

power is absolute to will and to do as seems to him right, for the good government of the brethren; so absolute is his sway, that one stroke of his gavel is sufficient to silence the large body over which he presides, and no one can question his judgment. The Wardens are his deputies—not his equals; each performs his allotted task, and, beyond that, are of no authority, save as assistants.

The Deacons are lower yet in the grade, and are simply the messengers of the Lodge. The Senior carries messages from the Worshipful Master in the East, to various portions of the body, and it is his duty to receive the candidates for initiation, and to be their guides and conductors. This office is, therefore, a difficult one to fill, and is made the stepping-stone to further preferment. The other officers of the lodge have their various duties to perform, and each rank in regular succession; but outside of their regular functions are without authority in the lodge. And to obey the will and pleasure of the Master is the unquestioned duty of *all*.

When the Lodge is open, the brethren are as Masons, equal; and in the working of the lodge each bears the burden assigned to him, in pursuit of a common object—knowledge. And when the Lodge is closed, we *part upon the Square*, giving “honor to whom honor is due.” In no other organization in the world is there such perfect harmony in the working as there is in the Masonic fraternity. —*The Square*.

HOW ROBERT STEPHENSON CAME TO BE A MASON.

THE biographer of this famous civil engineer relates the circumstances which led to his connection with the Fraternity as follows:

He had passed three years, (from 1824 to 1827,) being between twenty-one and twenty-four years of age, in South America, in the service of the Colombian Mining Association. At length the time came when he could honorably start homewards. As there was no suitable vessel about to start without delay from Carthagena for a British port, Robert Stephenson decided to take passage on a ship bound for New York, and then to proceed to London or Liverpool. The entire party quitted the unwholesome little town of Carthagena, where yellow fever was raging, and set out for New York.

The voyage was eventful. At first the weather was severe, and for several days the ship was becalmed among the islands. From the stillness of the atmosphere, the sailors predicted that on clearing off from there they would learn that a fearful storm had raged in the open ocean. A few degrees farther north they came upon the survivors of a wreck, who had been for days drifting about in a dismantled hull, without provisions, and almost without hope. Two more days' sailing brought them in with a second dismantled hull, full of miserable creatures, the relics of another wreck, whom hunger had reduced to cannibalism.

The voyage was almost at an end, and they had made land, when about midnight the vessel struck, and instantly began to fill. The wind blew a hurricane, and the deck was crowded with desperate people, to whom death within gunshot of land appeared more dreadful than perishing in the open sea. The masts and rigging were cut away, but no good was gained by the measure. Surrounded by broken water, the vessel began to break up, whilst the sea ran so high that it was impossible to put off the boats. By morning, however, the storm lulled, and with dawn the passengers were got ashore.

Robert Stephenson and his companions naturally pushed forward in the scramble to get places in the boat which was the first to leave the sinking ship; and they had succeeded in pushing their way to the ladder, when the mate of the vessel threw them back, and singled out for the vacant places a knot of humble passengers who stood just behind them. The chief of the party was a petty trader of Carthagena. He was, moreover, a second class passenger, well known to be without those gifts of fortune which might have made it worth a mate's while to render him especial service.

On the return of the boat, Robert Stephenson had better luck, and by 8 o'clock, A. M., he was landed, safe and sound, on the wished-for shore. Not a life was lost of either passengers or crew; but when Stephenson and his comrades found themselves in New York, they had lost all their luggage, and almost all their money. A collection of mineral specimens, on which he had spent time and labor, was luckily preserved; but he lost a complete cabinet of the entomological curiosities of Columbia, and the box containing his money, on which his fellow-travellers were dependent.

Fortunately, he had no difficulty in obtaining money in New York. He was, therefore, in a position to proceed homewards without delay; but as he was in America, he determined to see a little of the country, and to pay a visit to Canada before crossing the Atlantic for Great Britain.