



Nugget

Standing in the North-East

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An explanation of some of the symbolism associated with the North-East Corner.

Summary

An explanation of some of the symbolism associated with the North-East Corner, in relation to Charity, Foundation stones, and interestingly why the 'ceremony might have to be repeated'.

Keywords

First-Degree, North-East, Corner, Charity, Foundation, Stone

Standing in the North East

During his initiation, the candidate stood in the North-East, where his feelings for charity were tested. But why did we tell him that, if he had anything of value on him, we would have had to repeat the ceremony of his Initiation?

On this, the first stage of his masonic journey, it is important that he is in a symbolic state of poverty. In this sense money and metallic substances represent wealth, so he must be in possession of neither. An empathy for Charity is so important that the lesson must be understood from the start, and there can be no compromise. Charity, in its widest sense, is depicted at the top of Jacob's ladder and described as the Virtue that encompasses all the others. Beyond it we approach the Blazing Star, towards which our masonic journey is directed.

Now let us consider where the Initiate was placed: in the North-east, he entered the Lodge in a state of darkness, and walked in the North, a place of darkness in masonic terms, which is symbolic of his unenlightened state. He travelled towards the East, in the hope of finding enlightenment. Arriving at or turning point (the North-east corner), he is tested with a fundamental question: would you give if you could?

Consider for a moment where he stood: on his right is the North, from whence he came, representing his past. On his left is the East, where knowledge is to be found. To leave the darkness of his past, he had to show his feelings for charity. Once he had done so, he was taken to the East, towards the dawning light, to receive instruction in the symbolism of the working tools, an early lesson preparing him for his masonic labours.

In the North-east, where he represented a foundation stone, he demonstrated that we could safely start to build on a sure foundation. After all, no builder would place a flawed stone in the foundation of a building, as the superstructure would be weakened. It is better to go back and start again. And that is why we tell him that we might have had to repeat the ceremony of his initiation had he anything of worldly value on his person.

##END##

Recommended use of Nuggets

Nuggets offer a short, simple and readily absorbed means of progressing Masonic knowledge and an easy way to introduce learning to Lodges and Chapters. It is hoped that they will become a regular feature of Lodge and Chapter meetings as well as a source for private-study.

Nuggets can be included as an item in the summons and read at most Lodge/Chapter meetings. They can be:

- Read by either a new or an experienced Mason with the minimum of preparation and practice; *though ideally, they need to be read a few times beforehand.*
- Themed with the meeting or activity.
- Used to initiate a discussion within a Lodge/Chapter, LOI/COI, or group.
- Read at home and shared as a topic for a future discussion.
- Used as a focus for an unplanned, informal discussion.

For further nuggets and other learning materials visit 'Solomon' at <http://solomon.ugle.org.uk>

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