

St. Catharines, Ontario

The

Brock Broadcaster



A newsletter for the Brethren of Brock Daylight Lodge No. 745, Niagara "A" District and all members of the Grand Lodge of Canada in the Province of Ontario.

February 2021

DO WE NEED EDUCATION

The title is not a question but a statement of fact.

When we first became Masons, we find that we must learn the answers to certain questions. So, we do. Just why we have to learn the answers is seldom explained at that period. Nor do many ever ask why they are required to do so. Sometimes the ones they ask do not know, even though they are teaching those catechisms. All that can be given for an answer is that 'everyone has to do it'. It appears to be part of the process to be a part of the process of becoming a Mason-so let us do it and be done with it.

Finally, the job is done, the congratulations and handshakes are over. He,

the candidate, is now a Master Mason ready to 'travel to foreign countries, work and receive a master's pay'. Sounds good, doesn't it?

But what on earth does all this mean? Our new made 'Master' rises next morning, goes off to his usual job and does the same thing in the same way as he did the day before. So far as the world about him is concerned, nothing has happened, nothing has changed. So, what does all that stuff he spent so much time and effort on amount to?

After a few days pass and the novelty has worn off, the strain of memorizing the catechisms is gone and he begins to take his new status as a matter of course.

Well – why not? He goes to his new Lodge now as a regular member. He listens and bits and pieces come to mind, some as he heard them during the degrees and others were in those lectures he memorized, only just where those words fitted has already begun to slip from his memory.

What difference does it make anyway? Since he was raised no one has asked him any of those questions, so why bother about them. Now our new brother is well on his way to becoming a really full-fledged Master Mason. All that remains now is to forget to attend Lodge and to hold off paying his dues, until he is warned that he is about to be suspended. Now he is just like so many of our membership today.

What is wrong with him anyway? We did not promise him instant success in business or public acclaim. Nobody told him the world would roll over and play dead when he snapped his fingers. No fancy promises, no instant anything. In fact, when he passed through the doors of the Lodge, even for the first time, HE was the one who made promises! And each time he took an obligation he made still more promises.

Suppose since he does not come to us, we go to him and find out something about his feelings. There is plenty to be learned because HE is manifesting his dissatisfaction, displeasure, disillusionment or other feelings in this one practically universal way—that of not appearing at Lodge meetings?

Some, of course, have good reasons. The nature and demands of their occupations make attendance impossible. Others will make excuses, but we do not want excuses! We want reasons and many will offer excuses to cover up the real reasons, which they do not wish to disclose, for fear of embarrassment. Some will come right out and lay it on the line and most of the answers will be the same, “What has Freemasonry done to let me know what it is all about?”

And—what have we done? We spend less than three hours in conferring all three Degrees. We oblige them to put a lot of time into memorizing their lectures, mostly with instructors who go to great pains to see that their recital is letter perfect, but most always with no explanation given as to their meaning. In fact, many Lodges assign themselves, with the recollection of those lectures still fairly fresh in their minds. Unfortunately, they know no more about Freemasonry than their pupils. Still the Masters apparently believe, that by some sort of osmosis these officers will acquire a greater knowledge of the intricacies of the Craft by the monotonous repetition of the catechetical interrogations.

Now that we have followed the new Brother through his degrees and instruction, let us see what his Lodge has in store for him.

Now is the time when he thinks he will really learn something. Does he get it? Wait and see. It being the month after he was raised, a First Degree, is scheduled. He watches with interest because he now can see what he could not before. But it is still much the same as he remembers it. The next thing he knows, Lodge is

closing. He has his share of the refreshments, a bit of chitchat, he asks someone why a certain thing was said or done. He gets some sort of vague answer, maybe two or three, all different and so he goes home. Next month, Second Degree. What is all that stuff about Columns, Architecture and all? He is not particularly interested in Doric, ionic and Corinthian. He gets bemused by Jephtha and his battles. He asks a question and is referred to the Grand Lodge Library. He consults the list of recommended books, orders one and when it arrives, he reads it through. A fine book, well-written, by a scholarly author who drew freely from the works of Roman, Greek and Hebrew writers, and rather than alter meanings by possibly faulty translations, quotes them in their original languages. Liberal quotations from contemporary French and German research records, also in the vernacular, all immensely helpful in clarifying murky statements.

