

Nairobi Lodge of Instruction

This is the 11th in a series of booklets of papers presented at the Nairobi Lodge of Instruction. The first booklet was printed in 2007. These booklets have proved to be a source of invaluable information for other Lodges of Instruction in the District, Mentors and brethren who want to present a paper in the absence of a working. This booklet can also be downloaded from the District website: www.dgleastafrica.org

CONTENTS

<i>Appointment and Duties of a Tyler</i>	3
<i>The Cable Tow</i>	6
<i>Your Questions Answered</i>	8
<i>The role and duties of a Personal Mentor</i>	16
<i>Impressions of an Initiate</i>	20
<i>Cessation and Exclusion</i>	23
<i>Symbolic Explanation of the Initiation Ceremony</i>	25

The Nairobi Lodge of Instruction
functions under the aegis of the
District Grand Master
District Grand Lodge of East Africa

nairobilodgeofinstruction@gmail.com

APPOINTMENT AND DUTIES OF TYLER

W Bro Dilip A Sheth PGStdB, PAGDC (RA)

Before dealing with the duties of the Tyler let us first refer to the appointment of Tyler to his office.

The Book of Constitutions in Rule 104 provides that the Tyler is a Regular Officer of the Lodge and that whom the Lodge must appoint, as distinct from those which the Lodge may appoint.

The Regular Officers of a Lodge are the Master and his two Wardens, a Treasurer, a Secretary, two Deacons, an Inner Guard and a Tyler.

Rule 104 accordingly also states that Tyler is the only one who can be a non-subscribing member of the Lodge and thereby must be elected to the Office by the Brethren of the Lodge.

Rule 113 states that he must be a be a Master Mason and registered as such in the books of the Grand Lodge and if appointed by the Worshipful Master of the Lodge he must be a subscribing member of the Lodge and without emoluments, in which case he shall be appointed with the other Officers by the Master.

The appointment of Tyler is at the bottom of the precedence of the appointment of Officers.

It may perhaps be worth nothing that, in relation to Grand Lodge, the Grand Tyler like the Grand Secretary, is not necessarily appointed by the Grand Master at the Annual Installation, and that the Grand Tyler in accordance with Rule 23 shall be *“an Installed Master and he shall be appointed by the Grand Master as a vacancy occurs and shall continue in office during the pleasure of the Grand Master”*.

There are therefore three ways (English Freemasonry) in which a **Tyler’s office exists:**

- A non-subscribing member, who would be acting for many

other different Lodges and be paid for his services.

- A Brother appointed by the Master, being a subscribing member of the Lodge and not paid, and is as a progressive Office

- A Brother being a subscribing member of the Lodge, generally a Past Master, appointed to the office of Tyler.

Where is the situation of a Tyler in a Lodge? It is outside the door of the Lodge and should be always armed with a drawn sword.

His Duties:

Wikipedia Encyclopedia describes **“Tyler** (or Tiler) is the name of the office of *outer guard* of a Masonic Lodge. Masonic lodges may meet in rooms in taverns and other public meeting places, and all Lodges appoint a Tyler to guard the door from the outside against ineligible masons or malicious or curious people, to check the eligibility of latecomers, and to ensure that candidates for ceremonies in the Lodge are properly prepared. Although a junior Officer of the Lodge and often a highly experienced Past Master, he may often be considered akin to a sergeant: in some cases the Tyler may not be an unpaid member of the lodge, but a mason from another lodge employed for the purpose. Other duties often involve preparing the room for meetings, supplying regalia and equipment, serving as bar steward or acting as permanent, and **sometimes resident, caretaker of the furniture and premises.**”

Emulation ritual describes the duties as are explained to him by the Master at his Investiture

“To see that that the Candidates are properly prepared and to give the proper reports on the door of the Lodge when Candidates, members or visitors require admission. I therefore place in your hand this sword to enable you to keep off all intruders and cowans to Masonry and suffer none, to pass but such as are duly qualified.”

And in the West End and Taylors Rituals the duties are morally communicated to the Tyler with his sword, ***“This sword morally teaches us to set a guard over our thoughts, a watch at our lips***

and to post a sentinel over all our actions; thereby preventing the approach of any unworthy thought, word or deed thus preserving conscience void of offence towards God and man”

It is therefore important to know that in performance of his duties he should see that:

- he be present before the meeting commences
- the Lodge is fully prepared for the opening
- all furniture are in their proper places i.e. tracing board, columns, rough and perfect ashlers, etc
- the officers' collars are placed ready on their respective chairs the requisite WT are in the Box and that the WT's are kept near at hand as required
- the VSL and TB are in position as pertains to the Lodge and also the VSL of the faith of the candidate
- the lights/candles are in working order
- required apron is kept ready for the candidate
- the candidates are properly prepared
- to give proper reports on the door of the lodge, as to the admittance of candidates as well as visitors.
- all sign the attendance book thus establishing the name of the host who is responsible for guest(s).
- that the meeting commences at the Tying time
- after the Lodge being closed, he must collect the Regalia and safely lock them

He should under no circumstances, except for an emergency, leave his post outside the door of the Lodge and is said to be one of the hardest worked officers of the Lodge as he being the first to arrive and the last to leave.

