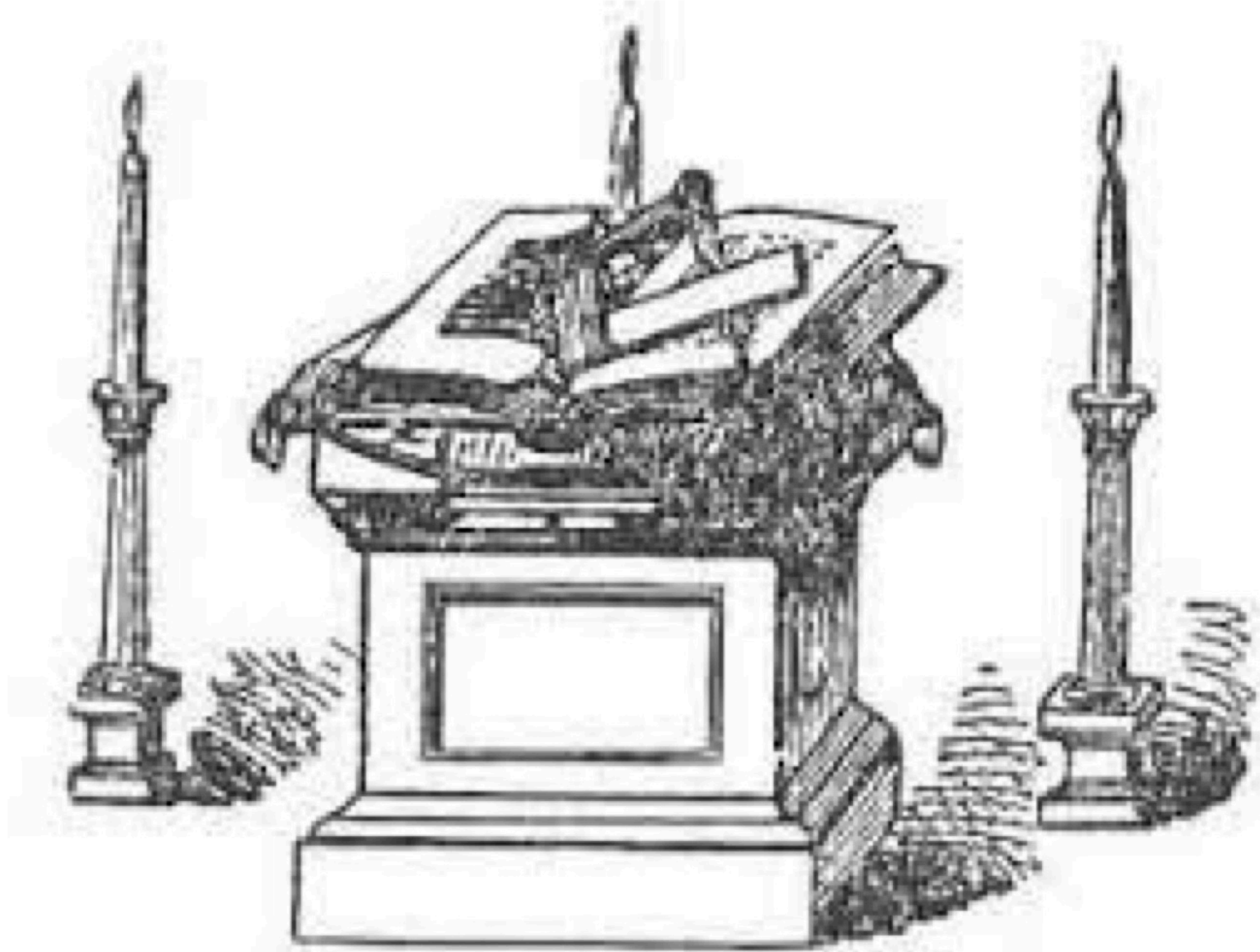
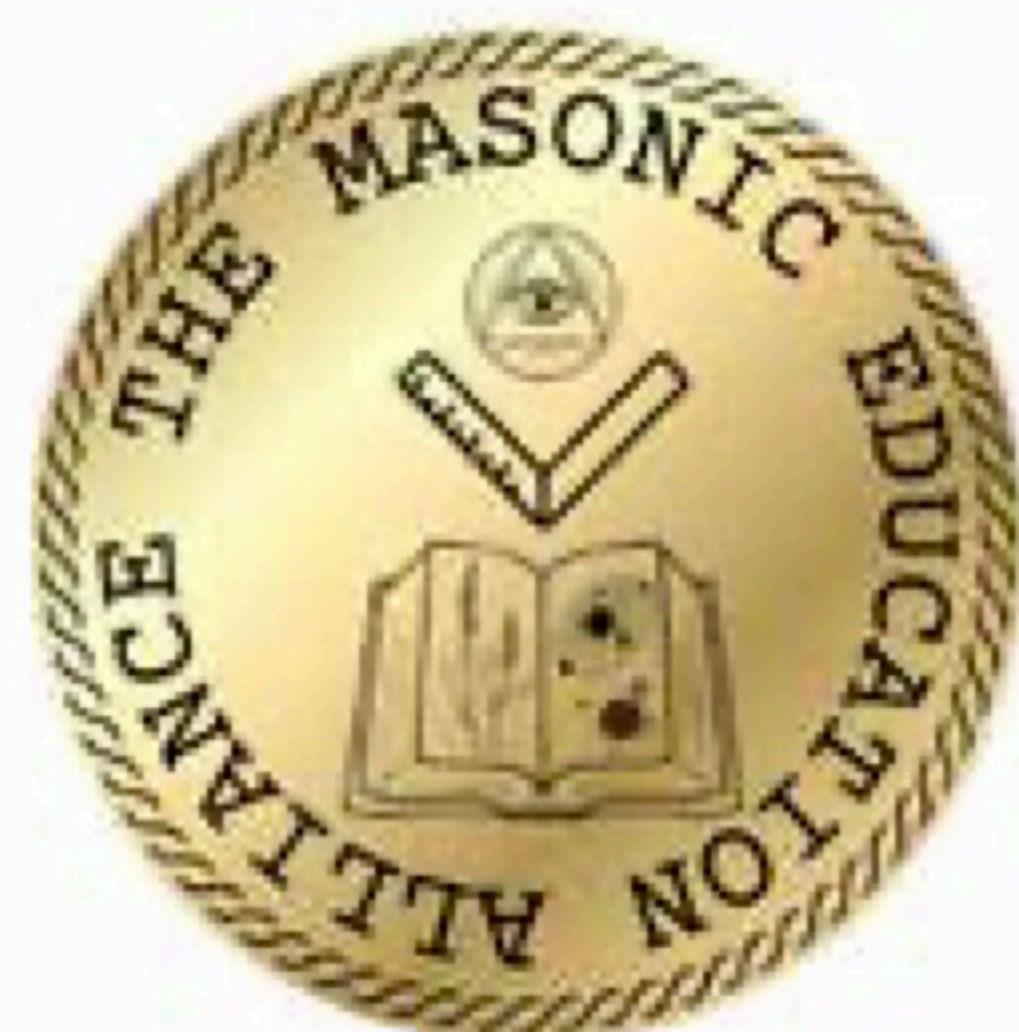

The Lyceum



A Publication of
The Masonic Education Alliance



From the Desk of R.H. Johnson



History:

Started in xxxx, The Lyceum, an e-magazine dedicated to Truth and Progress in Freemasonry, has undergone a necessary evolution in order to adapt to changing circumstances. Originally a publication of the Committee on Masonic Education of The Grand Lodge of Illinois, the magazine was the collaborative effort of two committee members. However, with the departure of one member and the Grand Lodge's change in direction, The Lyceum faced the threat of going defunct. In response, all previous issues have been rebranded, removing any association with the Grand Lodge of Illinois. While previous versions may still be available on certain websites, they are no longer offered by the publisher. These changes in branding ensure that The Lyceum can continue as a free and independent publication, focused on promoting Truth and Progress in Freemasonry, regardless of oppositional forces in any Grand Lodge organization. It is important to note that the content, authors, and publisher of The Lyceum do not represent any statements or positions of any Grand Lodge, unless expressly stated.

