

Grand Lodge of A.F. & A.M. of Canada in the Province of Ontario

EDUCATION MONTHLY



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GET KNOWLEDGE – GET WISDOM – GET UNDERSTANDING

The Collected Works of M.W. Bro. Raymond S. J. Daniels



Copies of this 300 page book are available at the Grand Lodge Office. The price is \$15.00 per copy, with shipping and handling extra. You can either drop by the Grand Lodge Office, if that is convenient for you or you can order them through your Lodge Secretary.

Brethren, this is Masonic Education made easy. Read M.W. Bro. Daniels works in Lodge; we are certain that you will learn much from each piece.

For every WHY there is a WHEREFORE!

*Some thoughts on "WHY" from M.W. Bro. Raymond S. J. Daniels
when he was Chairman of the Committee on Masonic Education in 2005 - Editor*

Supplement to WHY? – The most important question in Freemasonry

Be curious always! *For knowledge will not acquire you; you must acquire it.* (Sadie Black)

Every Brother is encouraged to think for himself about the countless questions that must arise in the mind of every serious Mason – to question, discuss, read, study and learn WHY we say and do certain things in the rites and ceremonies of the several Degrees. The classic definition of Freemasonry – “a beautiful system of morality, veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols” – should remind us that symbols can be interpreted in many and varied ways and have multifold and variegated meanings. Freemasonry has the innate ability to provide all things to all men!

*Curiosity has its own reason for existing. One cannot help but be in awe when he contemplates the mysteries of life. It is enough if one tries merely to comprehend a little of this mystery every day. **Never lodge a holy curiosity.*** (Albert Einstein)

There is some reluctance to supply answers to these questions. Learning is a ‘D-I-Y’ project, and the main emphasis of Masonic Education is on participation in honest, open discussion around the table: **Discuss – Question – Think – Learn – GROW.** What a keen student discovers for himself will always be more valuable than what he is told by others.

Freemasons are free to think for themselves. There are no definitive answers to the questions, no one has the final answer! Every Brother has the right to express his own opinion, carefully investigated, considered, developed and expressed to his own satisfaction. **Remember, real power comes when knowledge is shared.**

WHY do all Brethren present, stand at the Sign of Fidelity when the Candidate takes his Obligation?

Although the Candidate, being h.....ked, cannot see them, all the Brethren present stand with him, not only to renew their own Vows of Fidelity, but also to pledge their mutual support to him in the Masonic journey on which he is taking the first steps.

There are three distinct stages in the Masonic rites and ceremonies when a man is made a Mason. 1) **Ritual** – when the Candidate has taken the solemn Obligation, and is raised at the Altar as a Brother among Masons. 2) **Legal** – when the new Member signs the Bylaws of the Lodge, and is ‘entered’ on the Roll with all the rights and privileges, as well as the duties and responsibilities of membership. 3) **Philosophical** – a lifelong process, achieved when the Brother seriously undertakes and diligently strives to make a daily advancement in Masonic knowledge.

Enlightenment In Our Present Age

R.W. Bro. John Forster

On my recent visit to England I had the opportunity of visiting the Ashmolean museum in Oxford founded by Elias Ashmole in 1686. After presenting his vast collection of artifacts to the University of Oxford, he wrote, ***“knowledge cannot be so well or usefully attained except the history of nature be known and considered, and to this end is requisite the inspection of particulars especially those as are extraordinary in their fabric or useful in medicine or applied to manufacture or trade”***¹

Ashmole was the founder of the Royal Society and one of the earliest figures of the “enlightenment” That movement began in the late 18th century and was seen as a new beginning, a way of understanding the world through studying the application of reason. He was a complex man who lived in a time of major intellectual and political change. He was one of the first people recorded to have been initiated into speculative masonry many years before the establishment of the first Grand Lodge.

In 1784 the philosopher Immanuel Kant wrote ***“enlightenment is Man’s emergence from his self incurred immaturity. Immaturity is the inability to use one’s own understanding without direction from another. This immaturity is self incurred if its cause is not lack of understanding, but lack of resolve and courage to use it without another’s guidance. “Sapere aude” Dare to know! That is the motto of enlightenment”***¹

Most of my generation were educated in a system of applied reason whether we called it that or not. In the last 20 or 30 years however we have seen the rejection of these principles, a deliberate avoidance of common sense, and the rise of “postmodernism”. We can blame this on politicians, media or what you will but we are surrounded by religious fundamentalism, new age quackery, self-help bunkum, economic voodoo laced with fear and hysterical celebrity worship. In the words of a highly recommended book by Francis Wheen, an English journalist and titled “Mumbo-Jumbo has conquered the world”

Ashmole became a Mason for the same reason you and I did, to be more enlightened and thus a better man and a better citizen. The lessons of Masonry although often obscure but nevertheless based on reason are as a ray of light in the darkness of our present world.