And finally after the Festive Board it is the Tyler duty to give the **Tyler's Toast standing behind the Worshipful Master** *“To all Poor and distressed Masons”* and may continue *“wherever dispersed over the face of earth or water*”

CABLE TOW

W Bro Professor Bill Lore, PAGDC, DGOerator

The word “cable” is variously described as a rope, cord or a line, but the circumstances in which it is used differ; for instance, in motoring or sailing we talk of towing cable or line, with specific meaning of pulling a vehicle or drawing a boat. The Hebrew word “khabel”, the Dutch “cabel” and the German kabel all mean a rope. In India, Egypt and in most ancient Mysteries, a cord or cable was used in the same way and for the same purpose. The symbolic meaning of cable tow around the neck seems to convey the notion of pledge – a vow in which a man pledged his life.

As I have explained in my pocket book “*Glossary of Masonic words and associated terminologies*” that Dumfries No.4 MS of 1710 has two “**rope**” questions and the question and answer go as follows:

Q: How were you brought in?

A: Shamefully with a rope about my neck

Q: Why a rope about your neck?

A: To hang me if I should betray my trust

This is believed to be the earliest allusion to a rope as a piece of equipment then used in the preparation of a candidate. The rope did not appear in the early ritual documents until 1760 when it was first described as a *cable tow*.

Cable tow is now used in Freemasonry, but its use differs in various jurisdictions. For instance in American Freemasonry it is used in all the three Craft degrees to impart meanings specific the first, second or third degree. In this respect, there is one noose in the first degree, the rope is folded twice round the neck in the second degree and thrice in the third degree. In the English Constitution Freemasonry, preparation of the candidate for initiation includes the use of a cable tow. Over and above its use in Freemasonry, reference to cable tow is also found in the Bible. This brief discussion features its use in the context of Freemasonry, but the biblical reference may be invoked to amplify meaning.

In this ceremony of initiation, after the candidate has been restored to physical light, the WM explains to the candidate that he has symbolically escaped two great dangers those of stabbing and strangulation. **About strangulation, he explains that “There was likewise this cable tow with a running noose about your neck which would have rendered any attempt at retreat equally fatal.”** This explanation of the danger is meant to signify the use of cable tow as physical restraint.

In the Bible – in I Kings 20:31,32, we read that the King of Syria, Ben-hada had been defeated in battle by the King of Israel and taken captive. His servants are making a plea for his life. They **approach the King of Israel “with ropes upon their necks”**.- to signify that they are pledging their lives for the release of their King – which eventually was granted. The cable tow would therefore be seen as the outward and visible symbol of a vow in which a man pledges his life or pledges himself to save another life at the risk of his own

Within our ceremonies, a mason obliges himself to answer and obey all lawful signs and summonses he may receive if within the length of his cable tow, pleading no excuse thereto save sickness or the more pressing emergencies of his public or private avocations.

This begs the question: what is the length of a cable tow? The length of a cable tow is both physical and metaphorical.

In Navy terms, cable tow is a chain of a ship’s anchor with a nautical length of 200 yards (approximately 182.9 metres) or 240yards in USA (approximately 220 metres). Harry Car in his book *The Freemason at Work* says that the cable tow has a primarily practical purpose as defined in the ritual, and its length is not prescribed, but he is also quick to say that apart from its practical use, it has wide-ranging symbolism, such as submission, and bondage of ignorance. In general terms therefore the length of a **mason’s cable tow is the measure of his means and ability to aid and rescue a brother in need.**

YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

WBro Phil Dastur PGStB, PDepGSupt

Brethren, it is inevitable that in our daily lives at one time or other, questions will be put to you by your family, friends and acquaintances on matters pertaining to Freemasonry. In this paper I have picked up some of the most frequently asked questions and answers and hope the paper will help you when questions are put to you.

Let us begin with the question that is most frequently asked.

Q What is Freemasonry?

A Freemasonry offers its members an approach to life which seeks to reinforce thoughtfulness for others, kindness in the community, honesty in business, courtesy in Society and fairness in all things. Freemasonry also teaches and practices concern for people, care for the less fortunate and help for those in need.

Freemasonry is the U.K.'s largest secular, fraternal and charitable organization, and in all lodges worldwide, that fall under the United Grand Lodge of England, practice the maxim "Freemasonry teaches moral lessons and self-knowledge through participation in a progression of allegorical two-part plays."

Another question that normally follows this is:

Q What do we stand for, what do we get out of Freemasonry?

A There are probably as many answers as there are brethren present here today. Some find a moral and spiritual uplift which complements and supports their particular faith. Some enjoy the sense of the theatre. Some the company of like minds and for many the bonding and friendship generated at our meetings.

Q Why are you a secret society?

A We are certainly not a secret society. But lodge meetings like those of many other groups, are private and open only to

members. The rules and aims of Freemasonry are available to the public. The Book of Constitutions is now also readily available on the UGLE website.

Meeting places are known and in many areas are used by local communities for activities other than Freemasonry. For **example, the opening scenes in the movie “Pirates of the Caribbean” was shot at Freemasons Hall in Great Queen’s Street. Here in Nairobi, the American Women’s Association held their monthly meetings at Freemasons Hall on Nyerere Road.** Members are encouraged to speak openly about Freemasonry.

Q What are the secrets of Freemasonry?

