



AN

AUTHENTIC KEY

To the DOOR of

FREE-MASONRY.

THE Origin of this Society, called Free-  
\* T \* Masons, is said to have been a certain  
\* \* Number of Persons who formed a Reso-  
\* \* lution to rebuild the Temple of *Solemon*.

This fully appears in the Lecture, or rather History, of the Order, at the Making or Raising a Member to the Degree of Master, which you will find described in the Course of this Work. —But I am inclined to think, that the chief Design of the Establishment is to rectify the Heart, inform the Mind, and promote the Moral and Social Virtues of Humanity, Decency, and good Order, as much as possible in the World; and some of the Emblems of the Free-Masons confirms this Opinion, such as the Compass, Rule, Square, &c.

In all Countries where Masonry is practised, or established at this Time, there is a Grand Master; but formerly there was only One Grand Master, and he was an *Englishman*. The Person on whom this Dignity or Title is bestowed, such as the pre-

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sent Lord *Aberdour*, governs all the other Lodges in *Great Britain*, and has the Authority or Power of delivering the Constitutions and Laws of the Society to the Masters who preside over the subordinate Assemblies; which Constitutions must always be signed by the Secretary-General of the Order.— The Grand-Master can also hold a Meeting or Lodge as often as he thinks proper, which is generally the second *Saturday* in every Month in the Summer; but oftener in the Winter.

The other Lodges meet regularly twice a Month in the Winter Half-Year, and once a Month in the Summer; and the Members of each Lodge pay Quarterly, from 3s. 6d. to 5s. into the Hands of the Treasurer; and this generally defrays the Expences of their Meetings.

There are also Quarterly Communications, or Meetings, held, at which are present the Masters and Wardens of every Regular Constitution in *London*, and the adjacent Parts, where the several Lodges send by the said Wardens, different Sums of Money to be paid into the Hands of the Treasurer-General, and appropriated to such charitable Uses as the Grand-Master and the Masters of the different Lodges under him, think proper; but these Charities are chiefly confined to Masons only. Such as have good Recommendations as to their Behaviour and Character, will be assisted with Five, Ten, and Twenty Pounds; and less Sums are distributed to the indigent Brethren, in Proportion to their Wants, and the Number of Years they have been Members. At these Quarterly Communications, large Sums are likewise sent from Lodges in the most remote Parts of the World, viz. in the *East* and *West Indies*, and Accounts transmitted of the Growth of Masonry there. The State of the Funds of the Society are likewise communicated to the Company; and the  
Deliberations

Deliberations of the Meeting taken down by the Secretary, who lays them before the Grand-Master at the yearly Meeting.

The Number of Members which compose a Lodge is indeterminate ; but it is not a Lodge, except there are present two Masters, three Fellow-Crafts, and two Apprentices.

When a Lodge is met, there are two principal Officers under the Master, and are called his Assistants ; whose Business is to see the Laws of the Society strictly adhered to, and the Word of Command given by the Grand-Master, regularly followed.

It must be remarked, that the Authority of a Master, though Chief of the Lodge, reaches no farther than he is himself an Observer of the Laws ; should he infringe them, the Brethren never fail to censure him ; and if this has no Effect, they have a Power of deposing him, on appealing to the Grand-Master, and giving their Reasons for it : But they seldom proceed to this Extremity.

As no doubt the Reader chuses to be made acquainted with every Circumstance of the Manner of making a Brother, I shall begin with the following Directions, and proceed regularly in the proper Description of what further concerns Masonry.

A Man desirous of becoming a Free-Mason, should endeavour to get acquainted with a Member of some good Lodge, who will propose him as a Candidate for Admission the next Lodge Night. He is likewise obliged to acquaint the Brethren of the Qualifications of the Candidate\*. Upon this

\* For the Good of this, and all other Societies, it were to be wished a more strict Regard was paid, on the Part of the Proposers, to the Character and Morals of the Candidate, too many of the most infamous Part of Mankind being often admitted as Members.

it is debated whether or not he shall be admitted ; and it being carried in the Affirmative, the next Step is to go with the Proposer the ensuing Lodge-Night.

You are to suppose the Evening come when a Lodge is to be held, which generally begins about Seven in the Winter, and Nine in Summer ; proper Notices having been sent to the Members for this Purpose. The Masons are punctual to the Time ; and it frequently happens, that, in half an Hour, the whole Lodge, to the Number of Fifty or Sixty, are assembled.

