



Nugget

Properly Prepared

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Dressed so as to be 'Properly prepared.

Summary

The origins of the correct dress for each degree, so as to be 'properly prepared.

Keywords

Operative, Speculative, Degrees

Properly Prepared

If there is one thing connected with Freemasons, it is the epithet the 'rolled-up trouser brigade'. The reason behind it lies in our medieval operative origins, when the dress of a working craftsman was an open-necked shirt, pants that came to just above his knees-over woolen stockings, and slip-on leather shoes. That is more or less how a candidate enters a Lodge. Today, that requires considerable re-arrangement, either discarding our jacket and tie, opening our shirt, rolling up shirtsleeves and trouser legs and changing our shoes, or re-dressing in special 'pajamas'.

When Free & Accepted Masonry began, there was just one ceremony. You did not enter as an Apprentice, and then advance to become a Fellow-craft, but entered as a 'fellow of the local town or borough'; becoming a Master Mason when you had passed through the Chair. So, you came into the ceremony with both knees and your chest bare. The reason why we have one knee bare for one ceremony and another for the next is an invention to distinguish different degrees.

What is more, in the early days of Freemasonry, the handing of a slipper to a new candidate, was to remind him of the Bible story of Boaz handing a slipper to an elder at the city gate, so as to transfer Ruth into his family; in the same way as a new brother became a member of his new Lodge family. That is why we are slipshod.

##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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