

THE
COMMITTEE ON
MASONIC
EDUCATION

CHAIRMAN

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EDITOR

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TO ALL CONTRIBUTORS

THE FACTUAL ACCURACY OF AN ARTICLE IS THE CONTRIBUTOR'S RESPONSIBILITY; WHILST EVERY PRECAUTION IS TAKEN TO ENSURE ACCURACY YOUR EDITORIAL COMMITTEE CANNOT CHECK EVERY FACT.

Greetings from the Committee on Masonic Education. More than anything else the Craft today needs members who are aware of the aims, purpose and significance of Freemasonry. That is what Masonic Education is all about. Your Committee is convinced that one of its main functions is to serve as a clearing house for ideas. If an educational programme has proved useful in one lodge or one district, it may be worth imitating elsewhere. Lip to the present, the difficulties of communication have proved insuperable; but now R.W. Bro. David C. Bradley has consented to produce a newsletter intended specifically for the dissemination of practical suggestions. This is a burdensome responsibility and we should all be grateful to Bro. Bradley. Give him your attention, and support him by sending your reactions and suggestions.

Yours sincerely and fraternally,
Wallace McLeod, Chairman

EDITORIAL CONTENT

The purpose of the newsletter is to distribute educational information to as many brethren as possible. One of the greatest contributions that we can make is through the exchange of information. So please pass along information about people, events and programmes.

We welcome contributions from any member who feels that he has an idea to share. Remember that factual accuracy is the contributor's responsibility, whilst every precaution is taken to ensure accuracy, your Editorial Committee cannot check every fact.

Please forward suggestions about the newsletter, its format and content. Let us know what you don't like and what you like. Only from your comments can we obtain an idea of what is useful in your area.

Until we hear from you, the main thrust will be to exchange information, and to provide an avenue for additional research by education chairmen.

SYMBOLISM OF THE APRON

As I studied Masonic Symbolism, the more beautiful the Masons' apron became, for not only is the apron a badge full of history, it is also a badge that contains symbolism at its best.

Let me tell you a little of the history of the apron and then a little of the symbolism. The earliest aprons with rosettes in the museum at Freemasons Hall, London, are dated 1815 and the earliest aprons with levels, in the same museum are dated 1800. The levels were used years before the rosettes. Rosettes are likely to have been added to the apron as a means of distinguishing the rank of Brethren, but they may possibly have been added for decoration. There has been no positive reason established for the use of the rosettes as of yet. However, it is interesting to note that the rosettes on our aprons do form a triangle. The tassels came into use between 1827 and 1841 when ribbons replaced the tie strings. The ribbons passed around the body and tied in front under the flap. These tassels represent the ends of the ribbons that hung down in the front and are strictly for decoration. On earlier aprons they were closer together in the centre of the apron, and over the years have been moved out toward the edge, to where they are now.

The seven balls and the chain, as far as I can make out, are meant to represent the seven stars and the indivisible chain. If we recall to our minds the allusion of the seven stars then it is quite acceptable to believe that they are joined together by the indivisible chain.

Now to continue with the symbolism, I must first tell you that in ancient times, the Square symbolised the "Earth", and the Compasses symbolised the "Heavens". The next logical step in symbolism was to use the Compasses to symbolise all things pertaining to the "Spiritual", as Heaven and Spiritual had become one and the same. Eventually the Square was used to symbolise the "Material Man" and the Compasses the "Spiritual Man". Now we move into geometric shapes. If you recall in one of the lectures, you were urged to study geometry: it now comes into play. The shape of the square symbolises "Material Man". The equilateral triangle symbolises the "Supreme Being". It is composed of three equal sides and has no beginning and no ending: The Eternal! This, of course, is similar to the circle, and I mention that because on some aprons the circle is very important. The right angle triangle is the symbol of the "Complete Man" referred to in the bible as being composed of Body, Soul and Spirit. An equilateral triangle with the angle pointing upward is the symbol of the "Perfect" or "Spiritual Man", not to be confused with the "Complete Man". The equilateral triangle with the angle pointing downward

never symbolises anything other than "Deity". Turning away from the apron for a moment, if we take the equilateral triangle pointing up (Perfect or Spiritual Man) and interlock it with the equilateral triangle pointing down (Deity), we have now formed the six pointed star commonly known as the Star of David.