About:

The Masonic Education Alliance, a groundbreaking initiative, has emerged as a beacon of Light in the realm of Freemasonry. Born out of the necessity to bridge the gap left by dwindling education committees within various Grand Jurisdictions, this alliance has taken on the responsibility of providing a limitless educational magazine dedicated to all things Freemasonry. Unrestricted by the restraints of any particular jurisdiction, the Alliance unites Masonic scholars, writers, and enthusiasts from around the world to create a platform where knowledge can flow freely and uninhibited.

In the past, education committees were the pillars of Masonic educational activities, disseminating knowledge and fostering a deeper understanding of the Craft within their respective jurisdictions. However, due to various circumstances, these committees have been effectively gutted, leaving a void in the educational landscape of Freemasonry. Recognizing this critical need for a comprehensive educational platform, the Masonic Education Alliance was formed.

Unlike traditional Masonic publications, which are often confined by the limitations of a specific Grand Jurisdiction, the Masonic Education Alliance embraces the power of collaboration and inclusivity. Its mission is to foster a love for learning, share profound insights, and explore all aspects of Freemasonry in an unbiased and global

manner. By removing these boundaries, the Alliance opens doors for Masons and non-Masons alike to delve into the mysteries, history, philosophy, and symbolism of Freemasonry from diverse perspectives.

Through the publication of a cutting-edge digital magazine, the Masonic Education Alliance brings forth a wealth of articles, essays, research papers, and creative works that elevate the intellectual understanding of Freemasonry. Drawing upon the expertise of its contributors, the Alliance takes readers on a journey of intellectual expansion, inviting them to explore the depths of Masonic teachings and traditions.

In this rapidly changing world, where traditional modes of education are transforming, the Masonic Education Alliance stands as a beacon of progress and innovation. By harnessing the power of technology, this alliance is able to disseminate knowledge to a wide audience across continents and jurisdictions. As a digital platform, the Alliance ensures that no Mason is left behind and that access to Masonic education is available to all seekers, regardless of geographical boundaries or political constraints.

In essence, the Masonic Education Alliance is more than just a magazine; it is a revolution in Masonic education. With an unwavering commitment to intellectual growth, unlimited collaboration, and global connectivity, the Alliance cultivates a vibrant and dynamic community of Freemasons hungry for knowledge. Together, members of the Alliance strive to preserve the essence of Freemasonry while embracing the transformative power of education in an ever-evolving world.

The Seal:

The seal of the Masonic Education Alliance embodies the organization's commitment to providing rich and unbiased content to its readers. The golden hue represents the wealth of knowledge and information offered, while the borders ensure the protection of the Alliance from external influences and attacks. The Square symbolizes the Alliance's dedication to staying true to its research and providing accurate information to its readers. The presence of the All-Seeing Eye signifies the recognition of a higher power, while the book represents the Book of Nature, with a stalk of vegetation on one page and an illustration of a germ and the solar system on the other. Absent is the Compass, for the search for knowledge knows no boundaries.

R.H. Johnson

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FROM THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



Brothers all,

This month has flown by, and getting this issue together was a bit of a challenge. While researching for content a Fellowcraft issue, it became apparent that there is not—readily a supply of exciting materials based on the 2nd degree.

The Fellowcraft degree was, up until the mid-1720s, the highest degree we had. So why isn't more written about this once, titular degree experience? The key is breaking it down into what we know of the degree--two key components: the seven liberal arts and sciences and the “five” senses.

We wanted to explain the elements of this degree in a practical way. So we begin with a modern breakdown of the Charge for the Fellowcraft degree by Bro. Jordan Kelly. We also have a breakout on the Seven Liberal Arts and Sciences by Bro. Jordan as well. I think you'll find them both valuable as we look at how to approach Masonry in a modern and practical sense.

We've got a very thought-provoking piece by RWB. Chad Lacek about Artificial Intelligence and Freemasonry. The world has been set ablaze by AI programs like ChatGPT, and there are some impressive things AI has to say about Freemasonry.

We've reprinted a scholarly piece in the Seven Liberal Arts from the Illinois Lodge of Research from the year 2000. It's a deep dive that is best paired with a pen, notepad, and a cup of coffee. All this and much more, including information on educational conferences, are in the coming pages. Read on!

R.H. Johnson

R.H. Johnson



From the Chairman

W.:B.: Michael Overturf, Chairman



As February's gray and dull weather has sat in on us, Brethren, I hope this finds you all well. I sincerely hope you enjoy these articles as we walk through the Degrees. The Entered apprentice degree is where we work on ourselves, and now we pass to the Degree of Fellowcraft.

Here we receive instructions on The Trivium (Rhetoric, Grammar, and Logic) and the Quadrivium (Arithmetic, Geometry, Astronomy, and Music).

Using these seven liberal arts and sciences allows us to peel back the ritual and gain a more profound understanding of nature and creation.

The timing of the issues was almost perfect as I am reading Brother John S. Nagy's "The Craft Mastered" and Jamie Paul Lambs "Approaching The Middle Chamber." The Middle Chamber lecture was the first lecture I learned. As a civil engineer technician, it has a special meaning to me--seeing how I take the GAOTU's works and mold and shape them for everyday use undisturbed in the Garden of the Gods. I hope that this issue inspires you, also.

Fraternally,

Michael Overturf

Michael Overturf, Chairman

Masonic Education



Next Month's Theme

The Master Mason



Since 1953, the Research Lodge of Colorado has been producing quality Masonic Education papers. Over the last three years, the Lodge has worked tirelessly to compile the transactions into an amazing volume that is beautifully curated and printed. Volume II is coming!

\$20

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Understanding the Charges Pt. 2

The Fellowcraft

by PAEO Western Area WB Jordan Kelly

Continuing our work from last month, we present our next article. Last month PAEO Jordan Kelly broke apart the Entered Apprentice Charge so that we could understand it in its modern context. This is certainly a unique idea that many Masonic Authors have attempted to do--and to this day, none have done so in the way Brother Jordan has done.

In the following article, Jordan deconstructs the meaning of the Fellowcraft Charge paragraph by paragraph. It's unique, fun, and, most of all--edifying. I hope you enjoy this breakout as we take the language of tomorrow and fast forward about 300 years. Read on!

~R. H. Johnson



Introduction & 1st Paragraph

Congratulations on moving forward! You worked hard and earned this promotion. Freemasonry is a philosophy that gradually builds upon itself. We do this by separating these lessons into different

ceremonies are special. They are not of this world, but we must illustrate them here. So we do our best and hope that they stick with the brother.

2nd Paragraph

Since you made it this far, I don't need to tell you how to act. You have a good reputation. It's how you got this far. That reputation allows us to trust in your actions and ensure that you will bring honor to the fraternity. How so? By practicing our virtues, respecting yourself, and keeping your obligations. It is by these acts we show our values and standards.

