



## UGLE Oration

### Extend your Researches For what is to come

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An exhortation to 'extend your researches'.

#### **Summary**

The ceremony of Passing should have provided you with a clear sense of the progress and inspired you to 'extend your researches' and to prepare yourself further for what is yet to come.

#### **Keywords**

Second-Degree, Passing, Progress, Nature, Science

## Extend your Researches – for what is to come

### An Oration for the Second-Degree

Brother, the Roman poet Horace said, *‘No man ever reached to excellence in any one art or profession without having passed through the slow and painful process of study and preparation’*. Being ‘properly prepared’ is a phrase which you will have heard at your Initiation, at your Passing and you will be sure to hear it again.

Even before you became a Mason and you might not have realised it, you were preparing yourself. You must have had a reason for wanting to join. Was it curiosity to find out more? Was it something you wanted to share with a person you admired who seemed to derive a lot from his membership? You were asked at the outset whether you believed in God. The importance of charity will have been explained.

This was something different and something that you were not going to get involved with lightly. You will no doubt have mulled over and questioned your desire to join from the moment when you signed the bottom of the petition form. By the time you were presented at the door of the Lodge, you were in your own way ‘prepared in your heart’ to become a Mason - open minded and receptive. Once you had completed this initial work, the Brethren did the rest for you and led you through your Initiation.

Having now completed the ceremony of Passing, it will have become evident to you that to progress further in and to derive the most from our Masonic Art, the expectations of you in this regard have significantly increased. You will recall that the Worshipful Master explained this to you immediately after you had been invested with the badge of a Fellowcraft. But with these expectations come opportunities for development.

The Second-Degree points out the importance of education and the individual’s responsibilities to himself. The Brethren are still there for you, but Freemasonry reflects life itself – progression requires individual effort and application and Freemasonry is indeed a progressive science.

What also should have become obvious to you by now is that in Freemasonry, study and preparation are anything but slow and painful. You have been introduced to the ‘hidden mysteries of nature and science’. You are now acquainted with the concept of the seven liberal arts and sciences, namely grammar, rhetoric, logic, arithmetic, geometry, music, and astronomy. The hoodwink was removed during your Initiation and as a Craftsman you now have the gift of light to observe the ‘wonderful works of the Almighty’. You were taken around the Lodge room, but this time as a Brother you could see everything. As an Entered-Apprentice you have already embraced the principles of Moral Truth and Virtue. It is time to move on and the progress you can now make through study and reflection will change for the better the way you perceive the world and the way the world perceives you.

The difference between Man and the other animals is the ability to question. From now on as a Craftsman, you are encouraged to question yourself and challenge your thoughts and actions to better equip you to discharge your duties as a Mason. But you will need help with all this. At your Initiation the assistance of the Almighty was invoked. But in the ceremony of Passing, you had the additional assistance of the Square.

The Square is the central symbol in Freemasonry and is one of the Working Tools of the Second-Degree, the others as you know are the Level and the Plumb-Rule. These are all instruments of measurement or testing. In this sense, as the Fellowcraft passes between the two pillars, ascends the stairway to the Middle-Chamber and finally stands in the South East corner, he can contemplate and measure to what extent he has become the Perfect Ashlar and most importantly estimate what additional work there is yet to do.

You are no longer a beginner or an apprentice. You are now a skilled Craftsman and you have the tools available to assist you to look inwards at your own heart and to appraise how well *you really do* know yourself.

Brother, the ceremony of Passing should have provided you with a clear sense of the progress you have made. It should also not only have filled you with anticipation but also inspired you to 'extend your researches' and to prepare yourself further for what is yet to come.

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##END##

### Recommended use of Papers

Papers offer a simple, direct means of advancement in a particular aspect of Masonic knowledge. They can be used in a variety of ways:

- Read at home for private study
- Shared for pre-reading by members of a discussion group
- Read aloud in Lodge or Chapter, or in an LOI/COI/new members forum
  - Followed by 'any questions'
  - As a precursor to a discussion (*in which case much more time is needed, possibly more than double that allocated to the paper itself*)
  - Supported by audio-visual aids, if necessary.

They can be delivered by a single person or split into bite-sized pieces and read by multiple presenters (*in which case, the speaker(s) should have read and practiced the delivery of the paper beforehand*).

If the paper is to be used to introduce a discussion, the presenter will need to have thought about the material, done a little research, and prepared some open questions to engage with the audience. Kipling's dictum can be of help in preparing open questions, which should begin with one of his 'serving men', as follows: *'I keep six honest serving men (they taught me all I knew). Their names are, What and Why and When and How and Where and Who'*.

Rudyard Kipling

If used as part of an event, the paper should be advertised and promoted by way of trailers, flyers and announcements, in summonses, letters, emails, notice boards, and on social media.

**For further papers and other learning materials visit "Solomon" at <http://solomon.ugle.org.uk>**

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