Of course, anybody can read ancient Greek and Hebrew, it is mere child's play. The only trouble our friend has, is with the author's own English. He turns back to the title page in search of the publication date, to find that the book is nearly a century old! Written in a time when the more syllables a word contained the better. However, in those days, the reader, in the privacy of his own library, could tip-toe over to his Webster's Unabridged, extract the definition of a word that author has dredged up from the Lord knows where, and later use it himself to impress his auditors with his own erudition. I will readily grant that the author's use of English was exquisitely correct, but a large part of his expressions has gone out of present-day use.

Furthermore, much of what was then accepted as fact has since been proven to be the assumptions of earlier writers, who having no solid basis in authenticated records, used their own imagination in an attempt to give Freemasonry an antiquity and a dignity for which it has no need.

Our inquiring Brother, having wondered through a ponderous mass of sesquipedalian verbiage and meaning-less paragraphs printed in characters no more intelligible to him than Egyptian hieroglyphs, finally gave up and returned the book. Unfortunately, some of what he read stayed with him, leaving him with a mass of discredited information and an utter distaste for further investigation.

He once more returns to the Lodge in the hope that closer attention will reveal something he has thus far missed. Month after month he goes listening to the ritual and learning nothing new. Finally, he does what so many other do. He just goes when the Master Mason Degree is to be worked. He, like his uncomprehending Brothers, waits for that moment when the startled reaction of each candidate gives him a chance to laugh.

To laugh! What a tragedy! To find amusement in the most solemn moment to be found in all of the degrees Freemasonry has to offer. But can we condemn him for it? Can we honestly criticize him when he has no comprehension of what was being portrayed? That the candidate, as he himself once did, represented the man who sacrificed his most precious possession rather than betray the trust bestowed on Him?

Brethren, the man who laughed is not at fault. The real fault lies with those who know the lessons Freemasonry teaches. Those who know and remain silent! In the Fellowcraft Degree stress is placed on two lessons, Charity and Education. The true meaning of Charity is love! It has nothing to do with dropping a dime in a blind man's cup. It more properly denotes the sharing of what we have in abundance, with those in want by supplying their needs, out of the fullness of our love for them. One of those things to be shared is Education. Education has a truly miraculous nature; one which material objects can not possess. That miracle lies in the fact that we can give away all the knowledge we have to others and in the end have all we gave

and often more. Education in Masonry is what thousands of our Brethren need. There are all too many in this world who wear with pride the insignia of our Craft and yet do not dare visit another Lodge because they could not qualify themselves for admission. This situation is intolerable, disgraceful. Freemasonry does not demand that all members be highly educated. A multifaced organization, it is capable of serving the needs of men in every walk of life. In its origins, it was composed of largely illiterate men, education being reserved for the few in high places. Yet out of such as these, came what eventually developed into our present institution.

Our present weakness lies in too great a reliance on the instruction given during the working of the degrees, of which few men gain even the slightest amount. What we need will not be obtained overnight. First of all, an adequate system of instruction must be planned, and this will not be easy. A course in the history of Masonry, starting with the first authentic records and a careful screening out of the many fables and falsities which have persisted for so many years, would be necessary.

An account of the persons known to have made actual and valuable contributions to the development of the Craft, before and during the transitional period in which the Lodges abandoned the original form of a primitive trade union composed wholly of men employed in the various branches of the stone-worker's craft until it eventually became the purely speculative organization in which the stone-mason played no more important part than did a scientist or a shoemaker.

Sufficient records exist to show how these changes occurred and tell of the men whose influence moulded the Lodges into a semblance of their ultimate form. Then would come the names of the most outstanding persons whose vision perceived the direction these independent transitional bodies must take to weld them into a society with a centralized

governing authority with a uniform code of laws regulating procedures and behavior of Lodges and individual members.