3rd Paragraph

We have rules and regulations. Make sure that we are abiding by these, and not letting

our brothers stray away or break them. Don't palliate, which is to say, don't brush things under the rug. On the other hand, don't aggravate, which is to say, don't make a mountain out of a molehill. Remember the cardinal virtues, as they will help us here. However, there will be disagreements and even some breaking of the rules. When this happens, we are to Judge with Candor by being open and honest with those that you feel have wronged you or the lodge, Admonish with Friendship by warning, advising, and correcting in a friendly and loving manner, and Reprehend with Justice, meaning that if punishments need to be handed out, do so fairly.

4th Paragraph

These ceremonies are supposed to be impressive! Why should they be impressive? Our ceremonies have been built and refined over centuries so that the candidate might fully recognize the importance of what we are teaching him. In other words, settings matter!

We hold the liberal arts and sciences in high regard. They are Logic, Grammar, Rhetoric, Arithmetic, Geometry, Music, and Astronomy. Especially geometry! It forms the basis of Freemasonry. How? We learn in the SD lecture that man took note of natural coverings and figured out how to build one himself, thus inventing architecture. But how is this geometry? Nature's properties are proven by geometry. Geometry is all around us. It also teaches us the more important truths of morality. Again we might ask, how? We can look at the lessons of the moveable and immovable jewels, as well as our working tools, as an introduction about the truths of morality proved by geometry which also brings this lesson full circle back to architecture.

5th Paragraph

Through your past actions, you have

earned this degree. But now that you know all these things, you have new and higher expectations. You are to treat our meetings and degrees with the dignity and seriousness that they call for. This is serious business and should be recognized as such. We're here to change the lives of men. We dress the part, we speak properly, we don't joke on the sidelines, we don't interrupt brethren, and we absolutely do not correct others during degree work. All of these things can add or take away from the candidate experience, and we should hold ourselves to these standards at a minimum. You are to hold our ancient practices and traditions as sacred. Don't let them be violated by ourselves or others. Again, treat them with the dignity and seriousness that are due. These lessons give us a blueprint for how to change men's lives. However, if we corrupt or contaminate these lessons and remove this sanctity and reverence, these lessons will be of no use, and the fraternity may well perish.

Lead by example! When we treat these things seriously, so do others. We are a great example of that!

6th Paragraph

You are an honorable, faithful, and loyal man. If you weren't, we wouldn't allow you to get this far. Your personal honor, respect, faith, and loyalty are at risk if you do not abide by these lessons. These are internal ties. We are holding ourselves to standards above and beyond the world. And when we hold ourselves to these standards, we set ourselves apart as worthy and exemplary men and Masons.



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Featured Article

Would an Artificial Intelligence Want to Petition a Lodge?

by RWB.: Chad Lacek, 33°



I was recently made aware of an open Artificial Intelligence (AI) chat that became available late last year called ChatGPT. Many people have used this amazing resource

to create things in seconds that would take a human hours to do.

Need some computer code to perform a complex data-handling task? Just tell ChatGPT what result you want, and it will take care of the how. Clever (and lazy) students have been using it to write their term papers. It became so common that administrators requested another AI be created solely to examine what the students turned in to determine if an AI wrote it.

I wondered what this AI thought of our Fraternity. I asked it, "Can you compose a poem about the benefits of living a life informed by the values in Freemasonry?" This was its response:

ChatGPT AI:

"A life informed by the values of Freemasonry

Is one filled with purpose, direction and charity,

*A path of self-improvement, integrity and
fraternity,*

*A journey of enlightenment, kindness and
generosity.*

In Freemasonry, we learn to be true to ourselves,

To strive for excellence in all that we do,

To be of service to others, to be kind and to help,

To build a better world for me and for you.

*Through the practice of its teachings and its
symbolism,*

We learn to be better men, to grow and to learn,

To be of service to our fellow man,

To build a world that is brighter and less stern.

Freemasonry offers a way to live a moral life,

To be a light in the darkness, a beacon of hope,

To be of service to others, to be kind and to help,

*To build a better world for me and for you, as we
cope.*

So let us embrace the values of Freemasonry,

And live a life of purpose, integrity and charity,

*A path of self-improvement, fraternity and
generosity,*

*A journey of enlightenment, kindness, and
humility."*

Let's be honest. This isn't great poetry by any standard. But that's not the point. In the first place, it's pretty neat that a computer wrote a poem. What's much more significant are the words it selected to construct it.

Consider that this AI is using the sum total of the billions of bits of information available to

it. It's 'read' the conspiracy websites. It's seen the anti-Masonic blog posts. It knows about the Morgan Affair. And yet, look again at what it wrote about our Fraternity.

This isn't a biased opinion trying to advance some agenda. It's an impartial, completely emotionless logic machine, looking at the available data and drawing a conclusion. It makes you feel good to be a Freemason, doesn't it?

We are faced with a lot of noise from the "Vocal Minority" in our society today. These are a small, dare I say insignificant, group of people that shout their opinions very loudly and very often. As a result, it can appear as though they represent a majority view when in fact, the civilized majority refrains from shouting. They don't need to.

This poem demonstrates that the totality of data about Freemasonry is overwhelmingly positive. We all knew that in our hearts, but getting confirmation is nice. It does beg the question though, that when AI advances to a level approaching consciousness, will your Lodge receive a petition from an artificial being? Good luck teaching it the due guards and signs!



The Seven Liberal Arts and Sciences

– An Introduction

by Jordan Kelly, PAEO

The impressive ceremonies of the Fellowcrafts degree are specifically and intricately designed to instill and engrain the importance of the seven liberal arts and sciences into the mind of the brethren in attendance. The 2nd degree is riddled with hidden messages, numbers, and symbols that one could spend excessive time digging into. However, I thought it would be interesting to see how and where these arts and sciences might impact our lives, where they can be observed, and where they can be applied.

The seven liberal arts and sciences get their name from the Latin “liberalis,” meaning “worthy of a free person,” and were considered essential learning to all free men. The seven arts can be divided into two subcategories: the Trivium and Quadrivium. As their names allude, one category contains 3, the other 4. The Trivium consists of grammar, logic, and rhetoric, whereas the Quadrivium consists of arithmetic or mathematics, geometry, music, and astronomy.

The Trivium consists of the arts of language pertaining to the mind.

Grammar is knowledge, the art of inventing and combining symbols. Grammar concerns itself with facts, data, and rules. Grammar is the gathering of inputs.

Logic is the processing of those inputs. It is the art of thinking itself, fitting the facts together to discover the “why.” Logic is often where we find the largest application of the Quadrivium. We use logic to gain understanding. Using those Masonic virtues learned in the 1st-degree lecture, temperance and prudence.

Rhetoric is the art of communication. It is the proper use of the knowledge and understanding one has gathered, persuading others through wisdom.

The Trivium can take many forms. Consider these three, the classical, esoteric, and operational forms of each. As one can see, the Trivium concerns itself with teaching us “how” to think.

The Quadrivium are considered the higher arts, taught after the Trivium, and are the arts of matter. The Quadrivium was held in high esteem by our brother and great philosopher Pythagoras, who argued that there was a connected harmony to the universe. His followers believed that through studying the connections across mathematics, geometry, music, and astronomy, one could come to an understanding of this harmony.

Mathematics is the study of pure numbers and theories pertaining to numbers. It can be alchemically and elementally represented by Air, denoting the omnipresence of mathematics and its universal truths. Galileo is to have said, “Mathematics is the language with which God has written the universe.” It has also been said that our next subject, Geometry, is how that language is communicated to us here on Earth.

