

## SUGGESTED TALK TO THE NEWLY RAISED MASON

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As a Master Mason who has signed the by-laws, you are now a full-fledged member, not only of this Lodge but of Freemasonry as a whole. You have received the highest degree you can ever receive in Masonry, the Third Degree, and you are eligible for the highest of all Masonic offices, that of Grand Master. You are a member in good standing of the greatest fraternal order the world has ever known.

As a Master Mason, you have arrived. Have you anything more to do, anything further to learn? Of course you have. As a Master Mason, you are in the position of a man who has just been graduated from college. You have received your diploma. Your classes are over. But you are not fully educated. In fact, you are just beginning. The last act in the ceremony of graduation is called Commencement. This is your Masonic commencement. You are now ready to begin to live and improve yourself as a Mason. Your Brothers are still here to help you, on proper occasions, but not to lead you as they have in your progress through the Degrees. As a Master Mason, you are on your own.

It will be useful to you, at this commencement of your career as a Master Mason, to become acquainted with a few of the privileges which are now yours, and a few unfamiliar matters of Masonic procedure and etiquette. We want you, before anything else, to feel at home in your Lodge, and we know that the many ceremonies and instructions which you have so recently received may have left you with the impression that a Masonic lodge is a strange place, with strange customs difficult to follow. The purpose of these remarks is to help you feel at home among your Brothers.

First of all, as you know, the presiding officer is called the MASTER, and by ancient custom he has a title, which is WORSHIPFUL. He has wider responsibilities, and therefore greater power, than the presiding officers of most other organizations. His principal assistants are the two WARDENS, Senior and Junior. Lodge meetings may be either Stated or Special or Emergent Meetings. Stated meetings are those meetings fixed by the by-laws for a definite time and place. Emergent Meetings for particular purposes may be called by the Master at any time, provided reasonable notice is given. When a Lodge is officially in session it is said to be OPEN, and none but members or authorized Masonic visitors may enter; when it is not officially in session it is CLOSED. Another thing

you may have noticed is our use of gavels. The GAVEL is an emblem of authority. One stroke of the Master's GAVEL calls the Lodge to order; one stroke also indicates the conclusion of a particular item of business or discussion, or emphasizes an order; and, if members of the Lodge are standing, one stroke of the GAVEL directs them to take their seats. Two strokes of the GAVEL are a signal to the officers to rise to their feet; three strokes mean that everyone in the Lodge room should rise.

You have learned and practised the various signs, grips and words of the three degrees. You should practise them again before you leave this meeting, to be sure you understand and remember them, because in every Lodge Meeting you will be expected to give some of them, and you will need to know them if you visit another Lodge when there is no one to vouch for your identity as a Master Mason.

Another sign is the SIGN OF FIDELITY, which is made by placing the right hand over the heart. It is given only when standing, and only when clothed as a Mason, that is, when wearing an apron. This sign is used by the members when addressed by the Master or one of the Wardens; it is also given during obligations and prayers; whenever the Senior Deacon attends at the Altar; and when the National Colors are presented. The SIGN OF FIDELITY is also given when the Grand Master enters the Lodge, and at some ceremonies outside the Lodge room when the apron is worn.

A kind of ceremonial sign, called GRAND HONORS, is given only when specifically called for, as follows: (demonstrate.)

During the course of a Stated Meeting the Lodge may ballot on candidates for membership by initiation or affiliation. These men will have been investigated in the same manner that you were, and will then be ready for the process of election. This is done by secret ballot, for which purpose the Ballot Box is used. Our Masonic law requires that every member present must ballot. A white ball elects to membership; a black ball or cube rejects. You should never reject a man for personal reasons, but only if you are sincerely convinced that his character or record is such that his election would bring discredit to Masonry.

The space between the Master's station and the Altar should never be crossed while the Lodge is in session. If you find it necessary to cross the room at any time after the Lodge has been opened, you should cross on the West side of the Altar.

With these few remarks of explanation we welcome you among us. Not only those present at this meeting but also millions in other Lodges throughout the world are now your Masonic brothers. Attend your own Lodge as frequently as you can, and visit other Lodges when you have the opportunity. Continue your Masonic education by such attendance and such visits, and continue it further by reading Masonic books.

This is your Masonic commencement. May your Masonic life be long and satisfying.