The emergence of ritualistic teaching, the resultant tri-graded system of advancement of the neophytes is a subject which would be difficult for many men to become interested in unless the symbolisms and philosophies were presented in a simple easily assimilated form in which the student who enjoyed these topics would be stimulated to proceed further on his own and yet leave the ardent one with a good working knowledge.

No matter how we twist and turn we come face to face with the fact that we need an education. An education in Masonry. Not just to be able to mouth the lines of ritual work, that can be done – and often is – by anyone and without comprehension.

Maybe it was easier, two centuries and more ago, when men grew in Masonic knowledge as Masonry itself grew. But even now with all the growing done, we can do it without strain. Since more of us can claim to know all there is to know on the subject, a frank admission “I do not know”, backed up by convincing proof that other questions can and will be answered correctly, can do no harm and may even help convince a possible member that there is a place for him in the ranks of Freemasonry.

Reflections Newsletter – Volume 7, Issue 1

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RITUAL...
EDUCATION...
MENTORING

**AN ONTARIO TOWNSHIP and a
PROVINCIAL GRAND MASTER**



EFD photo

Perhaps you have passed through or may have seen the signs on your way to the shorelines of Lake Huron, or while visiting Bruce or Huron Counties.

McGillivray Township in Middlesex County was named after Simon McGillivray, a founding director of The Canada Company and a prominent Freemason. He was born in 1783 in Stratherwick, Inverness-shire, Scotland, a son of Donald McGillivray and Anne McTavish, and a cousin of John McGillivray of Dummaglas, later chief of the clan.

Following his formal education, young Simon and his elder brothers, William and Duncan, received training for the mercantile world from their uncle, Simon McTavish, a prosperous London merchant.

McGillivray assumed increasingly responsible positions, becoming a partner in his uncle’s prosperous business in England and Canada and eventually President and principal owner of the North West Company.

In 1670 the Hudson’s Bay Company had been ceded all lands draining into Hudson’s Bay. In 1779 the North West Company prospered, and its owners became wealthy until circumstances and misfortune intervened.

McGillivray was one of the original subscribers, directors and officers of the Canada Company. In 1815 he traveled to Upper Canada with John Galt as part of a Royal Commission to establish the boundaries of and prices for the lands to be acquired by the Company from the Crown.

In 1830, he accepted an appointment with the United Mexican Silver Company to reorganize the operation of their mines. This was an extremely successful venture, and his fortunes were restored. He purchased a partnership in the *Morning Chronicle*, a leading London paper, and married the daughter of his partner, Sir John Easthope, who was also a fellow director in the Canada Company.

Simon McGillivray was initiated in Shakespeare Lodge No. 131, E.T. (M.), London, on April 23, 1807. He served as its Master on three occasions. He also belonged to several other Lodges, and in 1813 he was the last Junior Grand Warden of the Moderns Grand Lodge of England. He was a personal friend of the Grand Master, the Duke of Sussex, and evidently an expert Mason.



GLCPOO photo

Even after his departure from Upper Canada, McGillivray continued to take an interest in the Masonic province. In 1826 he pointed out to the Grand Master that the jurisdiction was too large to be administrated effectively, and he proposed that it should be divided into two Provinces, with himself initially as P.G.M. for both. The Grand Master granted

him both patents in 1828, but the sojourn in Mexico intervened, and the idea came to naught. But before and after the Mexican adventure he tendered his resignation as Provincial Grand Master, but it was not accepted.

In May 1837 he gave a patent to John Auldjo, appointing him Deputy Provincial Grand Master. Auldjo came to Upper Canada and proceeded to gather information from the Lodges about the state of Masonry in the Province. On his return he delivered McGillivray a full report. In March 1838 Lord Durham was named Governor General of Canada, and the Masonic authorities considered making him PGM as well, so McGillivray again offered his resignation. The plan was stillborn, and McGillivray retained his patent.