Geometry is the physical representation of numbers, the shape, size, positions, properties, and theory of space. Geometry is the basis of Freemasonry. By it, we discover the power, wisdom, and goodness of the Grand Architect of the Universe. Geometry is considered the noblest of the arts and sciences. Man, observing the work of God, developed the ability to imitate these works of art to beautify our lives and architecture. Geometry, being of a divine and moral origin, proves the wonders of nature but, more



importantly, shares the truths of morality across time and faiths. Geometry can be alchemically and elementally represented by Earth denoting that by geometry, we better understand our surroundings, reminding us to live wholesome and faithful lives on Earth, so that we might reach that eternal lodge in the heavens.

Music is the application of the theory of numbers in time. Music is that art which employs vibration, rhythm, and the duality of sound and silence. The ratios found in the beauty of geometry are also present in music. Music is considered purifying to the soul and allows us to feel mathematics through vibrations. Music can be alchemically and elementally represented by water, denoting the fluidity of its expression. Note how music flows across time like water in a stream, both giving the recipient relief in times of desperation, worry, and distress.

The final part of the Quadrivium is **Astronomy**. Astronomy is the study of numbers across time and space. It is the natural science of all celestial objects: stars, planets, comets, and galaxies. Astronomy considers the impact these bodies in the macrocosm of the universe have on our microcosm of existence on Earth. It is the study of that constant trestle board in the sky, by which moral and divine instructions have been placed by the Grand Architect of the Universe to be shared through generations and across cultures. These instructions have provided us with collective archetypes, providing maps of meaning to our lives via the maps of the cosmos. Astronomy can be alchemically and elementally represented by Fire. As the flame rises to the sky, so does fire, repre-

sent those eternal flames in the heavens, these everlasting messages from our Creator, waiting for our discovery and application.

This is simply an introduction to these arts and sciences, and though, we can already see why our ancient brethren held them in such high esteem. These arts have an effect on our lives, often without our own realization. They permeate our very existence, and a thorough study of them will inevitably assist in our moral, spiritual, and personal development.





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Freemasonry and The Seven Liberal Arts and Sciences

by Harold J. Spelman

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Candidates are often puzzled when they are charged in the Fellow Craft Degree to study the liberal arts and sciences. Are they actually expected to re-enter school to study these subjects all over again? Not understanding what is meant by studying the Seven Liberal Arts and Sciences, but noting the impeachability of such an idea, they completely forget about the charge and return to the next Lodge meeting, where they become engrossed in planning the next golf outing or picnic. Once again, Freemasonry loses a student of the Craft and, more sadly, gains a Master Mason who has no idea what Freemasonry actually stands for. This, of course, is error enough. More importantly, the world has lost one more chance to make a good man a better person. As a result, an opportunity is lost to make the World a better place to live.

It is the thesis of this article that the injunction to study the seven liberal arts and sciences is one of the important keys to the true meaning of Freemasonry. It is a symbol of all Man's learning from the 14th century to the present time. In this scientific age, it provides a guide not only to the meaning of our civilization but also as a key to the true meaning of all religions, an insight into the philosophies that govern the thinking of Western civilization today. It also, when properly understood, provides a key to the problems of the world today. A careful reading and reflection on the material presented herein will assist in making a Master Mason cognizant of the great truths he has inherited as a member of this ancient and noble Craft. Read, study, and learn, my Brother, as you have been charged to do.

The dominant idea or philosophy found in society just prior to and concurrent with the emergence of Humanism was Scholasticism which could best be characterized as the attempt to

unite Christianity and Classical Greek thought, especially Aristotle's. Humanism reached its peak in the late 15th and early 16th Centuries, just prior to the rise of the Enlightenment. The Enlightenment was a continuation of Humanism with the important addition of scientific interest and knowledge. Humanism arose mainly as a result of the Crusades and the exploration of Western Europe, and the rediscovery of the classical Greek philosophers and their attendant popularity. The inability to bring Aristotle into alignment with Christian doctrine had long been a problem to the Christian church, for, unlike Plato's teachings, Aristotle's philosophy was much more difficult to square with Christian teachings. Plato, on the other hand, had been reconciled with Christian doctrine from early times.

Without becoming mired in philosophical discussions, we can state that it was much easier to assimilate the teachings of Plato with Christianity than it was to reconcile the philosophy of Aristotle. In order to claim the universality of Christianity, the church doctors realized that reconciliation emerging from the Cathedral school accepted this reconciliation as their main educational task. All advanced education was directed toward resolving that conflict. This resolution was attempted through arguments, debates, and writings concerning such erudite subjects as "What was Adam's first sin?" or "Where is the wedding cup used at the marriage of Adam and Eve?" In these debates, the dominant thought in writing, speaking, and debating was precision. The concept held that one could not advance an argument if words were not used precisely and grammatically correct rules were followed. The goal was to think clearly and for each to express himself in the same manner according to a uniform set of rules. This ability was considered the

major accomplishment of the educated man. It can easily be seen that form was more important than substance!

The imitation of the writing of the classical Greeks was worth emulating. In doing that, they were following the examples found in their readings of the classical Greek scholars and the Greek's precise and beautiful use of language. Lurking behind these requirements were the changes that would be gradually brought about by the invention and use of the printing press. It takes little explanation to realize that if arguments and theories were to reach the stage of a printed document, those arguments and theories on both sides needed to be expressed in views according to agreed-upon rules of expression. Otherwise, neither side would clearly understand the discussion, resulting in chaos. These events brought about a change in the Cathedral schools. This change placed the emphasis upon what was originally known as the Trivium. Later, in the early Enlightenment period, adding the Quadrivium that then became the "...seven liberal arts and sciences" expanded this concept. We will now proceed to examine the Trivium and Quadrivium and their effect on the rise of Freemasonry.

TRIVIUM

Grammar

The Trivium consisted of; grammar, rhetoric, and dialectic. To quote Sanctius, " God created man as the participant of reason; and as he willed him to be a social being, he bestowed upon him the gift of language, in the perfecting of which there are three aids, which rejects from language all solecisms and barbarous expressions...." Therefore, the most important reason for grammar is to aid men in their capacity to reason. You will note that this is also followed by the statement "... he willed him to be a social being..." Strange as it may seem, the ability to reason and sociability are not strangers to each other and are certainly not diametrically opposed. Human beings learn through social contact. Hearing the ideas of others, whether expressed in art, music, lectures,

discussion, or debates, allowed an individual to sharpen and refine his thinking. We recognize this today when we put the idea into colloquialism and say to some person, "Let me bounce this idea off you," or "Well, let's run it up the flagpole and see how it will fly"

These are nothing more than a request for discussion or criticism, an attempt to see if we are right, to have our thinking refined. It must be remembered that in this period of Man's awakening, right reason and a search for the truth ranked high on his agenda. Social gatherings at this time involved serious discussion. It really raises an interesting philosophical or psychological question as to whether or not a person may obtain wisdom or reason in isolation or in solitude. This idea of sociability will later lead to the rise of the "club movement" in the Enlightenment period and may very well have had a great influence on the founding of Freemasonry, a topic that needs further exploration and research. We can see in tracing these ideas that the Trivium, and later the Quadrivium, were based on obtaining wisdom through communication among men. Grammar contained the basic or fundamental rules for proper writing and speaking and ensured that these men had reached an agreement on the meaning of words and their proper grammatical usage.

Rhetoric

Rhetoric has been defined as "The art of embellishing the language with the ornaments of construction so as to enable the speaker to persuade or affect his hearers." It simply means knowledge of the rules and construction of an argument that will enable an orator to use his art and skill to win an argument. It coincides with obtaining wisdom in the same manner as grammar. It is a method of effective communication and a method of obtaining wisdom.

Dialectic

The last of the Trivium is dialectic. This is defined as the "...branch of logic which teaches the rules and modes of reasoning." Probably the best

example of its use is in the arguments and dialectics of Plato. There is no need to explain how important this is to obtaining wisdom. The ability to reason was one of the hallmarks of Humanism and is that which separates the human being from the beast.