A The secrets in Freemasonry are the traditional modes of recognition which are not used indiscriminately, but solely as a test of membership, e.g. When visiting a lodge where you are not known.

Q What happens at a lodge meeting?

A The meeting is in two parts. As in any association there is a certain amount of administrative procedure – minutes of the last meeting, proposing and balloting for new members, discussing and voting on financial matters, election of officers, news and correspondence. Then there are ceremonies for admitting new Masons and annual installation of the Master and appointment of officers. The three ceremonies for admitting a new Mason are in two parts. A slight dramatic instruction in the principles and lessons taught in the Craft **followed by a lecture in which the candidate’s various duties are spelled out.**

Q **Isn’t ritual out of place in modern society?**

A No. The ritual is a shared experience which binds the members together. Its use of drama, allegory and symbolism impresses the principles and teachings more firmly in the mind of each candidate than if they were passed on to him in a matter-of-fact modern language.

Q Why do grown men run around with their trousers rolled up?

A It is true that candidates have to roll up their trouser legs during the three ceremonies when they are being admitted to membership. Taken out of context, this can seem amusing, but like other aspects of Freemasonry it has a symbolic meaning

Q Why do freemasons take oaths?

A New members make solemn promises concerning their conduct in the Lodge and in society. Each member also promises to keep confidential the traditional methods of proving that he is a Freemason which he would use when visiting a lodge where he is not known. Freemasons do not swear allegiances to each other or to Freemasonry. Freemasons promise to support each other in times of need, but only if the support does not conflict with their duties to God, the law, their family or with their responsibilities as a citizen.

Q **Why do your 'obligations' contain hideous penalties?**

A They no longer do. When the Masonic ritual was developing in the late 1600s and 1700s it was quite common for legal and civil oaths to include physical penalties and Freemasonry simply followed the practice of the times. In Freemasonry, however the physical penalties were always symbolic and were never carried out. After long discussion, they were removed from the promises in 1986.

Q Are Freemasons expected to prefer fellow Masons at the expense others in giving jobs, promotions, contracts and the like?

A Absolutely not. That would be misuse of membership and subject to Masonic discipline. On his entry into Freemasonry each candidate states unequivocally that he expects no material gain from his membership. At various stages during the ceremonies of his admission and when he is presented with a certificate from Grand Lodge that the admission ceremonies have been completed, he is forcefully reminded that attempts

to gain preferment or material gain for himself or others is a misuse of membership and which will not be tolerated. *The Book of Constitutions*, which every candidate receives, contains strict rules governing abuse of membership which can result in penalties from temporary suspension to expulsion.

Q Isn't it true that Freemasons only look after each other.

A No. From its earliest days, Freemasonry has been involved in charitable activities. Since its inception Freemasonry has provided support not only to widows and orphans of Freemasons but also to many others within the community. Whilst some Masonic charities cater specifically but not exclusively for Masons or their dependents, others make significant grants to non-Masonic organizations. On a local level lodges give substantial support to local causes, mainly in the field of health and education..

Q Aren't you a religion or rival to religion?

A Emphatically not. Freemasonry requires a belief in God and its **principles are common to many of the world's great religions.** Freemasonry does not try to replace religion or substitute for it. Every candidate is exhorted to practice his religion and to regard its holy book as the unerring standard of truth. Freemasonry does not instruct its members in what their religion beliefs should be, nor does it offer sacraments. Freemasonry deals in relations between men; religion deals in a **man's relationship with his God.**

Q Why do you call it the VSL and not the Bible?

A To the majority of the freemasons the volume of the sacred law is the bible. There are many in freemasonry, however, who are not Christians and to them the bible is not their sacred book and they will make their promises on the book which is regarded as sacred to their religion. The bible will always be present in an English lodge but as the organization welcomes men of many different faiths, it is called the volume of the

scared law. Thus, when the volume of the scared law is referred to in ceremonies, to a non-Christian it will be the holy book of his religion and to Christian it will be the bible.

Q Why do you call God the great Architect?

A Freemasonry embraces all men who believe in God. Its Membership includes Christians, Hindus, Sikhs, Muslims, Parsees and many others. The use of descriptions such as the great Architect prevents disharmony. The Great Architect is not a specific masonic god or attempt to combine all gods into one. Thus men of differing religion pray together without offense being given to any of them

Q **Why don't some churches like freemasonry?**

A There are elements within certain churches who misunderstand freemasonry and confuse secular rituals with religious liturgy. Although the Methodist conference and the general synod of the Anglican church have occasionally criticized freemasonry, in both churches there are many masons and indeed others who are dismayed that the churches should attack freemasonry, an organization which has always encouraged its members to be active in their own religion.

Q Why will freemasonry not accept Roman Catholics as members?

A It does. The prime qualification for admission into freemasonry has always been a belief in God. How that belief is expressed is entirely up to the individual.

Four Grand Masters of English freemasonry have been Roman Catholics. There are many Roman Catholic freemasons.

Q **Isn't freemasonry just another political pressure group?**

A Emphatically not. Whilst individual freemason will have their own views on politics and state policy, freemasonry as a body will never express a view on either. The discussions of politics at masonic meeting have always been prohibited.