Now back to the apron. If we raise the flap of the apron (which would represent the "Bib" or chest protection of an operative Masons' apron it now appears as a triangle surmounting a square. In this position, it symbolises the two men separated, the "Material Man" without the "Spiritual Man", the "Spiritual Man" having risen above the "Material". However, when we lower the flap, we now have the equilateral triangle within the square or Deity within the Man.

"Deity within the Man"...the true meaning of Freemasonry.
- by Bro. Leonard H. Hirst.

Sources of reference:
Steinmetz, Freemasonry Its Hidden Meaning
Mackey's Encyclopedia of Freemasonry

ON LEARNING THE RITUAL

Before attempting to learn any part of the ritual, read the entire book. The general meaning of the ritual will be realised in the feeling and flour of the words, as they are neither empty nor meaningless. The ritual shows some antiquity; it shows traces of Middle English, and must have been developed when the influence of Middle English of the 14th and 15th centuries was still present in the language.

Early invaders from Normandy under William the Conqueror introduced the Norman dialect into England. The Anglo Saxons however, tended to maintain their own language. As a result a common language developed over the years culminating in Middle English in the 1300's. It thus became the custom in proclamations to use pairs of words to avoid confusion, and to ensure understanding by both Norman and Anglo Saxon. Examples of this are: free will and accord; parts and point; true and proper, truth and verity, promise and swear.

The ritual therefore may be called archaic but it is steeped in history, beauty and clarity of language. Read it with this in mind. Say it in front of a mirror. Insert pauses for breathing and for effect. Notice how a change of emphasis or inflection or strength of voice can alter or enhance the meaning of sentence or a paragraph.

Pay attention to punctuation, and start to learn the passage. Learn it well; do not omit or insert words. Then repeat it slowly to find its meaning. Make sure of your pronunciation. Finally put in emphasis and slow down your delivery.

The whole intent of the ritual is to communicate ideas to the candidate, not merely to speak to him. Good speech provides us with knowledge and an insight into the ritual teaching. Therefore to speak the Work sincerely and with meaning is not only to understand it yourself, but also to pass along that understanding to the candidate. Bear in mind that you are telling the candidate something of importance.

Notes prepared by the Editorial Board.

THE ANCIENT LANDMARKS

The most often asked question in the mind of a Freemason is - "What are the Ancient Landmarks which I have been charged to 'preserve sacred and inviolable', and which every Master before being placed in the chair solemnly pledges himself to 'preserve'?"

The question of what these Ancient Landmarks are and how they came into being has always been a mystery. But one thing is certain: they are the unwritten laws, the principles and the guidelines or framework within which the Masonic system of morality has been created. It is interesting to note that the word appears in Deuteronomy 19, v. 14 and Chapter 27, v. 17; Proverbs 22, v. 28. Landmarks can be likened to the unwritten laws and principles of common acceptance in our daily lives. Probably the first mention of Landmarks in Masonic literature occurs in the General Regulations compiled by George Fayne, the antiquary, in 1720, when he was Grand Master in England, and approved by that Grand Lodge in 1721. William Preston in 1775 maintained that the term Landmarks was synonymous with "The Ancient usages and Customs of the Order" which came into being after the advent of Free or Speculative Masons or those previously obtaining amongst purely operative masons.

Two essential points recur again and again in definitions.

1. A Landmark must have existed from the 'time where of the memory of man runneth not to the contrary'.
2. A Landmark is an element in the form or essence of the Society of such importance that Freemasonry would not be .Freemasonry if it were removed.

Applying these two limitations it is evident that many so-called Landmarks are but tenets, principles, customs or regulations which have been adopted and may be subject to change by Grand Lodge rulings.