In concluding the explanation, the Trivium teaches subjects that are intended to instruct us to correctly and properly express our thoughts to others. We can state that the Trivium teaches us not what to think but how to think; not what to communicate but how to communicate. As has been stated, if right reason is to be gained, it is not gained as a solo endeavor. Correct thinking requires communicating with others. Your thoughts can only be tested and corrected when exposed to the scrutiny of others. These are the rules for that communication. In addition, either written or spoken words must have a universal symbolic meaning. If we do not use this universal symbolic meaning in discourse, we have lied. A lie will always destroy the truth. If the speaker stated that it is raining outside while it is not raining, the hearer, on observing this error, purposeful or otherwise, has all the symbolism of the words destroyed, thus rendering the truth uncertain. The Trivium is only the correct use of this symbolism or language in the art of communication, in the art of reasoning, and in the art of obtaining wisdom. In the studies of the Quadrivium, the purpose is altogether different, as we shall now learn.

QUADRIVIUM

The Quadrivium was a later addition to the Humanists' curriculum. It consists of four subjects: arithmetic, music, geometry, and astronomy. Their purpose was entirely different than the Trivium, and each has more philosophical importance to Freemasonry than does the Trivium. The study of the Quadrivium in the order set out above must be continued in that order, with arithmetic coming first and astronomy last. This order forms a prerequisite in that the student would be unable to grasp music without first understanding arithmetic and so forth. The Quadrivium was always taught in this sequence,

a progression from the lowest to the highest. A progression with an attendant symbolic meaning of going from Man to God. It is still a part of religion. It still maintains the importance of theology, but reason has now been substituted for dogma. This reason is the reasoning of Man rather than the Church. Those subjects comprising the Quadrivium are used for a different purpose than are the subjects of the Trivium. Here, in the Quadrivium, we find the unification principle running through the curriculum, a principle whose purpose is to lead us to the mind of God. By so doing, we will be more able to understand the will of God, His laws, and His plan for the cosmos. It is also important to understand that we are not referring to these subjects in their practical application. In arithmetic, for instance, we are not referring to its practical use but rather to the philosophy of numbers. In the Humanists' period, the practical application of numbers was referred to as algorism.

Mathematics

Quadrivium mathematics has often been described as being the knowledge gained by the senses that are essential to the understanding of the ultimate knowledge or philosophy. Bacon held that philosophy could not be known without arithmetic. Arithmetic entered into and influenced music, art, literature, architecture, and astronomy. To properly understand this, it is necessary to understand that arithmetic, as understood in the Quadrivium, had a great deal to do with ratio and proportionality; hence with logic and philosophy. As an example, consider the proposition that it takes 2 to create. This could be described arithmetically as 1 plus 2 = tension from which you develop 3, or as in the proportion 1:2 as 2:4. This could be an arithmetical formula to prove as 'God is to me as I am to my children.' These are simple examples to show the use of arithmetical proportions and to prove logical or philosophical propositions. Of course, these are simple examples of arithmetical proportions that, when used in science, create proportions that may become more complicated and lengthy. If we apply this theory of proportions and ratios to works of art, music, literature,

and architecture, we find beauty or esthetics can be defined by size, properties, and relationships. Therefore, it was said that parts of a cathedral could be built according to abstract notions of intellectual beauty. "Numbers were at the basis of many medieval conceptions of the beauty full."

Numbers had a far greater impact on philosophy than this medieval conception of beauty. Numbers, or arithmetic, became the connection or the link between God and the created cosmos. This was the intellectual key, according to the Chartres' schoolmen, that unlocked the secrets of the universe. It takes only a moment's reflection to understand how important this "discovery" was. If this were true, it behooves man to study the entire universe; natural history, government, the history of art, and even the history of history. It becomes a universal yardstick or measure of all things to which Man's mind or learning would know no bounds. "The world was created according to a model in the Divine mind and there is a resemblance between the model and that which was created and this is seen in arithmetic. " The argument continues with: " Since the world is an intelligible phenomenon understanding it, by and through mathematics, will allow us to understand the Divine mind."

This is an important milestone in human thinking. For over 1200 years, the Church reigned supreme while Man, his culture, and his society had not progressed. Now we have a philosophy that is going to link intellectualism with religion. Man can now reach, explore and discover not only in the field of religion and its related arts but also in the whole field of human knowledge. Yet, the Church still has its place of leadership. Aristotle, like Plato, has now been united with religion. It might not be incorrect to say that, at last, Athens and Jerusalem are united. However, this uniting will have an uneasy peace for approximately another 400 years. Then the intellectual, Athens, will finally be victorious and will end the dominance of the Church, Jerusalem.

In line with this reasoning, there is one last person to be heard from; a person who is important to Freemasonry, the well-known cathe-

dral architect Villard de Honnecourt, who will provide examples of geometrical and human proportions in his notebook. He will begin with the human figure and extend it to a model of a perfect Church. This will truly set the model for the third temple, the temple to last for all eternity, the temple not built with human hands but found in the hearts of men. Thus the way is now paved to understand Geometry, the "G" that is so important to our ancient Craft. Later, we will discuss this in detail.

Music

The Humanists' idea of music may be summed up in one sentence, "The philosophers of antiquity and the Middle Ages were not interested in music and music making as an isolated and idle pastime but as music's role as part of an integrated and divinely ordered universe." The philosophers of the Humanists' period did not feel it was necessary to play an instrument in order to understand music nor to qualify oneself as a musician. Dionysius the Areopagite, the person whose philosophy most influenced the concept and the construction of the Gothic cathedrals, felt that Music was a reflection of the Divine Harmony in the world and, therefore, the material world also was a reflection of divine harmony and beauty. To understand this theory of the importance of music to the philosophy of Humanism, we must trace it back to the philosophy of Pythagoras. We must also bear in mind the importance of our opening quote; that music's importance was to show an integrated and divinely ordered universe. This was the key to Humanism: to know the secret of the natural world was to know the will of the Divine mind. It was Pythagoras who pointed the way for this concept in both music and geometry.

Pythagoras, as most Greek philosophers, had a passionate interest in learning the philosophical rules for establishing a good government. In other words, what items were necessarily required to establish a government that could perform its duties while being just towards all men? He determined that in order to embark upon this study, one must first learn what harmony is be-

cause harmony seemed to be the natural secret of men working together for mutual good. Pythagoras reasoned that harmony is best found in music inasmuch as music is harmony. Therefore, to understand harmony, we must understand the nature of music. To do this, Pythagoras invented a stringed instrument that would illustrate for him the principles of harmony. He found, from his invention, that as he lengthened or shortened the strings the sound would either be in harmony or not depending on the relationship of the length of the strings. Pythagoras then measured the distance on these strings when in harmony and discovered that their lengths were in geometric relations. His conclusion was that harmony was based on geometric proportion. From this, he concluded that the cosmos must be in harmony; otherwise, it would have destroyed itself, and being in harmony, the cosmos operated as did music according to geometric principles. Therefore, he reasoned, The Grand Architect of the Universe was a geometrician, and geometry was the major law of creation.

It is for this reason that Freemasonry refers to Pythagoras as “our ancient friend and brother” and accords geometry a high place in Masonic teachings. From this, we learn that music is not only the basis of harmony but also the teacher of geometry. It is of great mathematical importance as it teaches the laws of nature and that those natural laws are God’s laws, the basis for the operation of the cosmos. We will discuss the importance of geometry in greater detail in the following section.