Q Are there not masonic groups who are involved in politics

A There are groups in other countries who call themselves freemasons and who involve themselves in political matters. They are not recognized or countenanced by the United Grand Lodge of England and other regular Grand Lodges who follow the basic principles of freemasonry and ban the discussion of politics and religion at their meetings

Q Is Freemasonry an International Order

A Only in the sense that Freemasonry exists throughout the free world. Each Grand Lodge is sovereign and independent, and whilst following the same basic principles, may have differing ways of passing them on. There is no international governing body for Freemasonry.

Q What is the relationship between Freemasonry and groups like the Orange Order Odd Fellows and Buffaloes?

A None. There are numerous fraternal orders and Friendly Societies whose rituals regalia and organization are similar in **some respects to Freemasonry's. They have no formal or informal connections with Freemasonry.**

Q **Why don't you have women Members?**

A Traditionally, Freemasonry under the United Grand Lodge of England has been restricted to men. The early stonemasons were all male, and when freemasonry was organising, the positions of women in society was different from today. If women wish to join Freemasonry, there are two separate Grand Lodges in England restricted to woman only.

Q Why do you wear regalia?

Wearing regalia is historical and symbolic and like a uniform serves to indicate to members where they rank in organizations.

Q How many Freemasons are there?

A Under the United Grand Lodge of England there are 330,000 Freemasons, meeting in 8644 lodges. There are separate Grand Lodges for Ireland (which covers north and south) and Scotland,

with a combined membership of 150,000. In the District Grand Lodge of East Africa, which covers Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania and Seychelles we have 48 lodges with a membership of around 2000. Worldwide there are probably 5 million members.

Q How and when did Freemasonry start?

A **It is not known. The earliest recorded 'making 'of a Freemason** in England is that of Elias Ashmole in 1646.

Organised Freemasonry began with the founding of the Grand Lodge of England on 24 June 1717, the first Grand Lodge in the world. Ireland followed in 1725 and Scotland in 1736. All the regular Grand Lodges in the world trace themselves back to one or more of the Grand Lodges in the British Isles.

There are two main theories of origin According to one the operative stonemason who built the great cathedrals and castles had lodges in which they discussed trade affairs. They had simple initiation ceremonies and, as there was no City and Guilds certificates, dues cards or trade union membership cards, they adopted secrets signs and words to demonstrative that they were trained masons when they moved from site to site. In the 1600s these operative lodges began to accept non **operatives as 'gentlemen masons'**. **Gradually these non-operatives took over the lodges and turned them from operative to 'free and accepted' or 'speculative' lodges.**

The other theory is that in the late 1500s and early 1600s there was a group which was interested in the promotion of religious and political tolerance in an age of great intolerance when difference of opinion on matters of religion and politics were to lead to bloody civil war. In forming Freemasonry they were trying to make better men and build a better world. As the means of teaching in those days was by allegory and symbolism, they took the idea of building as the central allegory on which to form their systems . The main source of allegory was the Bible, the contents of which were known to everyone even if they could not read, and the only building described in detail in

the Bible was King Solomon's Temple, which became the basis of the ritual. The old trade guilds provided them with their basic administration of Masters, Wardens, Treasurer, and Secretary, **and the operative man's tools provided them with a wealth of** symbols with which to illustrate the moral teachings of freemasonry.

Q How many degrees are there in Freemasonry?

A **Basic Freemasonry consists of the three 'Craft' Degrees** (Entered Apprentice, Fellow Craft and Master Mason) completed by the Royal Arch degree (Chapter). There are many others Masonic degrees and Orders which are called **"additional" because they add to the basis of the Craft and Royal Arch.** They are not basic to Freemasonry but add to it by further expounding and illustrating the principles stated in the Craft and Royal Arch. Some of these additional degrees are *numerically* superior to the third degree but this does not affect the fact that they are additional to and not in any way superior to or higher than the Craft. The ranks that these additional degrees carry have no standing with the Craft or Royal Arch.

Q How much does it cost to be a Freemason?

A It varies from lodge to lodge but anyone wishing to join can find a lodge to suit his pocket.

On entry, there is an initiation fee and an apron to buy. A member pays an annual subscription to his lodge which covers his membership and the administrative cost of running the lodge. It is usual to have a meal after the meeting; the cost of this can be included either in the annual subscription or paid for at the time.

It is entirely up to the individual member what he gives to charity, but it should always be without detriment to his other responsibilities. Similarly, he may join as many lodges as his time and pocket can allow as long as it does not adversely affect his family and responsibilities.

The Role and Duties of the Personal Mentor

W Bro Sundip Chotai, DSGW, DGMentor

Before I present my paper, let us first look at some background information. The District Mentoring Scheme was established in 2008 & the office of Lodge Mentor was formalised in 2012.

The principle duty of the Lodge Mentor is to promote, coordinate & monitor all of the mentoring activities within his lodge and to ensure that a Personal Mentor is appointed to every candidate and other members of the lodge, if they need one. It is NOT necessary for a Lodge Mentor to act as a Personal Mentor, unless in a particular case, it is required.

Brethren - There can be no doubt that the early days of a candidates membership are the most impressionable and so it is important that the right Personal Mentor is appointed as early as possible after the interview stage and at any rate from initiation onwards.

The role of the Personal Mentor is the key position within the whole Mentoring process. It is the Personal Mentor who imparts his knowledge, spends time with the candidate & supports him throughout his early Masonic career & beyond.