In the words of our late Grand Master, M.W.Bro Raymond S. J Daniels, ***“the World has never been in more need of the principles of Freemasonry”***



COLLEGE
OF FREEMASONRY

The work of the **COLLEGE OF FREEMASONRY** is aligned with our Grand Lodge Strategic Plan “Rebuilding the West Gate” by assisting in ***“Create high quality educational programs and training courses for all Brethren in the jurisdiction.”***

To this end, it is a reaffirmation that the Lodge Room is the dynamic center of the Masonic experience. Seeking greater Light allows us an opportunity to learn more about the meaning and origin of the ceremonies, while at the same time explaining the philosophy which is veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols. In the Grand Lodge Proceedings from 1984 the aim of the College was described to be - “to prepare Masons for very knowledgeable leadership, therein strengthening the fibers that hold our Craft together”... a laudable pursuit.

College courses are intended to be completed at home, at your own pace and in an informal environment. There are 18 individual modules, the 19th module is on Esoteric Studies – a study of the deeper meanings and origins of Freemasonry and there are also three certificated courses of study:

Masonic Arts & Sciences (\$135) – bundles most of the modules that the College has to offer; areas such as Benevolence, History, Philosophy & Symbolism, and Administration in your lodge, District, and Grand Lodge. It helps you to study and learn what most of us learn over years of being in the Craft. Upon its completion you become a Fellow of the College of Freemasonry and may use the F.C.F. designation after your name.

Past Master’s Course (\$50) – a selected number of study modules that help prepare you, the Installed Master, for an elected Grand Lodge Office such as District Deputy Grand Master, Grand Registrar, and the Board of General Purposes – you may complete this course of study even if you are not seeking an office in the future.

Worshipful Master’s Course (\$50) - a selected number of study modules that help prepare you for your term in the East. This preparation will help you to be a more informed brother about your responsibilities and duties as the leader of your Lodge.

Once you have become a Master Mason you may begin your studies at the College of Freemasonry. A course registration form can be found on the Grand Lodge Website or requested from the College of Freemasonry at masonic.college@gmail.com.

THE SAINT ANDREW'S ORDER OF FREE GARDENERS

The following comes to us via the Grand Lodge of Scotland's Facebook page. - Editor

We have posted two or three times on the Order of Free Gardeners and have done so for two main reasons. Firstly, the Order is as close to being Masonic as possible without actually being Masonic. Secondly, like Freemasonry it is quintessentially Scottish.

Scotland gave birth to a number of fraternities such as: Free Carters; Free Colliers; Free Fishermen; Free Wrights (carpenters); the Hammermen and the Horsemen. These Scottish fraternities were grounded in the day-to-day working lives of those who made a living in these occupations. In other words these were not pure invention, and were unlike other English groups such as the Foresters, Oddfellows and Druids which were not based on direct experience of an actual occupation.

At one time in Scotland, nearly every male was a Free 'something' and this was often because being a member offered some financial security long before any form of welfare was provided by government. Nearly all such organizations developed into Friendly Societies and later became a form of Insurance Company.

However, because becoming a member of the Lodge (or Tent, Chapter or Forge etc.) was necessary before gaining access to the 'insurance' part of the order, that meant that the ritual and esoteric elements became squeezed, as government enacted increasingly complex laws to control this developing financial 'industry.' All of these Scottish 'Orders' had begun as Initiatic and ritualistic fraternities with the monetary ('insurance') aspects being a secondary purpose.

As the collection of contributions and the payment of benefits (death benefits and sickness & unemployment benefits were the main ones) became more complex, those volunteer administrators were forced to spend more and more time complying with government directives. Consequently, the ritual became more and more of a burden, and portions of the ritual were omitted so that new members were admitted with the minimum of delay.

