

FREE MASONRY 14

FRIENDSHIP

By Leonard Morris, PGM, GRPEI.

Friendship is traced through the circle of private connections to the grand system of universal benevolence, which no limits can circumscribe, as its influence extends to every branch of the human race.

On this general plan the universality of the system of Masonry is established.

Were friendship confined to the spot of our nativity, its operation would be partial, and imply a kind of enmity to other nations.

"Where the interests of one country interfere with those of another, nature dictates an adherence to the welfare of our own immediate connections, but such interference apart, the true Mason is a citizen of the world, and his philanthropy extends to all the human race." - Preston.

The three great principles of Free Masonry are brotherly love, relief and truth, the first of which means friendship

International friendship is a world necessity, and never more so than at the present. Humanity is one family the rich, the poor, the high and the low, all created by one Almighty Parent and inhabiting the same planet, should aid, support and protect each other.

Free Masonry is not Socialism or Communism, does not seek to destroy or hinder individual effort in any of the walks of life, and yet unites men of every country, sect or opinion, and permits true friendship among those who otherwise might be perpetually at a distance.

In doing this, it selects only those whose habits of life or moral standard make them fit companions; otherwise brotherly love could not prevail, as the moral man is not happy in the company of the vicious.

Masonic friendship therefore extends to every worthy Mason, whatever his color, race or creed, the sick or indigent brother is cared for; the deceased member buried with honor, and his family helped if in need, until able to support themselves. This is not a legal obligation but a sincere voluntary benefaction, done without ostentation.

The benevolence born of Masonic teaching reaches farther than the confines of the fraternity. In many instances, poor families have received aid from Masonic charity unaware, of the source from which the help came.

"This is the brightest ornament of our Masonic profession. Happy is the brother who hath sown in his heart the seeds of benevolence, the product of which is charity and love." - Old Lectures.

Nowhere is Masonic friendship so manifest as at a Mason's funeral. The public is sometimes astonished at beholding a large funeral procession and wonder how the deceased, who lived in comparative obscurity, could have had so many friends, among whom are some in the ranks of wealth, affluence and social position.

Friendship is a beautiful thing when it is real. When we are prosperous there are numbers who pretend to be friends and protest their friendship in strong terms, but when adversity overtakes us they forget us and coldness takes the place of their protestations of friendship.

Masonic friendship is not in that class. It makes no pretensions or demonstrations of friendship, but when there is a need of real kindness it speaks in deeds not in display. Men in every walk of life, from the King to the peasant, meet in Masonic Lodge on the common level of friendship and brotherly love, act on the plumb, and part upon the square.

So may we ever meet, act and part. May the blessing of Heaven rest upon us and all regular Masons. May brotherly love prevail and every moral and social virtue cement us.

"So Mote it Be!"

By: Leonard Morris, PGM; G.R.P.E.I.
Published at Vancouver, B.C.; 1934.

Submitted by D. Roy Murray
King Solomon Lodge, No. 58, GRS