What Does a Personal Mentor Do?

The old adage of “ *You get out of it, what you put in* ” is so true of Freemasonry. We all know of brethren who are fully active in many degrees & also those who just enjoy the social side. It is not the role of the Personal Mentor to turn the candidate into the former, but rather to let him find his own level of participation and to support him in doing so.

If the candidate does not wish to embark on a path of continuous Masonic development, he should not be rushed. To be taken through each step of the learning process slowly, will in such cases ultimately achieve better results.

It is important that the Candidate feels comfortable in his Masonry. At first he will have many questions and concerns that are at a quite basic level, such as - when do we meet? What do I wear?, etc. These basic questions should be answered before any

attempt is made to introduce him to the more 'involved' aspects of Freemasonry.

As all good operative Masons know, we must have solid foundations upon which to build a strong structure. So it is with the Candidate. Cover the basics first, for only then will he be ready for the next step.

As an absolute minimum, it is important to meet with the Candidate before and after each degree ceremony to put him at ease and to answer any questions he may have. Regular meetings thereafter will assist in the implementation of a development programme which allows the Candidate to achieve his goals.

To help Mentors to understand their role & to ensure that the Mentoring process is implemented in a uniform manner - the basis for discussion for each meeting are properly laid out in a series of booklets published by the District Grand Lodge of East Africa.

There is a booklet specific to each degree & an accompanying booklet that outlines the guidelines to be followed. There is also a check list outlining the various mentoring activities.

At the end of each session the Personal Mentor should take a few minutes to discuss with the Candidate what has been achieved and whether the Candidate feels the session has been worthwhile. Following a meeting, indulge in a little self-analysis (*What could I have done better?*)

In addition the Personal Mentor should:

- Ensure he is seated next to the Candidate during the Lodge meeting.
- Ensure he is seated next to the Candidate at the meal and introduce him to others present (i.e. Lodge members, their guests and visitors).
- Be prepared to visit the Candidate at his home if invited to do so and keep in contact outside of Lodge meetings.
- Accompany the candidate at all times when he is required to leave the Lodge Room. This is a very useful time for answering questions and explaining what has happened.
- Explain Freemasonry, its structure, Offices, symbolism,

ceremonial, and demonstrate the correct manner of saluting. Ideas of what to cover and when can be found in the Mentoring booklets & also in the check list.

- Take a supportive interest in the progress made by the Candidate. Congratulate him on his progress and encourage him to develop it still further.
- Help the Candidate to learn the Ritual as he progresses in the Lodge. Not just the words, but more importantly, their meaning.
- Encourage the Candidate to play a full part in the life of the Lodge, both ceremonially and socially.

Feedback

It is important for the Personal Mentor to ask himself - "***Is it working?***", but as communication is a two-way street, he will not know how comfortable the Candidate is with his membership of the Lodge, or indeed in his relationship with the Personal Mentor, unless he is encouraged to talk about himself. Remember, the Personal Mentor may at this stage be the one person he feels he can talk to in confidence.

Hopefully his initial impressions of Freemasonry in general and of the Lodge in particular will be positive ones. However, it would not be surprising if within that generally positive framework there appeared to be one or two negative areas and, if so, it should not be too difficult to identify the specific problems and address them.

In the event that feedback from the Candidate is generally negative, then of course we have a problem of a very different kind. It is essential to try and work out what has gone wrong before we start making decisions and the Personal Mentor should immediately confer with the Lodge Mentor with a view to establishing the best course of remedial action available. It may be **that, despite the Personal Mentor's best efforts, the Candidate** does not feel Freemasonry is for him. Alternatively, it may be that the relationship between the Personal Mentor and the Candidate

has not developed as it should and the appointment of another Mentor may meet with greater success. In such circumstances, the Personal Mentor should not feel embarrassed, for it takes two

people to form a meaningful relationship and although he may well have done everything he could to make it work, it naturally will not do so unless his efforts are reciprocated.

Conclusion

The responsibilities of a Mentor are great, but the role is also, in many ways, an easy and enjoyable one. Mentoring is not rocket science. It is simply a process of spending time with a Candidate and exposing him to information in a controlled manner. If the Mentoring Programme is followed, the Lodge will have a new member with a clear understanding of the fundamentals of Freemasonry and who will have met and enjoyed the company of members of the Lodge. By joining the Lodge of Instruction, if one is available, he will have become involved in the ritual and ceremonial proceedings of the Institution more quickly than may otherwise have proved possible. He should therefore be in a position to thoroughly enjoy his Freemasonry.

In short, by looking after, taking care of and instructing the new Brother, the Lodge has gained a valuable new addition to its membership and the Craft in general is strengthened.

The skill is to achieve this with a light touch!

Be in no doubt that the future of Freemasonry is in the hands of our newer Brethren.

Impressions of an Initiate

Bro Miroslav Vignejevic - Lodge of Nairobi No 7187

After my initiation ceremony on the 5th of November 2015, our Lodge Mentor W Bro Dipak Shah asked me to send him a short write-up of my impressions. He also suggested that I should do that as soon as possible while my thoughts were still fresh.

On the day of the ceremony, I arrived at Freemasons' Hall around 4 pm. It was a bit early to report, but I didn't want to be late. I rehearsed my speech a few times before the first brother showed up. Brethren made a few jokes with me but at the same time tried to encourage me. They advised me to just follow the Junior Deacon's instructions during the ceremony.