Freemasonry did not take the same path. In fact, quite the reverse. The Grand Lodge of Scotland instructed all Lodges that had 'insurance' schemes to close them. The reasoning was simple. Freemasonry had come into being as a ritualistic society, and seeing what was happening to other 'orders' decided to focus on ritual and ceremonial rather than providing benefits to members.

It is a quirk of history that at one time Free Masonry was similar to other 'Free' societies and that no one took exception to someone being a Free Mason, a Free Gardener or Free Fisherman. As those other societies disappeared (under a welter of government regulation) Freemasonry was left 'high and dry' as the only Order that continued to pass on its secrets in private gatherings of its members.

Like many fraternities or Orders the Free Gardeners had their high and low points. The high point was in the 1850's - 1880's and the low point was the Order's demise in the 1950's.

The image above is of a Scottish Free Gardener's diploma dated A.L. 1882. This Saint Andrew's Order of Free Gardeners was a schismatic order from 'main stream' Free Gardenerly something from which Scottish Freemasonry, thankfully, never experienced on the same scale.



THE SQUARE AND THE MOSAIC PAVEMENT

Official Visit presentation by R.W. Bro. Charles A. Sankey at Niagara Lodge No. 2 on November 1st, 1967.

As you read this paper, we urge you to keep in mind that this was written in 1967 – Editor.

I want to provide a pattern and a purpose for what I have to say to the various Lodges during my term of office as your District Deputy Grand Master. On social occasions I hope to comment on some aspects of Masonry which, I believe, should be public knowledge. As some of you know I have already started to do this. On my official visits I propose to discuss some Masonic symbol or teaching which relates to our individual problems of living, which, in other words, relates to Masonic things we live by. Sometimes these can have reference to the degree of the evening but tonight, as this is my first official visit, we begin at the beginning.

When each one of us first saw a Masonic lodge in session, there was, in our immediate view, a group of three things, things which we call “the Three Great Lights” - nearest to us a symbol of the common problems of mankind; beneath it a symbol of the scope of the universe which surrounds and contains us; and underlying both a symbol of a divine message.

Applying the term “light” to the square which we use to remind us of our proper relationship to our fellow men has a genuine basis. Light brings us knowledge first of our immediate environment. Satisfactory knowledge of our surroundings, both material and personal, that is knowledge satisfactory at the time to us, is essential to our own confidence. Light thus becomes a symbol of confidence and I think we will all agree that it is only on the basis of mutual confidence that reasonable, let alone ideal, human relationships can be maintained.

The principal conflicts in the world today are each primarily characterized by a lack of mutual confidence. Between Israel and the Arab States mutual confidence is almost zero, between Muslim and Hindu it is highly tenuous, between the communist and non-communist worlds it is improving but still low, between negro and white it has been deteriorating rapidly, between Roman Catholic and Protestant it has, thanks to Pope John, improved enormously. I suppose most Anglo Saxons would say that De Gaulle has never had confidence in anyone but himself. Closer to home a maintenance of a reasonable mutual confidence between French-speaking and English-speaking Canadians is essential to Canada’s future.

The square however is too true, too 90° -ish, too exact to be really human. It symbolizes the desirable but not the humanly attainable. By its very rigidity it separates an unrealistic perfection from all the degrees of human imperfection.

This was recognized at the dawn of Masonry, hence in our apprenticeship we soon see the mosaic pavement. Light and darkness, said Zoroaster, are the world’s eternal ways. So, Masonically, the term “light” involves the whole problem of good and evil. The colour white, representing the harmoniously balanced totality of light as viewed by our eyes, has become the colour of good, of the ideal, of those “clothed in white raiment”. The complete absence of light renders anything black. “Black” is thus separate or apart from our comprehension. It is not a colour but is indicative of the supreme sin of separateness from man and God alike.

We each have our own mosaic based on our own experiences and personalities and we must not expect even our brother’s mosaic, let alone a stranger’s, to be identical with our own. One time I remember listening in on a small group discussing, rather smugly and piously, the merits of the golden rule. They were shocked out of their smugness when a friend inquired how they knew that the other fellow wanted to be done by the same way that they did.

