



Grand Collège des Rites Écossais

SUPRÊME CONSEIL DU 33^È DEGRÉ
EN FRANCE
1764 - 1804
GODF

Monthly letter n°152 - March 2018

The Grand Lodge of Perfection met in Bordeaux on March 17th 2018, after the second “Sources Encounters” dealing with “Hierarchy and Initiation” and before the Conference - open to entered apprentices - on the subject of the anthropocene. The success of the Sources Encounters and of the Conference, the quality of the orators and the number of participants must be highlighted. They will be published in the coming weeks. You will be informed in due time. During the Grand Loge meeting, the preliminary results of the axiological survey launched in Lyon in 2017 were presented. In an initial assessment, they bring to light the efficiency of the initiatory process as regards a hierarchy of values. The final results will be presented at the Grand Lodge of Perfection in Rouen, in 2019.

In the memory of the Scottish Rite, the city of Bordeaux cannot be separated from Etienne Morin (1717-1771) who was the first Commander in Chief of the Order of the Princes of the Royal Secret in the island of Saint-Domingue (1764). After he died, an inventory of his property* was established in Kingston, Jamaica, in 1772.

As Grand Commander of the Grand College of Scottish Rites – Grand Orient of France, I am his direct successor and his heir, as well as that of Alexandre de Grasse-Tilly, the first Grand Commander of the Supreme Council of the 33rd degree in France.

Out of a special interest in that inventory, I closely examined it and I was driven to the conclusion that the only Scottish Rite implement which it contained was a case of mathematical instruments, which accompanied him all through his life.

This attribute of the Grand Master Architect, the 12th degree of our Rite, is described in the manuscripts in which Francken copied the degrees which he had drawn up in order to constitute his Rite of Perfection. It may be assumed that it corresponds to Etienne Morin’s own case of instruments.

Having devoted his whole life to the creation of the Higher Scottish Degrees, Etienne Morin was that same Grand Master Architect who is ritually requested to give the following answer:

“I know what is contained in a perfect case of mathematical instruments”.

In fact, the ten instruments – including three compasses – contained in the case are the necessary tools for elaborating the more and more complex drafts which are needed for a progress towards Knowledge. However, having the tools and knowing how to use them is not enough. One must have the will to use them. That is why in the French ritual, Grand Master Architects work in a lodge whose specific character can be read in its double place name. One is the “Archi Loge”, whose etymological meaning is “The Lodge of the Beginning”, and the “Boulomie”, i.e. “The place of Volition”. Indeed, volition is the first quality which this degree requires and that is what the holder of the degree makes clear when, as the degree orders him, he makes this statement:

“I want and I build”.

Because construction of any kind requires a will that is unshakable, indispensable, unavoidable and whose firmness necessarily entails its free affirmation: “out of my own free will, I swear that...”

Etienne Morin died intestate. However, he left us a treasure hidden in his rituals by leaving us free to use them, but that is not enough. We must also want to do so. We are all the joint heirs of the case of mathematical instruments which was found in his posthumous inventory and which is described in Francken’s manuscripts.

It is part of our duty as Secret Masters and of our determination as Grand Master Architects to act as builders in accordance with the oath that we took and which we repeat at each degree.

T : III : F : Jacques OREFICE
33rd, Sovereign Grand Commander

* in Louis Trébuchet « De l’Écosse à l’Écossisme », Éditions Ubik, Tome 3-volume2-pages 554-557.