Everything was ok till the moment all brethren left the dining area and I was left alone. That was the point when I really started to think. I was preoccupied with my thoughts until the time I was called to get dressed in a pajama. I was constantly asking myself questions like "what will happen inside the Temple?", "how long will the ceremony last?" etc. Maybe I should rehearse my speech a few more times? How I will perform after I am blindfolded? I **DIDN'T HAVE DOUBTS, AS MY "BRETHREN TO BE" HAD ALWAYS RECEIVED ME WELL BEFORE. I WAS ANXIOUS ON ONE HAND, AND DETERMINED ON THE OTHER.**

Finally I was called to get dressed in A pajama. After a few moments I was blindfolded. At this moment, my heart starts to beat faster. My brothers had told me earlier that that is the time for the ceremony to begin. The first few sentences that brethren exchanged at the entrance left an impression on my mind that everyone was prepared and knows their role and task. All the time I tried to stand upright. The moment when the Junior Deacon took my hand was the time when I realized that I was in good hands. **AND I FELT SAFE.** He keeps a very strong hold of my right hand and I felt confident walking around with him. This will not be a

problem. AND IT WASN'T! THE JUNIOR DEACON THOROUGHLY KNEW HIS WORK.

I was very sure that nothing 'bad' will happen to me during the ceremony as I really trusted my proposer and seconder, but I must admit that I didn't feel comfortable when a S.I was placed near my heart and a C.T around my neck. TIME STOPPED... I COULD NOT ORIENT MYSELF AND THE ONLY THING THAT WAS GOING THROUGH MY MIND WAS, WHY IS EVERYTHING SO SILENT? - WHERE DID EVERYONE DISAPPEAR? HOW COME I DON'T HEAR THE USUAL CHATTER?

During the first part of the ceremony my only wish was just to see light again. All my movements and performance depended on the Junior Deacon. This was a first time in my life that I really felt helpless. WORDS! THOUGHTS! DARKNESS! EVERYTHING WAS JUST - LISTEN AND DO AS YOU ARE TOLD!

Once the Obligation process started, I was focused on pronouncing the words correctly. I would like to mention that English is not my mother tongue and I did not understand well, some of the words and terms mentioned during the ceremony. The entire ceremony was meaningful and very deep and I was just scared to make a mistake. I DIDN'T UNDERSTAND ALL THAT WENT ON BUT I UNDERSTOOD THE MESSAGE THAT WAS BEING CONVEYED.

Finally, after the Obligation, my blindfold was removed. I really can't explain that feeling, especially my first step on the JDs command. I was completely out of balance and I had a feeling that I had never walked before. I felt like a new born baby who was just learning to walk. After a few minutes I was feeling much better. HAVING SEEN THE FRIENDLY FACES AGAIN, AND RECEIVING A FEW RE-ASSURING WINKS FROM THE BRETHREN WHILE PASSING THEM, I STARTED TO FEEL COMFORTABLE.

The part of the ceremony that left a big impression on me was when the JD was standing in a front of me with the Charity charge. All this time the JD was my main support and now he was asking

me a question to which I did not have a clear answer. AND ALL THE BRETHREN WERE VERY SERIOUS - NO HELP FROM ANYONE! Basically, for my answer I just followed my heart. SURELY NO ONE CAN BE PREPARED FOR SUCH A QUESTION! IT IS DEEPLY EMBEDDED IN MY MIND AND HEART FOR EVER!

Even now I am still living with those impressions. AND NOW THAT I HAVE GONE THROUGH MY THIRD DEGREE I BELIEVE THAT I HAVE JUST SCRATCHED THE SURFACE OF MASONIC TEACHING. WITH TIME I HOPE TO UNDERSTAND THE DEEPER MEANING OF THE WORDS AND SYMBOLS. I GUESS THAT IS A LIFE LONG DEDICATION FOR WHICH I AM PREPARED!

CESSATION AND EXCLUSION

W Bro Dilip Sheth, PGStB, PAGDC (RA)

RULES GOVERNING:

By-Laws of the Lodge, BOC - R148; R181 and 183

CESSATION AND EXCLUSION

Under Rule 181

- i. as provided in the by-Laws of the Lodge or Chapter for non-payment of Subscription for a period less than two years.
- ii. Exclusion for a sufficient cause – eg misconduct, unmasonic behaviour, use of abusive language, instigating disharmony in the Lodge, etc.

181 (i) above - for non-payment for a period less than two years

Full procedure as detailed in the Book of constitution.

Thus he is excluded as a member of this particular Lodge and NOT from any other Lodges of which he may be a subscribing member.

Procedure - Under Rule 181 - summarised

- (i) Notice in writing, stating full particulars of the complaint.
- (ii) At the last known address
- (iii) At least 14 days before the meeting.
- (iv) Notice preferably sent by normal mail and a recorded delivery, i.e. registered mail.
- (v) Can also communicate by email however a written notice is required.
- (vi) Entitled to attend to answer the complaint in person or representation in writing.
- (vii) Notice of such on the Summons not less than ten days of such a resolution to be voted upon.
- (viii) The voting shall be by ballot.
- (ix) The resolution carried by two-thirds of the members present.
- (x) The exclusion is effective forthwith.