In our own mosaic let us also note with Aldous Huxley that *“Experience is not a matter of having actually swum the Hellespont, or danced with the dervishes, or slept in a doss house. It is a matter of sensibility and intuition, of seeing and hearing the significant things, of paying attention at the right moments, of understanding and coordinating. Experience is not what happens to a man; it is what a man does with what happens to him.”*

On this basis we will perhaps more fully appreciate the light shown to us many years ago by Milton: “He that can apprehend and consider vice with all her baits and seeming pleasures, and yet abstain and yet distinguish and yet prefer that which is truly better, he is the true wayfaring Christian.

I cannot praise a fugitive and cloistered virtue, unexercised and unbreathed, that never sallies out to see her adversary, but slinks out of the race, where that immortal garland is to be run for, not without dust and heat that which purifies us is trial, and trial is by what is contrary.”

So as a Masonic-thing-to-live-by I give you the square on the mosaic pavement. To my mind, they are inseparable. The square will act through your own conscience on the mosaic. The mosaic is always individual for you, for your brother, for your neighbour, and for the stranger. And, remembering that “experience” is not what happens to a man; it is what a man does with what happens to him. May you tread your mosaic as the dictates of right reason prompt you, cultivate harmony, practice charity and live in peace with all men.



TRAVELING MAN

By John L. Cooper III, Past Grand Master and Past Grand Secretary, Grand Lodge of California.

This Short Talk was originally published in the June/July 2016 issue of the California Freemason.



A new look at the Mythology of the Traveling Man

In addition to the symbolism attached to architectural tools, Freemasonry is built upon stories and legends. And, no story is more intriguing than the one about the "traveling man" – the stonemason who traveled from work site to work site in search of a job. We have little direct evidence of how traveling stonemasons did this, but it remains an important part of the lore of Freemasonry.

According to our traditional history, when a building was completed, and stonemasons were released from their duties, they would scatter in different directions looking for work. Upon their arrival at a new work site, the master stonemason in charge would test them to determine if they were really who they claimed to be. One test asked them to recite part of the legendary history of the craft – the Old Charges. Another required them to give the proper passwords and grips. The final test was to ask them for the "mason word." The mysterious "mason word" was proof that they were, indeed, members of the guild of stonemasons, for it was the most carefully guarded of all the secrets. It was so secret that it was only given in a way and a manner known to fellow masons, and then only in a whisper – "mouth to ear."

Contemporary Masonic historians have searched for evidence of this colorful story in the old records of the craft, but have come up empty handed. Perhaps these "traveling masons" were so careful with their means of proving who they really were that no evidence has survived to prove the accuracy of this old story. Or, perhaps the evidence has been under our noses all the time, but we have not been looking in the right place.

The "right place" to look may not have been in England, Scotland, or Ireland – the homeland of speculative Freemasonry as we know it – but in France. France has preserved an organization similar to Freemasonry called the "Compagnonnage." The French title of those who belong to it is "Compagnons du Tour de France." Today the "Tour de France" is a famous bicycle race, but the race was named for a much older institution, a "Tour de France" associated with stonemasons in the Middle Ages. When a journeyman stonemason (a fellow of the craft, as we would call him) wanted to become a master stonemason, he would leave home and go "on tour." The tour – the "Tour de France" – would take him to many towns around the country where he would work for different master stonemasons to prove his skill. It was as if he were having his "card punched" by other skilled workmen, who would certify that he, indeed, proved his worth to achieve the rank of "master stonemason."

When one of these "journeyman stonemasons" arrived at a new work site he would prove himself by "words and signs" that he had learned during his days as an apprentice.

As with our own Masonic stonemason ancestors, these "Compagnons" had their own manuscript legends, which were carefully preserved through the centuries. They were also organized into three separate societies, with names that seem somewhat familiar to Masons today: The Sons of Solomon, the Sons of Master Jacques, and the Sons of Master Soubise. Of these three, the Sons of Solomon were stonemasons, while those who belonged to the other two societies often belonged to other trades, such as carpentry.

So here we have it: In France, an organization called the "Sons of Solomon," who are stonemasons by trade, travel from one work site to another to prove their skill, and at the end of the "around the country tour," are eligible to be honored as "master craftsmen." The Compagnonnage is still in existence today, and while it is not a direct ancestor of our form of Freemasonry, it is easy to see a practice that is very similar to our own legendary history of "traveling stonemasons." Coincidence or not? We may never know. But this knowledge does present a compelling theory that a possible answer to our long search for the historical proof of the "traveling man" and his Masonic "proof" may have been right across the English Channel in France all along.