Thus while some quote the seven specified in the Constitution of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts - the oldest on this continent - other G.L.'s in the U.S.A. have listed many more, even twenty-five but the Grand Lodge of Canada in the Province of Ontario has never made any explicit pronouncement on the precise number and nature of the Landmarks, however it is generally held in our Grand jurisdiction that they include the beliefs which every candidate must confirm before he can be initiated.

On page 162 in the XXIV volume of the proceedings of Quatuor Coronati we find: "What is a Landmark?" Webster gives the figurative meaning of the word 'Any event, characteristic, or modification which makes a turning point or a stage. Everything that is a landmark of Freemasonry, which is admitted cannot be altered must be part and parcel of 'the peculiar system of morality' and not the allegory and symbols that veil or illustrate it. If landmarks were enunciated in the Book of Constitution, Freemasonry would not be Freemasonry vii. "A peculiar system veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols." Every tenet, of the Craft is a landmark -but no allegory or symbol teaching or indicating such a tenet is one".

References:

Beyond the Pillars p.56-64

Leicester Lodge of Research Transactions, 1972-1973, pg. 9-17

The Prestonian Lecture for 1935 pg, 228

District 3 Research Committee

JACOB'S LADDER

We have often listened to the J.W. say "The covering of a Masonic lodge is a celestial canopy of diverse colours, even the Heavens. We hope to arrive at the summit by the assistance of a ladder, in scripture called Jacob's ladder. This ladder has many staves or rounds, but there are three principal ones, namely Faith, Hope and Charity;" There is a great purpose behind the lecture and a hidden Truth for those who wish to dig for its treasure. We do not profess to provide the only

answer, but we might help you to obtain greater meaning and significance from this beautiful lecture.

If it is true that Masonry is a progressive science, there is no better symbol of progress than a ladder, with its feet resting on the earth while the top points upward to the Heavens. We are taught to believe that we ascend step by step by faith, until we reach the summit of Masonry, which is, figuratively speaking, an ethereal mansion veiled from mortal eyes by the starry firmament.

Let us now search for the hidden truths, hinted at in this figurative language by our ancient brethren. We are told that this ladder has many staves or rounds, but there are three principal ones. Actually it ought to consist of seven—Temperance, Fortitude, Prudence and Justice as well as Faith, Hope and Charity. The four cardinal virtues were dropped from the lecture many years ago.

Jacob's ladder represents the progressive scale of intellectual communication between earth and heaven. Upon this ladder, as it were, step by step man is permitted with the angels to ascend and descend until the mind finds complete repose in the bosom of Divinity. A newly initiated candidate stands on the floor of the lodge, typifying the world in which we live, and begins his ascent up the ladder of life from "earth" to "heaven", from "life" to "death", from the "mortal" to the "immortal". Step by Step he progresses until he reaches the top of the ladder, figuratively resting in the covering of the Lodge, which is symbolic of Heaven itself.

Our discussion will centre around the three theological steps of the ladder, Faith, Hope, Charity. Let us consider why Jacob dreamt of a ladder, as recounted in Genesis 28. He outwitted his brother Esau, and, by false pretences, fooled his father Issac into giving him the blessing that rightfully belonged to Esau, the first born. Jacob stole Esau's birthright. His birthright was more than mere property. The real birthright of Esau was the High Priesthood of the tribe and family. It was the power, and the position in the community that it represented that made Jacob deceive his father and cheat his brother. The office of the Priesthood was the highest office of leadership, and Jacob wanted that birthright, so that he would assume the honour, the power and the prestige that accompanied that office.

Jacob fled from the wrath and vengeance of Esau, who had realised the trickery and treachery of his brother. Jacob, in his flight, came to Brethren at nightfall and lay down to rest, weary and afraid. While his exhausted body slept, his subconscious mind was still active and, by way of a dream, it illustrated his ambition

in the form of a ladder reaching from earth to Heaven with angels ascending and descending. The angels that ascended to God were the same who descended from God to Man. Jacob had granted the glory, the power of the priesthood, but never for a moment had it occurred to him that with the privilege and power went responsibility and service to his fellowman.