RESIGNATION AS A MEMBER OF THE CRAFT/CHAPTER

Rule 183A - Under the English Constitution – assuming that he is a member only under the E.C.

- a) A Brother may at any time resign his membership from the Craft.
- b) Notifying such resignation in writing or on such form or forms as may be prescribed, i.e. requests that he no longer considers himself to be a Freemason.

He should also copy such resignation of his intention to all the Lodges/Chapters/and other orders of which he is a subscribing or honorary member.

He therefore ceases to be a member of ALL the Lodges and Chapters under the United Grand Lodge of England and the Supreme Grand Chapter of England, and of ALL the other Orders/ Degrees of which he is a member.

As to my knowledge a primary requisition is that he continues to be a subscribing member of a Craft Lodge.

Resignation is forwarded by:

- a) His Grand Lodge Certificate
- b) Grand Chapter Certificate, if a Royal Arch Mason, and
- c) ALSO send to the other Orders
- d) he forfeits and resigns from ALL Grand or District Grand Rank and or any other Masonic Rank that he holds.

Communicated to the District Grand Secretary and onwards to the Grand Secretary.

Symbolic Explanation of the Initiation Ceremony

W Bro Shreekesh Shah, DGPurs

PREAMBLE

Each of us here entered the fraternity of Freemasonry for our own unique reasons.

Some became Freemasons for the very definite aim of becoming better men and hoping to become useful contributors to society. Others, to extend their connections and make new friends.

Whilst both of these reasons are extremely important and should in no way be underestimated, the key to enjoying your Freemasonry to the fullest lies in understanding it.

However, in coming to understanding our Ceremonies, we have a problem, for different Brethren will interpret them in different ways – and what is more, none of them will be wrong. After all, if we all understood the Ceremonies in a uniform manner, there would be little point in coming to our Lodges to witness them time after time, as their signification would be explained in a single visit.

Over a period of time, the ritual you see, hear and learn, will prompt you to think more widely and deeply and this will lead you to consider the one constant that should be on our minds:

HOW CAN WE IMPROVE OURSELVES AS BUILDING BLOCKS FOR THE TEMPLE WE ARE CONTEMPLATING?

For someone who has just been initiated and gone through a Ceremony, this is a challenging concept that may be viewed on the evening of their Initiation as confusing, somewhat bizarre and a little nerve wracking.

The Ceremony of Initiation represents the birth of Man. At birth we are all naked, without possessions and rely upon the help and guidance of others until we reach maturity and can, in turn, extend help to others.

PREPARATION

Before you entered the Lodge Room you were prepared in a certain way.

Divested of Money and Metallic Substances

You were divested of all money and metallic substances, symbolically, to demonstrate that you entered the Lodge room a destitute person, without means; just as Man enters this world. It is also believed that the divestiture was to ensure that no offensive weapons were brought into the Lodge to disturb its harmony.

Hoodwinked

Remember that we were all born blind and helpless; and if the Ceremony of Initiation represents the birth of Man or the birth of knowledge then THE HOODWINK or blindfold you wore represented the darkness associated with the lack of sight, the lack of knowledge of Masonic Education, being helpless and guided by your Conductor.

It also has another more practical application and that it enables you to be led from the Lodge room without seeing it, in the unlikely event that you might refuse to continue with the Ceremony.

Right Arm, Left Breast and Knee made bare, your Right Heel Slipshod

Your right arm was made bare to symbolically demonstrate that you were prepared to use all your strength in the service of your fellow Masons.

Your left breast was made bare so that the points of both the poignard and compasses could be felt next to your heart. Some also believe that it was done to prove that the Candidate was not a female.

Your trouser leg was rolled up and your knee was made bare to demonstrate that you were a free man, bearing no marks of a leg iron, a symbol of bondage. It was also the knee on which you took your Obligation.

Your right heel was slipshod because the ground was consecrated and the knee being bare, there is nothing between it and the Earth when the Obligation is taken.

The Cable Tow

A cable tow was placed about your neck. In olden times, the cable tow was the emblem of a servant being bonded to his Master. In a **Freemasons' Lodge, it symbolizes the bondage that comes from ignorance until we are brought to the light of knowledge of the Volume of the Sacred Law.** Also, together with the poignard which was presented to your naked left breast, it also served to control your movements during the Ceremony.

YOUR ENTRY INTO THE LODGE

The first challenge: Do You Feel Anything?

You may remember that just before you entered the Lodge you were confronted with the challenge – Do You Feel Anything? and you felt the point of the poignard on your naked left breast. This symbolic challenge was designed to intimate to you that you were about to engage in something serious and solemn.

The second challenge: Are You Free?

A second challenge awaited you inside the door of the Lodge, 'Are you free and of the full age of twenty one years?'

This, in olden times, was to ensure that you were free of bondage and of mature age.

The third: In All Cases Of Difficulty And Danger, In Whom Do You Put Your Trust?

Then, almost immediately, came the third and most important **challenge of all, 'In all cases of difficulty and danger, in whom do you put your trust?'**

There is, of course, only one answer to this question: IN GOD.

'In God' for the Christian, 'In Allah' for the Muslim; in other words, in the name of the Supreme Being appropriate to the religious

persuasion of the Candidate.