Geometry

As we had previously stated, music and geometry have much in common. Therefore, it is necessary to keep in mind the comments made regarding music as we consider geometry, especially that part concerned with the teaching of the laws of nature. Nevertheless, geometry has its own importance as far as the Quadrivium and Freemasonry are concerned.

Geometry and its study may be divided, as was all Gaul, into three parts. These parts consist

of practical geometry, constructive geometry, and theoretical geometry. Of these, as far as our study of the seven liberal arts and sciences are concerned, we may dismiss the study of practical geometry with two exceptions. The first of these exceptions is the association that practical geometry has through the work of Euclid with classical studies. As has been said before, classical studies form the basis of the Trivium and the Quadrivium, and, through a roundabout way, Euclidean geometry will have some interest for the study of the seven liberal arts and sciences. The second reason practical geometry should be considered important is because it is one of the subjects involved in the founding of the philosophy of Humanism. The Gothic cathedrals gave man the ability to begin to believe in himself and his ability to reason, create, and increase his self-esteem. This developed into a feeling of the importance for, and an appreciation of, mankind that would lead to the development of Humanism. Therefore, with these brief remarks, we will dismiss these two exceptions.

The second branch of geometry that concerns itself with lines, angles, and figures is known as constructive geometry. It is important to our study of the seven liberal arts and sciences. As we have stated, the study of natural law, or natural phenomena, was paramount in the philosophy of Humanism. It bears repeating that the Humanists believed that by understanding the workings of nature, they could understand the mind of God. Two philosophers of this period, Grosseteste and Bacon, “perceived mathematical geometry as a fundamental technique for the investigation of natural phenomenon.”

“The usefulness of considering lines, angles, and figures is the greatest because it is impossible to understand natural philosophy without these. They are efficacious throughout the universe as a whole and its parts all causes and in related properties, as in rectilinear and circular motions ...For all causes of natural effects have to be expressed by means of lines, angles, and figures, for otherwise, it would be impossible to have knowledge of the reason concerning them. Hence these rules and principles and fundamentals, having

been given by the power of geometry, the careful observer of natural things can give the causes of all natural effects by this method. And it will be impossible otherwise, as is already clear in respect to the universal since every natural action is varied in strength and weakness through variation of lines, angles, and figures. But in respect of the particular, this is even clearer, first in natural action upon matter and later upon the senses, so that the truth of geometry is quite plain.”

What this teaches us are the differences that were understood in early Freemasonry between the geometry of music and constructive geometry. In the former, we are dealing with harmony as part of the mind of God. In the latter, our attention is directed to geometry in forms, angles, and figures. This principle, when properly understood, is set forth in the Senior Deacon’s Lecture, which reads: “Geometry is that science which treats of the powers and properties of magnitudes in general, where length, breadth, and thickness are considered - from a point to a line, from a line to a superficies, from a superficies to a solid ... geometry is the foundation of architecture and the root of mathematics.”

In the former, we learn that music, when coupled with geometry, teaches us that harmony is a law of the cosmos, an important lesson that will help teach us the correctness of the doctrine of the brotherhood of Man. In the teachings of constructive geometry, we learn about the forms that compose the material properties of the universe. We learn that all matter must have a form and that geometry instructs us in the relationships between them. Together they teach us the mind of God and the laws that constitute the working rules of the cosmos. They help us to understand that form, as well as harmony, and substance are part of the mind of God. Thus, Plato teaches harmony, essence, and substance while Aristotle teaches form: or, by example, Plato teaches you cannot have a chair without the essence of a chair having been created by God (?). Aristotle teaches us the form of that chair. As far as Freemasonry is concerned, both of these philosophies are compatible with Masonry because they are founded on geometry.

There is one more lesson that will help us understand the relationship of all things as taught to us by the third form of geometry, theoretical geometry. Theoretical geometry teaches us what is known as the “Golden Ratio.” To understand the “Golden Ratio,” we must fully understand the above explanations about geometry which lead us to the conclusion that there is a sense of oneness throughout the cosmos, a sense that all things are related to each other. This is another example of the 3x4x5-triangle discovery that led to the confirmation of the theory of Universal Laws, the “...whenever you have ...you will always find” laws. This law of the right angle triangle also led to the discovery of proportional relationships or the “Golden Ratio.”

Proportional relationships are not easy to understand on a mathematical level. We shall use a simplified explanation here to show their importance in understanding the cosmos. Scientists discovered that by measuring the spiral growth distances of a snail, they would find that such distances are in a direct proportion to the distance between the spirals of the Milky Way galaxy. They are not the same distance, but they are in a proportional relationship. This relationship is true of each and every spiral in nature: the spiral of leaves around a branch, the spirals of flowers, and the spirals of water running down a drain. We can then state that all spirals found in nature bear a relation to one another. This is also true of the distance of bones from each other and of all things found in nature. This, for the Master Mason, proves the unification of all of nature, including Man, through that proportionality. Again, most important for all Freemasons, it proves one of the laws of God and the ability for us to know a portion of His mind and His plans for the cosmos. Probably the most important truth that it teaches us is that there is a plan!

Astronomy

The fourth and final member of the Quadrivium is astronomy. It was written earlier that to understand music, one must understand mathematics; to understand geometry, one must understand music; and to understand astronomy,

it follows that one must understand geometry. Each Quadrivium subject is dependent on the last Quadrivium subject, so that the final subject, astronomy, should act as a summary of all that has gone on before. It should lead us to a final understanding of God's plan for the cosmos. Astronomy does this well!

In many ways, the study of astronomy is a symbol of the thinking in the Cathedral schools. As their curriculums shifted from bringing ancient classical studies into an agreement with the Holy Scriptures to the philosophy of Humanism astronomy, the leading edge of the new studies and the center of future disputes would be found between the science found in Humanism and the Church. The battle that raged over Galileo and his theory of the Sun is a prime example. In the Humanist's world of education, astronomy became part of the curriculum with the other three Quadrivium subjects and was treated accordingly. It followed the natural history thesis that knowledge of the laws of nature would give us knowledge of God's plan for the cosmos and would, therefore, be most beneficial. Since astronomy covered a large part of all natural laws, it was most favored to give Man a more complete picture of this plan. It was the summation of these studies or the center of natural history philosophy. Later, during the period of the Enlightenment, with its great advances in science following the experiments led by Newton and others, we would find this natural law thesis to be the center of the philosophy of the 18th Century which brought forth new theories of government. These were not only the cause but also the result of the American Revolution and were also philosophical causes for the formation of a new government termed Democracy. It also had the effect of overthrowing the political theory of the Divine Right of Kings.

CONCLUSION

The seven liberal arts ushered in the Age of Humanism, which is the forerunner of the Age of Enlightenment. Its story of natural laws being the basis for God's plan for creation was in direct opposition to the stories of creation set forth in

the Bible. The age of the Humanist could not have begun without the Trivium. If man is to rule his own thinking, there must be rules concerning how individual thoughts are not only created but also what these thoughts represent, how others know them and subsequently build upon them. Rules of grammar were derived from the classical writers of Greece. While the written word remained constant, the meaning of words and their use required uniformity. Rhetoric applied the same idea of rules to the spoken word since most of Man's communication was oral. An agreed-upon method of speech construction based on classical speakers was important. To persuade you of the truths propounded, more was needed. The art of persuasion became important, and dialectics entered the field of study. We may conclude that the Trivium taught "how to." "How to" present a man's ideas, not any preconceived dogma, to his fellow man. How did he obtain the knowledge to form these ideas? This is the subject matter of the Quadrivium in which a course of study was presented, proceeding from the simplest form of reasoning, arithmetic, to the most complex, astronomy. The proposition was to teach man the ability to understand God and His plan as seen in the laws of nature. That allowed each individual man to be able to interpret God's plan for himself rather than blindly follow some religious dogma. The Quadrivium allowed the mind of Man to be opened to ideas to be promoted and discoveries to be made. All those resulted in that period which is a forerunner of the Scientific Age, the age in which we now live.

