

FREE MASONRY ORIGIN AND EARLY HISTORY IN CANADA.

WHAT IS FREE MASONRY.

Free Masonry is a fraternity, the issue of an ancient and celebrated corporation of Artists and Mechanics; the Builders of Churches, Cathedrals and Public Structures in Europe; the Stone Masons of Ancient Times.

Transformed at London, 1717 to 1723, it renounced forever material architecture and declared it wish to continue to propagate the philosophical principles which had always been the basis of the society.

Such is the origin of Modern Speculative Free Masonry. As to the origin of the Ancient Craft, that is another matter, which will be discussed later. Modern Free Masonry is a system of philosophy or practical wisdom.

The Duke of Sussex, First Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of England, said: "Masonry is one of the most sublime and perfect institutions that was ever formed for the advancement of happiness, and the general good of mankind, creating in all its varieties, universal benevolence and brotherly love."

Hemming defined it as "A beautiful system of morality veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols."

It is a moral institution based on the principles of righteousness found in the Holy Scriptures. It has no theological creed, leaving room for the Christians, Hebrew, Mohammedan, Hindu, or those of any faith who have the common factor of a Divine Father of All and His revealed will, and the immortality of the soul.

It is not an Order of the State or Church. It is not the hand-maid of anything, nor subordinate to anything not provided within itself, and takes no second place among fraternal organizations, being the oldest in the world, having existed from time immemorial.

Free Masonry is a system of jurisprudence, more noble than the Roman law or Grecian Ethics, unexcelled by the Code of Hammurabi.

A social fraternity of good men whose objects are to efface from the world the prejudice of caste, conventional distinctions of color, race or origin; to annihilate fanaticism, superstition and discord.

Although it cares for its indigent and unfortunate members, their widows and orphans, it is not an insurance society. Its benefactions are not based on tables of morality or liability to accident or disease, but on the particular needs in each case.

Since the organization of Modern Free Masonry, in the beginning of the 18th century, it has been greatly modified, new forms and ceremonies have been added. From four Lodges in London it has spread to nearly every civilized country in the world, making a universal brotherhood, wielding an unostentatious silent influence upon society - making the world a better place to live in.

Many societies have been organized during the centuries, flourished for a time, and ceased, but Masonry, without solicitation, goes on increasing its membership with the years. Its portals are sought by young men wherever it is established. The fathers left a clean record which the sons emulate; the Mason's wife or mother speaks well of the fraternity, and is pleased when her husband, brother or son seeks membership in the Lodge.

Like the morning of a new day, the Sun of Free Masonry has but arisen in the East; it has not reached the zenith; nor will it be High Noon until Liberty, Equality and Fraternity shall be known among the nations, until Friendship and Brotherly Love will actuate the human family in their relations to each other.

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