To avoid possible offence and to promote unity among all men, the Supreme Being of all denominations is referred to as the Great Architect of the Universe.

THE PERAMBULATION

It is appropriate that you entered the Lodge Room in a state of darkness, for it symbolized the gateway or beginning of life. You proceeded down the North side, symbolically a place of darkness.

Your movements around the Lodge Room followed the path of the sun in the Northern Hemisphere, where our Ceremonies originate. It rises in the East, reaches its highest point or meridian in the South, then sets in the West and returns to the East through the hours of darkness.

After convincing the Brethren you were properly prepared to be a Freemason, you made significant declarations about your honesty to the Craft. You declared that you offered yourself freely and voluntarily as a Candidate, that you wished to serve your fellow man and that, if you were admitted, you would adhere to the established customs of the Order.

THE OBLIGATION

You were then advanced to the pedestal by three steps, the beginning of your journey to the East, or light, in Freemasonry. You stepped off each time with your left foot, the left side traditionally symbolizing evil. Each step with your left foot was symbolical of putting down evil. Each step represented your growing confidence. Upon reaching the pedestal you entered into an Obligation of concealment.

On your knee before all the assembled Brethren, you vowed to hele and conceal what you might learn. Both words, hele and conceal, have the same meaning ie to cover over.

The word 'hele' is derived from the Anglo-Saxon language used in

England before the time of William the Conqueror, just under a **thousand years ago**. The word **'conceal'** comes from **Norman French**.

Both words are used to ensure that the vow of secrecy is clearly understood.

You were made a Freemason in the body of a Lodge 'Just, Perfect and Regular'.

JUST, because the Volume of the Sacred Law, or the book of your **faith, was open on the Master's pedestal**.

PERFECT, because there were seven or more regularly made Freemasons in attendance.

REGULAR, because the Lodge had a Warrant or Charter from the United Grand Lodge of England, which gives authority to perform the Ceremony.

RECEIVING THE LIGHT

After being restored to material light, you were informed of the Three Great, Though, Emblematical Lights, or guides, in Freemasonry, the Volume of the Sacred Law, the Square and the Compasses.

You received light at the pedestal facing East, symbolizing birth and became a Brother among Masons.

THE SIGN, TOKEN AND WORD

Having taken the Great and Solemn Obligation of a Mason, you were entrusted with the Sign, Token and Word of an Entered Apprentice Freemason.

For those Entered Apprentices in our midst this evening, a great deal happened to you during the Ceremony and it would not be surprising if you have difficulty recollecting them.

Do not let this concern you, for your Mentor will go through them with you.

THE BADGE

At the SW's pedestal you were invested with the badge of a Freemason, which is a simple white lambskin apron derived from the aprons worn by the ancient operative masons. It symbolizes purity and innocence, white being the emblem of purity and the lamb being usually considered the symbol of innocence.

This is the basis of all Masonic aprons and it is adorned to show the progress a Brother has made in the Craft.

The badge is more ancient than the Order of the Golden Fleece*, which was established in 1430, or the Roman Eagle, which the early Romans carried at the head of a staff as an emblem of honour. It is more honourable than the Most Noble Order of the Garter* founded in 1346, the highest order of knighthood in the world.

Apart from signifying purity and innocence, the apron also denotes friendship. We are urged to use this symbol as a guide in our daily lives and never to disgrace the principles for which it stands.

THE NORTH EAST CORNER

You will remember being placed in the North East Corner of the Lodge, body upright, feet in the form of a square. This is where you represented the foundation stone of a new building, the building of your new Masonic life.

Be upright in life, deal with every man on the square and continue to look to the East for learning. On this foundation you were **challenged 'to raise a superstructure perfect in all its parts'**. The North East corner has been well chosen for this foundation stone as it represents the point where you move from the North, the place of darkness and ignorance, to the East, the place of light and learning.

Make learning a lifelong ambition.

CHARITY

The Charity lecture challenged: 'Have you anything to give in the cause of Masonic charity?'

You were deliberately prevented from accepting the challenge. All valuables had been taken from you. It demonstrated that charity comes from the heart and is a way of life, not just a payment. Your dress and absence of valuables must have made you ponder in what ways you can demonstrate charity. It was meant to be a constant reminder of your obligation to relieve the distress of indigent or needy Brethren. Charity may take the form of your time, your energy, your friendship or financial assistance. The practice of charity in its broadest sense is the foundation and springboard for other qualities in life.

THE WORKING TOOLS

The Twenty-Four Inch Gauge, the Common Gavel and the Chisel are the Working Tools of an Entered Apprentice. They shape the rough stones of the future building.

Symbolically, the twenty-four inch gauge teaches you how to use time; part in prayer to the Great Architect of the Universe; part in caring for your neighbor and part for yourself, particularly as it relates to your family, your work and your recreation. Your Masonic life is a symbolic rough stone that needs to be shaped for the intended structure.

The Common Gavel represents the voice of conscience, which is ever ready to warn us when we may tend to err. It reminds us with every knock to keep down all vain and unbecoming thoughts.

The Chisel points out the advantages of education and discipline. As the workman uses the chisel to give form to the shapeless mass of stone, so education transforms the ignorant person into a civilized being.

The Working Tools which were presented to you are to teach the basis of a good life which is explained in more detail in the Charge.