He died on June 9, 1840 and is buried near London. A newspaper obituary notice spoke of him as follows.

“Few men so extensively engaged in important business have passed through life with a higher reputation for unsullied integrity and rigid adherence to principles. His word was sacred. But if he was inflexibly just, he was, at the same time, kind and generous to a fault. He was a close reasoner and whatever he wrote was remarkable for a lucid arrangement”.



EFD photo

RW Bro. Charles P Corbett – “McGillivray Township Remembers”
Whence Come We – pages 48 through 50

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Whenever asked for my “secret” to delivering great ritual:

“Practice...

More Practice...

And a Lot More Practice.

And when I am comfortable with it, repeat the exercise!”



Bruce McLennan photo

On February 9th, Ivy Lodge No. 115, Niagara “A” District, held their first virtual meeting. It was well attended by Lodge members, visiting brethren and several Grand Lodge officers. RW Bro. Thomas W Hogeboom, DGM, was the invited guest and spoke about the meanings of Freemasonry. During the question-and-answer period, he provided an explanation regarding the 2021 Annual Communication along with the protocols and procedures related to electronic voting. Thank you RW Sir for sharing your evening with us.



Bruce McLennan photo

THE TYLER and the SYMBOLISM OF THE SWORD

The sword used to play an important role in Freemasonry, and still does so in many of the so-called “higher degrees”. In ancient times, it was a regular part of the dressing of a gentleman, but Masons were required to leave their swords in the Tyler’s room before entering a Lodge. Its importance can be seen that even today, many Grand Lodges, including ours, still appoint a “Swords Bearer”.

In modern times the implement used by the Tyler, or Tiler, is a sword of ordinary form. This is incorrect. Formerly, and indeed up to a comparatively recent period, the Tyler’s sword was wavy in shape, and so made the allusion to the “flaming sword which was placed at the east of the Garden of Eden, which turned every way to keep the way of the tree of life”. It was, of course, without a scabbard, because the Tyler’s sword should ever be drawn and ready for the defense of his post.



The Knights Templar swore that they would never draw their swords unless convinced of the justice of the cause in which they were engaged, nor to sheathe it until their enemies were subdued. Many swords, especially those from Spain, often had the following engraved on them, “No me saques sin rason. No me embaines sin honor”, meaning “Do not draw with justice, do not sheathe me without honor”.

In many places, the Tyler was clothed differently than the other Brethren. This usually took the form of a cloak, cape or full robe of striking design. Some were deep blue and

decorated with golden shapes of suns, moons and stars. Others were red and orange, with similar decorations. In other words, the Tyler was dressed as a cherub – a celestial being of fire.

www.masoniya.com/sword
www.freemasonry.bcy.ca/sword
www.thecraftsman.org/TheTyler

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“Will a relaxation in formal dress attract new members to our Lodges or encourage present members to attend more regularly? I doubt it very much. The lowering of standards in Freemasonry, whether moral or social, will ultimately destroy us by eliminating the reason for our existence. Actions always speak louder than words. No, a meeting of the Lodge opened in the Name of the Great Architect is not merely an unbuttoned get-together. No, dressing formally does not make us, like the Pharisee of old, better than other men, but is an indication that we press toward the mark of our high calling”.

“It was Bro. Sir WS Gilbert, librettist of the great operas composed by Bro. Arthur Sullivan, who wrote in *The Gondoliers*, “When everyone’s a somebody, then no one’s anybody!” A friend of mine who became a Mason some thirty years ago, always said, “If you’re a Mason, you’re somebody.” If you think about it, he was right. A Freemason is indeed a “somebody”! Perhaps our formal dress code is a small signal that not just “anybody” can become one.”

“All of which is my personal opinion. I have not been able to find any substantial historical basis for what would appear to be “established usage and custom” in our Lodges.”
taken from a paper presented by MW Bro. Raymond SJ Daniel, PGM

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Do hope you enjoyed the read. Until next time, take care and stay safe.

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