with this weapon to keep out the man who does not measure up to the requirements Masonry demands.

There is another equally bad feature which occasionally develops: that of repeated rejections by a single black ball, leading one to believe—as it sometimes does—that the motive prompting it was not a worthy one. The Mason who, from mere spite, prejudice, personal ill-will or, for any disgruntled reason, uses this method to balance the thoughts of his own ill-governed mind proves conclusively that he has received very little benefit from his Masonic teachings. Therefore let us urge caution in the acceptance of new material, but gladly welcome every man who has the cause near to his heart and possesses in addition the ability to advance that cause.

The zeal and devotion displayed by the officers and members of the several lodges, both small and large, are indeed most gratifying. In these instances one is, however, impressed with the evidence of faithfulness, good-will and vigilance that is most pleasing. Under this heading it may not be out of place to express an opinion in relation to the government and officers of lodges; not that there is any particular call for it at this time, but because it seems to me that it is a question that concerns us at all times. Upon the government of a lodge depends its usefulness. If the officers show a lack of interest, are careless in their deportment and without heart, or in a ragged manner do their work, and if the secretary is slack in keeping his records and accounts, it soon manifests itself among the brethren. They lose interest, attendance falls off, and the treasury is without funds. Then deserving assistance can not be rendered, nor purposes that might be considered praiseworthy carried out, the influence of the lodge wanes. It simply becomes an "out of order," poorly-run machine. How different in the lodge in which attention is paid to its government, where the officers are zealous and attentive to their duties at all times, deporting themselves in a proper manner and putting heart and soul into the work, so that it is made impressive and instructive, not alone to the candidate but to all present. If the secretary is "up-to-date" with everything pertaining to his office and the revenues of the lodge in the hands of a good treasurer, at the disposal of the brethren for any object they may deem worthy, this condition soon manifests itself, the members are alert and anxious to attend their lodge meetings, enthusiasm runs high and the bonds of brotherly love grows stronger and the lodge flourishes. How is this state of affairs to be brought about? By using care and sound judgment in choosing your officers, both elective and appointive. Select men for the places, where "rotation" usually prevails, with a view to their some day occupying the "Oriental chair." If perchance a mistake has been made and it is discovered in the lower stations that the brother does not develop those qualities expected, and which are essential for a Master to have, do not advance him.

To be a Master of a lodge is a commendable ambition. No man should be deterred from aspiring to this preferment, but advancement should come for no other reason than merit. It is far better that a brother lacking the essential qualifications of a good officer suffer an injury to his feelings than that the whole body be made to suffer through the shortcomings of such a brother, especially if placed in "The East."

The sum and substance of what I wish to say is, that the welfare and peace of a lodge depends almost entirely upon the genius of a Master to govern his lodge in an exemplary manner; the whole lodge is made to feel this influence, and the high ideals of our institution are brought into practical use every day. Brethren, I urge your careful consideration of this subject and hope that you who are in a position will thoroughly disseminate this idea among the craft.

## **Decisions**

That the secretary of a particular lodge be exempt from dues for the time only that he performs the duties of that office.

That no particular lodge of Master Masons can alter or amend its by-laws without the sanction of the Grand Lodge, under which it is working.

## **Charity**

February 28, 1913, I received from P. G. M. Jas. E. Shepperson a letter above the signature of Mrs. Jennie Lewis of Snohomish, Wash., appealing for assistance. I forwarded the letter to Bro. J. B. Griffin, D. D. G. M., at Everett and commissioned him to take up the matter. Bro. Griffin replied that owing to the unworthiness of Mrs. Lewis her claim upon the craft should not be allowed or considered.

## **Clandestine Lodges**

Considerable annoyance has been experienced during the past year in our jurisdiction by the introduction of "clandestine lodges." I, however, have taken no great amount of action regarding the matter, but have left the case for the consideration of the Grand Lodge.

## **Departed Brethren**

So universal is the passing from this earthly sphere, so insatiate is the power that calls us, so futile are human agencies against this law of nature, that it is almost certain that we will have to record some vacancies at the end of each year. Sincerely mourning for all those who have gone before and deeply sympathizing with those who grieve for their loved ones, it is not with any invidious distinction that mention is made of one well-known member of this body, both ripe in age and knowledge, whose presence at these communications could most always be reckoned on. How strange it will seem to look about and not see the venerable, stately figure of Bro. Thomas Johnson of Enterprise Lodge No. 1, a brother of culture and refinement. Affable in manner, of a kind, gentle disposition, but firm of purpose and loyal to his host of friends, ever thoughtfully speaking helpful words of encouragement to the younger members, Bro. Johnson passed from our Grand Lodge below to the Supreme Lodge above on February 4, 1913. in Portland, Ore. Our great loss is Heaven's gain. He was faithful and active in the affairs of his lodge up to the time of his death. May his "dust rest in peace" and his good works ever be fondly cherished and remembered among us.

## **Recommendations**

1. In view of the fact that the custom hitherto practiced through this jurisdiction, of each particular lodge caring for the representative of the several lodges while attending the Grand Lodge, has been expensive and, in some instances, burdensome upon the smaller lodges and often depletes their treasury, oftentimes leaving them in debt, I hereby recommend that a resolution be drawn and adopted at this session requiring that at all subsequent sessions of the Grand Lodge each particular lodge be responsible for the board and lodging expenses of its representatives, for not more than four days, and that a committee be appointed by the particular lodge where the Grand Lodge is to meet to engage suitable moderate-rate accommodations for the respective representatives.
2. That a law be enacted at this session of our Grand Lodge enforcing a more rigid system of economy and a stricter conservation of Grand Lodge revenues.
3. That all monies belonging to the Grand Lodge, when being paid by particular lodges in the jurisdiction, be transmitted to the Grand Secretary by P. O. Order or personal check, made payable to the Grand Treasurer only.
4. That the "clandestine," so-called Masons and their doings in the jurisdiction be ignored.

5. I further recommend that the following bills be paid in full, before any payment is made on the principal of the Home Land debt, to-wit:

American Scandinavian Pub. Co. (bal. due on Minutes)	\$164.00
DeMoulin Bros. & Co. (bal. on regalias)	45.00
Interest on Grand Lodge land debt (\$300, 8% per annum)...	<u>24.00</u>
 Total.....	 \$233.00

**Grand Lodge Officers**

I feel very much dissatisfied with this report, but I would be even more so should I fail to say a few words in recognition of the generous and helpful assistance that I have at all times received from the Grand Lodge officers and many brethren who have given their time, counsel and advice, whenever called upon. Whatever success the year has brought is due more to their efforts than to my own.

**Conclusion**

My Brethren, the affairs of this annual communication are now in your hands. May you be guided by the spirit of those virtues which are the underlying principles of our institution. We are a deliberative body, possessed of powers, administrative, legislature, and judicial. Then let us deliberate with care and wisdom upon all matters presented, actuated by no motive other than that springing from a pure desire to uplift and increase the usefulness of this beneficent brotherhood.

Very soon you will confer upon another the duties of this exalted station, in resuming my place in the ranks I want to sincerely thank all the brethren for the help they have given me and the honor they have bestowed.

Fraternally submitted,

J. T. SIMMS,  
Grand Master