We all remember the time we stood in the West, facing the East, on the occasion of being made a Mason to solemnly declare upon our honour that we sought membership because of a sincere wish to render ourselves more serviceable to our fellow creatures. Were we strictly honest in that hour? Or were we prompted more by selfish ambition like Jacob?

It is the great lesson of service that Jacob learned at Eethel with his head on a pillow of stone, and his mind in the clouds. Think of these things and, when next you see Jacob's ladder, remember that the progress made figuratively up and down the ladder is meant to teach you to descend to the level of your fellow men, so that you may fulfill the duty placed upon you in the lecture at the N.E. angle. It is a great achievement when you are received into a Masonic lodge and 'made a Mason', but much depends on why you sought that privilege. The full measure of success was not achieved when you were made a Mason; "success" is not a destination, but a continuous journey. To whom much is given, of him much shall be required. Such is the lesson veiled in allegory that is obtained from the story of Jacob's ladder.

The Editorial Board.

BENEVOLENCE

The Chairman of the Committee on Benevolence has supplied the following in order to publicise the work of this important Grand Lodge Committee. The primary purpose and function of the District Chairman of Benevolence, as outlined in a resolution presented by the Committee on Benevolence, is "to be the contact for the Committee on Benevolence through the Grand Lodge Supervisor of Benevolence and to pass on to the Lodge Chairman of Benevolent Committees instruction and information received from Grand Lodge, in an effort to better organize our great function of Benevolence at the lodge and district levels.

To this end the following recommendations for the attention of the lodges in the District are submitted.

1. It is recommended that each lodge set up a Benevolent Committee, if a Committee has not already been established.
2. It is suggested that the District Chairman arrange a meeting of the lodge representatives in his district to get acquainted and to discuss the fundamental and general purpose of Masonic benevolence.
3. That each lodge, through its Benevolent Committee, should become familiar with the Rules Respecting benevolence contained in the Book of Constitution.
4. When a need arises, it is essential that the lodge Benevolent Committee investigate the case, making a thorough check of the circumstances, and submit their report to the District Benevolent Chairman, along with the completed application form, duly signed and approved by the lodge.
5. Inform dependents of the possible assistance available through various levels of government and, where necessary, assist in completing the required application forms.
6. Check, thoroughly, all sources of income and expenses.
7. IMPORTANT - that lodges forward all applications for Benevolence to the District Benevolent Chairman by May 1st so that they may be scrutinized and mailed to the Grand Lodge Office before June 1.

Forms, when submitted, must be completed in detail, indicating what the Lodge has done or is prepared to do and signed by the Worshipful Master and Secretary over the seal of the Lodge.

BLOOD DONORS

The Chairman of the Blood Donors Committee has supplied the following in order to publicize the work of this special committee of Grand Lodge.

The availability of crucial blood supplies as well as components has been curtailed during the past four months This has been augmented by adverse publicity by the news media resulting in the reluctance of many faithful blood donors to donate "The Gift of Life".

Despite the transfusion service of the Canadian Red Cross Society, the fact remains that our hospitals are dependent upon the latter to provide blood and its

constituents. Your blood donor committee urges all whose blood is suitable, to include blood donations among their acts of charity. The Committee has been very pleased with the number of Masons who are volunteering for the phoresis. This is a time consuming situation where one has to sit quietly for about three hours with a needle in either arm. Blood is shunted through a machine to separate out essential elements before the blood is returned to the donor. A volunteer can contribute more frequently thus compounding the time expended and the number of donations.

If you desire help in your district regarding any aspect of the Blood Donor program, please feel free to contact any of the members of the Blood Donor Committee.

THE SPEAKER'S CORNER

From time to time we shall try to include some items that could be turned into a brief speech or used as a toast. One excellent source of information is the Grand Lodge Library at 808 Yonge St., Toronto. It is open in the evening between 7:00 and 10:00 p.m. from Monday to Thursday, and also on Fridays from noon to 2:00 p.m. A letter to them will bring information and photocopies of articles to assist in your research. If you are lucky enough to live reasonably close, a visit can be turned into a rewarding evening of research.