There is a deeper meaning to the Masonic injunction concerning the Seven Liberal arts and Sciences. First, by placing the teachings of the Seven Liberal Arts and Sciences in the prerequisite form, we found above; astronomy requires knowledge of geometry, geometry of music, and music of mathematics. We learn that all the laws of nature, the laws that govern the cosmos, are connected. One is inseparable from the other together. They show the relatedness of all things. This is the basis of the "brotherhood of man under the fatherhood of God." Secondly, the student of that day balanced his success in worldly attainments with an equal belief in God

and faith in a Creative Power. His world was of God and Mammon. He kept these two diverse beliefs in harmony, in balance, or, as Pike taught, in equilibrium. It is this balance, this harmony, this equilibrium that is symbolized by all of Freemasonry. Man must keep in balance his worldliness and his faith. But this equilibrium seems forgotten in our society as all our directions are towards Mammon. This is the great teaching of our Craft. This equilibrium, the balancing of God and Mammon, is the great teaching that Masonry not only preserves for all generations but is the teaching which every Mason is bound to practice himself and bound to teach others, to give it to the world. This is the lesson that society needs so badly today. This lesson is what makes "good men better men."

This entire period, this entire philosophy, all of this is symbolized in Freemasonry when the candidate in the Second degree is admonished that: "The impressive ceremonies of this degree are calculated to inculcate upon the mind of the novice the importance of the study of the liberal arts and sciences, especially the noble science of geometry..." Truly Freemasonry is symbolically the keeper of this knowledge and wisdom.



THE FIVE ELEMENTS AND FIVE SENSES

by Bro. J. Clint Lewey

Reprinted from the Midnight Freemasons Blog

FREEMASONRY AND MASONIC SYMBOLISM

In Freemasonry, there always seems to be a rhythm or correlation with any number of things. It seems to nearly never fail for the Craft to line up with all things Hermetic, Kabalistic, mystical, or beyond. Whether or not 'modern' Ancient Craft Masonry came from the ancient knowledge found prior to antiquity is a subject of debate. However, it does typically fall right into place with it and is unquestionably related.

As we were passed through the degrees of Masonry, we were introduced to esoteric, and numerical studies and were explained some of their meanings. As we travel through the (B) and (J) pillars, we begin to ascend the flight of winding stairs. We first come upon three steps of, which have an infinite amount of explanation based on the number three. However, we are taught they primarily represent the three main officers of the lodge: JW, SW, and WM.

As we continue along, we come upon a set of five steps. Along with the five orders of architecture, each one represents one of our five primary senses. They are labeled hearing, seeing, feeling, smelling, and tasting. We are taught in one particular degree to primarily focus on the first three senses, but as searchers of further light, there is usually a way to correlate similarities with numbers in Masonry and beyond. These five senses are what we utilize to study the seven liberal arts we are later introduced to in the lesson.

In some of the more esoteric Masonic and non-Masonic groups, we are introduced to the four primary elements of the Hermetic and Kabalistic sciences. They are Earth, water, air, and fire. While many other teachings, such as eastern religions, utilize the same and different elements, I will stick with what our Masonic-related groups teach.

Based upon my initiatory experiences and with some research, I found that there is a less-known fifth

element or Quintessence. According to Dr. Israel Regardie, the fifth element of spirit crowns and connects the other four. [i] This is a culmination of all the elements. One primary difference with this element is that it cannot stand alone as the others do. It is essential that the other four elements are 'present' and in alignment have an understanding of the fifth element.

As receivers of light often found in the blue lodge (but more often overlooked) and beyond, we are encouraged to learn and become familiar with numerology. In some of the first lessons taught, we are informed of the many meanings of different numbers but specifically here, the number five. In one of our degrees, as mentioned above, the number five is alluded to in regard to the five senses (and five pillars), and we are taught that when we are fully in sync with ourselves and surroundings, we can get by without any of our senses, spiritually speaking. In Masonry, the five senses are much needed. Touch, whereby one Mason may know another in the dark as well as in the light. Sight, utilized whereby we see certain signs of recognition given to us or symbols as well. Hearing, to hear the word of a Brother Mason, to also hear music as a part of some lodges ritual. Taste, to rejoice among brethren in fellowship with fine food and drink. Smell, when we have our ceremonial incense burning in lodge to help center our minds and bodies.

AIR & HEARING

In some Masonic traditions, the element of air is represented as intelligence and/or spiritual growth as well. During the creation days, it was God that breathed into a man's nostrils and made us in his likeness. With air travels sound. From our time in the womb to our last moments on Earth, we primarily hear sound through the air. Also, through the air is played one liberal art that is perhaps the most recognizable, and it is that of music.

Hearing in Masonry and other ritualistic orders

is perhaps the primary means of communication. Whether whispering good counsel or carefully scripted, deeply esoteric lines of a ritual, the sound traveling in the air to our ears to be heard is everywhere. Air being represented by the east; it is from the east we receive most of our Masonic lessons. We are given our obligation from the east and admonished, as well as other communications. The sense of hearing and air go hand in hand with gaining knowledge and spiritual growth.

It is not so much to simply say certain words but to forcefully vibrate them out as to really push the sound waves through the air. As with our sense of smell, we often never see any of the day-to-day things we hear. From car horns and ambulances to other people's conversations, the air is filled with constant sounds.

Perhaps no phenomenon in nature is as common and powerful as air. It is a driving force and a symbol of determination. In nature, wind storms, tornadoes, and hurricanes have no rivals--accept themselves in destructive power. These forces of air carry with them, thunder, howling winds, and crashing noises of destruction. Air can also be gentle, cooling and bring in clouds of life-supporting rain. It can tenderly blow a wind chime or be pushed through a musical horn or woodwind to produce a beautiful sound. If harnessed correctly and brought under control, it can carefully steer a sailboat, generate energy or lift a 700,000-pound 747 jet airliner. Air can blow out fires, dry up water, and shift the Earth. As Masons or students of the Hermetic sciences, when we hear the winds coming, it is necessary to be able to harness and control these opportunities of learning something new or growing spiritually.

FIRE & SMELL

In the Masonic tradition, the element of fire is a symbol of life and destruction. In the Winter Solstice Ceremony for Masonry, it is symbolic of creation and energy; a new beginning and life. In tarot and other studies, fire is represented as passion and change, whether good or bad. In alchemy, fire is often associated with sulfur, one of the most potent and distinct-smelling chemicals on planet Earth. Fire is represented in the south; the opposite of the cold, dark north.

In Masonry, as mentioned previously, one of the senses less talked about is that of smell. Smell is often

one of our first senses to be activated during certain situations. It is also one that could be considered quite subconscious, yet if something triggers your sense of smell enough, it can be one of the most difficult to ignore.

When fire is created, we usually smell it far before we see, hear, or feel it. Whether literally or figuratively, we often sense the smell of smoke, that all too recognizable smell of sulfur, or worse yet, the 'smell of death.' On the other hand, fire and smell can have positive meanings as well. In the culinary arts, we often smell what we are going to be eating before we ever see or taste it. As with fire, our sense of smell senses a sign of new beginnings, love, passion, physical attraction towards (pheromones) another, or the very familiar smell of a newborn baby.