Here is one thought for a short educational talk. The S.W. says he closes the lodge after seeing that every brother has had his just due. Is the S.W., therefore the guardian of the legal rights of each member? Should an appeal be made to the S.W. if it is felt that your 'just due' is being infringed? And finally, what is meant by 'just due'?

The Proceedings of Grand Lodge is a useful record to own. It can be purchased from the Grand Secretary, P.O. Box 217, Hamilton, Ont., L8N 3C9 for the sum of \$5.00. Each Lodge Secretary receives a copy. The W.M. should bear in mind that Section 240 of the Book of Constitution makes it mandatory for the W.M. to arrange that excerpts from the Proceedings are read in Lodge or printed in the Summons.

Perhaps the idea embodied in the following might be turned to good advantage when preparing a speech. After Benjamin Franklin had received a letter thanking him for having done a kindness, he replied: "As to the kindness you mentioned, I

wish I could have been of more service to you, than I have been, but if I had, the only thanks I should desire are that you would always be ready to serve any other person that may need your assistance, and so let good offices around, for mankind are a family. As for my own part, when I am employed in serving others, I do not look upon myself as conferring favours but paying debts”.

This note is not designed to provide material for educational talks, but to point to sources that could be adapted to any presentation at a Masonic gathering. The third source mentioned was the Work Book and we close with one last suggestion also taken from the ritual. We are directed to a serious contemplation of the V.O.S.L., and to consider it the unerring standard of truth and justice. Compose a speech entitled “The Unerring Standard”. Such questions as: “What is the standard? How is it obtained or known? What is to be done with it once it is obtained? Leap to the mind in rapid succession, and suddenly you have a topic.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. Question:

What is the meaning of the word “cable tow”? What is meant by the reference to its length?

Answer:

The Oxford English Dictionary contains a number of cable combinations, e.g. “cable-rope”, “cable-range”, “cable-stock”, but does not give “cable-tow”.

The word “tow” has another significance in addition to pulling or dragging?; it also means the fibre of flax or hemp or jute. A cable might be made of plaited wire, or of metal links, or of man-made fibres, but the combination “cable-tow”, which seems to be of purely masonic usage, implies almost certainly -- the natural fibre from which the rope is to be made. The cable's length is a unit of marine measurement, 1/10th of a sea mile, or 607.56 feet. Masons use the term "cable's length' in two senses: (1) “a cable's length from the shore” implying that anything buried ,at that distance out at sea, could never be recovered. (2) “if within the length of my cable-tow”: In operative times, attendance at Lodge or 'assembly' was obligatory, and there were penalties for non-attendance. Early regulations on this point varied from 5 to 50 miles, except 'in peril of death'. In effect the length of the cable-tow implies that Masons are obliged to attend, so long as it was humanly possible to do so.

2. Question:

What is the meaning, of the word "hele"?

Answer:

To hide, conceal, keep secret. The Oxford English Dictionary quotes the earliest English use of the word as circa 975, over thousand years ago.

The above were answers given by W. Bro. Harry Carr, a former Secretary of Quatuor Coronati Lodge No. 2076 in England to a number of questions assembled by R.W. Bro. Frank J. Bruce, Chairman of the Grand Lodge Library Committee.

3. Question:

Section 377 of the Book of Constitution mentions the requirements for proving one's proficiency in the former degree. Is the proving left to the discretion of the W.M.? Is it absolutely necessary for a candidate to know the obligation?

Answer:

The requirements are the mandatory questions and answers ,as per the Work, and any other requests from the Brethren which the Master may choose to accept. It is not absolutely essential that the candidate know the obligation, although it is desirable that he know more than the mere answers to few questions.

4. Question:

Does section 337 of the Book of Constitution mean that the Tyler is obliged to vote? Can he refuse? If the Tyler is not given a ballot is the vote illegal?