Our sense of smell often allows us to sense what is beyond our other senses, even hearing. It can also be right in front of us as we 'stop and smell the flowers as to live in the moment. As mentioned above, you can smell fire miles away and know that there is likely danger and destruction. But you can be rest assured; it is also a new beginning in the making as well.

WATER & TASTE

In the Masonic tradition, the element of water is represented as emotion and intuition, and according to Cicero [ii], it has creative, subconscious, or mysterious qualities. As for taste, having 'good taste' is perhaps all of these things. It is that natural ability to make good choices, and react accordingly without thinking. It is also the ability to see beauty, and everyone else in the room would likely agree. It is a subconscious ability to have a positive awareness of what everyone else likely should see or does see in something. Having those water qualities means you are fluidic in that not only do you have good decision-making abilities, but that you also can adapt and see the hidden beauty in most everything.

As Masons, we should have the ability to be fluid in most scenarios. If we are demanding to be free and accepted ourselves, we must also be accepting of others as well. As Masons, we are curious about the ancient mysteries, both esoteric and exoteric. From the west is water, and fittingly so, as it slows the fires of our minds for rest. The west is where the sun sets every day. The search for more light from the east is then allowed to be pondered and meditated over. As

water is passive and feminine, it is utilized best as a time to contemplate those fiery desires for knowledge.

One tradition that has been long forgotten in our day-to-day lives of traffic, work, and fast food is the slow consumption of our foods. As a whole, we eat more than ever in the history of mankind, yet we enjoy our food less than we ever have. We often miss the taste of every nuance in a fine dish we are eating, and therefore that likely reflects on our lives for the most part. We tend not to let our minds wander into its subconscious due to busy schedules. If we are missing those moments, it's likely due to bad taste.

EARTH & TOUCH

In the Masonic tradition, the element of Earth is represented as grounding, stabilization, or material. This is the element often looked at as the element that really houses all of the aforementioned elements. The earth element is the basis of knowledge, things learned, which allow for further spontaneous/passionate (fire), logical (air), or emotional (water) abilities in our mind and spirit. It is our day-to-day life. It is what we can see, smell, hear, taste, and, most importantly, touch. Being earthbound in a philosophical way is a less-than-desirable way to grow spiritually. However, it is the earth element and our physical beings that essentially make us up. While water can be touched and even held, it is more fluid and will change immediately. As for earth qualities, it is malleable, but not as much as air and water, and is nowhere near as inspired as fire. The Earth is under our feet and is all we can touch.

Earth is represented from the cold north. It is also represented with the color black and therefore represents our lack of 'light.' We are too concerned about gadgets, money, and other items we must have in our possessions to be anywhere other than in complete darkness. While it is the earth element that houses the others and is the basis for our growth, it is a virtue to have the stability underneath us. It is the basis for all Masons to be physically born in darkness and to have to put away our possessions we hold close to us. We are even asked at one point to deposit a physical, metal item for archival reasons into our lodges. This helps us be able to give something up of a physical nature.

Being grounded to the Earth to a fault can be a problem. As we can feel earthquakes underneath our

feet if our Earth below us is toiling, so should we feel the earthquakes within ourselves if we are toiling inside. This toiling is often what pushes us towards any number of belief systems or to even begin our journey into Masonry. It is important to understand the positives and negatives of the earth element as it can keep us from ever growing but always allows our acacia to grow.

SPIRIT & SIGHT

In the Masonic tradition, the element of spirit is a symbol of purity and is, more or less, a culmination of all of the other four elements. It is typically less spoken about or even recognized by many students of the ancient mysteries. It is so invisible; it is less visible than air itself, yet as Masons, we are constantly looking for it. It is nowhere yet everywhere. It is made up of all four elements, yet none of them are specifically it. Spirit can also be called Quintessence or aether as well.

Its similarity to air is relevant since air is represented in the east, the place we are constantly traveling. As seekers of light, it is sight that we use most literally but figuratively as well. From the dawn of man until now, we have peered into the skies pondering questions of our existence. From worshiping the sun and moon or looking into the heavens for God's answers, we are constantly looking for the light or spirit.

As humans with sight, we often have to 'see it to believe it.' As seekers, we know we won't see it with our physical eyes but with our wisdom and studies. Some believe in the 'third eye' concept, which allows for deeper meditation and understanding of things around us. As we bow our heads and pray, we usually close our eyes. This is most likely due to closing off our ability to actually see but utilize more of our inner sight. In Masonic lodges, we are ceremoniously given light, more light, and further light by having our hoodwinked removed. Having a requirement to believe in a higher power, a GAOTU, this ritual alludes to the great light. To our ancestors, it may have simply been the sun. To us, it could be a multitude of belief systems.

If all things are of the aether element, then on an earthly level, we see and detect signs from the universe, such as numerology and things we often call coincidental. We use our sight to gain more knowledge that can be transferred into logic and wisdom.

My studies have led me to believe that in lodge, the spirit is represented in the middle of the room. The other elements are represented directionally, but not spirit. As indicated in specific grades of at least one appendant body of Masonry, our 'spirits' are positioned in a place of no direction but all directions, facing the east looking for light. Spirit is inside all of these elements and makes up the space each one of them lacks in.

It is often represented with a circle, and this symbolizes the infinity of the spirit and how it is all things. It is also represented in the pentagram as the apex point of the star. In Masonry, we are caused to kneel at an altar and give a prayer. The VSL is also in the middle of the lodge as a rule and guide for us as Masons. This is fittingly so as it represents the place our spirit is. Our sight is taken away from us until a certain point, and then as mentioned before, the hoodwink is removed for us to see the light.

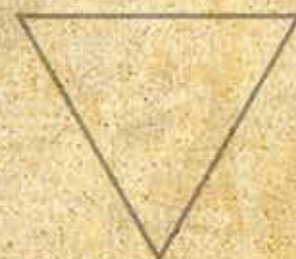
The element of Quintessence has all of the features of the other elements. It is very logical and intelligent as with air yet as simple and grounded as the earth element. It is very emotional and soft as water yet powerful and scorching as fire. It is highly represented in Masonry but rarely, if ever, talked about. It is the 'light' we are constantly looking for.

PRACTICAL FREEMASONRY

The study of the aforementioned and our Craft is not exclusive to blue lodge and can be explored via many avenues. Much literature has been written about the subjects and can be interpreted in an endless amount of ways. Also, much of what we learn is obtained from within through meditation and self-study. There are many Masonic appendant or concordant bodies that subscribe to these schools of thought as well as non-Masonic bodies that are considered more "fringe Masonry" but have just as much value as actual Masonic institutes. Incorporating the elements, senses, and sciences into our daily lives can further shape our ashlar into that perfect stone we are striving to have.

[i] Regardie, Israel (1938). *The Middle Pillar: The Balance Between Mind and Body* Ch. 9, pg. 185

[ii] Cicero, Chic (2003) *The Essential Golden Dawn* Ch. 4, pg 117



EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCES

Friday-Sunday, April 28th-30th, 2023
Midwest Conference on Masonic Education
Canton Masonic Temple, Canton, Ohio
<http://www.mcme1949.org/events.html>



Saturday, April 29th, 2023
The Southeastern Masonic Education Symposium
Hillsborough Lodge No. 25 F&AM, Tampa, Florida
<https://www.h25smes.org> for more information.



Friday, July 28th - 30th
Masonic Con Kansas
Overland Park, KS
www.MasonicConKansas.com



Saturday, September 16th
Masonic Con Chicago
Libertyville, IL
www.MasonicConChicago.com



For more visit, MasonicConferences.com

If your lodge or organization is having an Educational Event (not related to instruction or charities), please let us know. Email the details to: secretary@spesnovum.com

Please give us at least a month notice so that we can ensure it is added.