Answer:

It seems to me that he is under the same obligation as any other member of the lodge. If he is not offered the opportunity, the ballot could be considered as illegal, and another ballot called for. He has the same right as any other brother to accept or deny an applicant.

The above questions arose from a discussion by Deacons of the new Book of Constitution, and were answered by M.W. Bro. Wm. K. Bailey, Custodian of the Work.

BOOK REVIEW

With the concurrence of the Chairman of the Grand Lodge Library Committee we publish a few reviews of Masonic books.

Freemasons Guide and Compendium

-by Bernard E. Jones.

This is probably the best single book there is on English Masonry, and is well worth buying for your own reading and reference. The first chapter, a potted history of architecture, is tedious and superficial. If you persevere past it, or ignore it, you will find a wealth of information on the history, the ritual, the degrees, the lodge, the officers, the clothing, and many other matters. It is too rich to absorb at a single reading, but is the sort of book you want to come back to again and again. It is pleasantly written, and its facts are dependable and up-to-date. The chief criticism, somewhat unfairly, is that the book is too heavy to hold comfortably in your hands for long.

Plain Tales From the Hills

-by Rudyard Kipling.

Bro. Kipling tells a good story. Here are forty of them, all concerned with India.

One, "The Rout of the "White Hussars" (pages 32-245) will be of particular interest to Masons; in fact they will be about the only ones who will understand the ending. There may be reference in "The Madness of Private Orthris" (which begins on page 286). In it, Kipling refers to Queen Victoria as the widow; this probably is in the same vein as his poem in which he calls British soldiers (especially Masonic ones) "sons of the widow." You really ought to read this book.

Beyond the Pillars

Edited by Wallace McLeod.

In 1971, the Grand Master of our Grand Lodge named a Special Committee on Publications, to review existing publications, and to undertake the preparation of any new ones which seemed required. The Committee decided that the Manual for Instructors and for Masonic Students, which had not been radically revised since its preparation in 1948, should be retired to a place of honour, and be superseded by a new book, BEYOND THE PILLARS.

It deals with the history, administration, and symbolism of the Craft, and includes a discussion of the meaning of all three degrees. It has been well received, and is a must for every Mason in Ontario.

"Let There Be Light":

by Alphonse Cerza

There have been men who were opposed to freemasonry from the very beginning. In this "Masonic Digest", W. Bro. Cerza traces the history of such movements, notes the arguments they have used against the Craft, and attempts to refute them. This book should be read by every brother.

Thousands of books have been written the subject of Masonry. Any selection is bound to cause disagreement. If you wish us to print a review of a specific book, please let us know. These books are available in the Masonic library at 888 Yonge St., Toronto, or can be purchased from Masonic booksellers. There seems to be only one Masonic bookseller in the Province of Ontario: The Freemason, F.O. Box 250, Pefferlaw, Ontario L0E 1N0. Readers should remember that books published outside the borders of Ontario need not reflect in detail the views and practices of this Grand Lodge.

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Grand Lodge Library:
Address: 888 Yonge Street, Toronto, Ontario

Open: – Monday to Thursday 7 pm to 10 pm
- Friday 12 noon to 2:15 pm

A reference library is the storage place for material used to cultivate the mind and develop that knowledge. In the charge from the Book of Constitution to the candidate in the first degree we charge him that, "without neglecting the ordinary duties of his station in life, to consider himself called on to make a daily advancement in Masonic knowledge". In most cases we stop there and leave him to find that knowledge for himself.

Grand Lodge Publications

I list for your convenience the book and prices:

1. A History of the Grand Lodge A.F. & A.M. of Canada in the Province of Ontario by W.S. Herrington, \$2.00 each.
2. The First Grand Master by Bruce M. Pearce \$2.00 each.
3. Beyond the Pillars - Editor R.W. Bro. Wallace McLeod \$3.00 each.
4. Meeting The Challenge – Editor R.W. Bro. Wallace McLeod \$2.50 each.
5. Whence Came We? - Editor R. W. Bro. Wallace McLeod \$5.00 each.

These books can be ordered and purchased from your library.