The Master, the Two Assistants, Secretary, and Treasurer, begin with putting over their Necks a blue Ribbon of a triangular Shape ; to the Master's Ribbon hangs a Rule and Compass, which is in some Lodges made of Gold, though in others only gilt ; the Assistants, Senior Wardens, and the other Officers, carry the Compass alone.

The Candles that are upon the Table are always placed in the Form of a Triangle ; and in the best Lodges the Candlesticks are finely carved with allegorical Figures, and put in a triangular Form. Every Brother has an Apron made of white Skin, and the Strings are also of Skin ; though some of them chuse to ornament them with blue Ribbon. On the Grand Days, such as Quarterly Communication, or other general Meetings, the Grand Officers Aprons are finely decorated, and they carry the Rule and Compass, the Emblems of the Order.

When they sit down to the Table, the Master seats himself in the first Place on the East-Side, the Bible being opened before him, with the Compasses laid thereon, and the Points of them covered with a Lignum Vitæ or Box Square ; and the Senior and Junior Wardens opposite to him on the West and South. On the Table is likewise placed  
different.

different Sorts of Wine, Punch, &c. to regale the Brethren, who take their Places according to their Degree or Seniority. Being thus seated, after a few Minutes, the Master proceeds to \* *open the Lodge* in the following Manner.

*How to open a Lodge, and set the Men to Work.*

*Master to the Junior Deacon.* What is the chief Care of a Mason ?

*Ans.* To see that the Lodge is tyled.

*Mas.* Pray do your Duty.

[The Junior Deacon gives Three Knocks at the Door; and if no-body is nigh, the † Tyler on the other Side of the Door answereth, by giving Three Knocks : Then the Junior Deacon tells the Master, by saying]

*Ans.* Worshipful, the Lodge is tyled.

*Master to the Junior Deacon.* Pray where is the Junior Deacon's Place in the Lodge ?

*Deacon's Ans.* At the Back of the Senior Warden; or at his Right-Hand, if he permits him.

*Mas.* Your Business there ?

*Ans.* To carry Messages from the Senior to the Junior Warden, so that they may be dispersed round the Lodge.

*Master to the Senior Deacon.* Pray where is the Senior Deacon's Place in the Lodge ?

*Sen. Deacon's Ans.* At the Back of the Master; or at his Right-Hand, if he permits.

\* *To open a Lodge*, in Masonry, signifies, that it is allowed to speak openly of the Mysteries of the Order.

† A Tyler is properly no more than a Guard or Centinel placed at the Lodge-Door, to give the Sign when any one craves Admittance, that the Wardens, or other proper Person, may come out and examine him; but he is always one of the Brethren.

*Mas.*

*Mas.* Your Business there ?

*Ans.* To carry Messages from the Master to the Senior Warden.

*Mas.* The Junior Warden's Place in the Lodge ?

*Deacon's Ans.* In the South.

*Master to the Junior Warden.* Why in the South ?

*Junior Warden's Ans.* The better to observe the Sun, at high Meridian to call the Men off from Work to Refreshment, and to see that they come on in due Time, that the Master may have Pleasure and Profit thereby.

*Mas.* Pray where is the Senior Warden's Place in the Lodge ?

*Junior Warden's Ans.* In the West.

*Master to Senior Warden.* Your Business there, Brother ?

*Senior Warden's Ans.* As the Sun sets in the West to close the Day, so the Senior Warden stands in the West to close the Lodge, to pay the Men their Wages, and dismiss them from their Labour.

*Mas.* The Master's Place in the Lodge ?

*Senior Warden's Ans.* In the East.

*Mas.* His Business there ?

*Senior Warden's Ans.* As the Sun rises in the East to open the Day, so the Master stands in the East to open his Lodge, and set his Men to work.

[Then the Master takes off his Hat, and declares the Lodge open, as follows : ]

*Master.* " This Lodge is open, in the Name of  
 " Holy St. John, forbidding all Cursing, Swear-  
 " ing, or Whispering, and all profane Discourse  
 " whatever, under no less Penalty than what the  
 " Majority shall think proper."

The Master then gives Three Knocks upon the Table with a wooden Hammer, and puts on his Hat; the other Brethren being uncovered; Then they

they sit down, and drink promiscuously, or take a Pipe of Tobacco.

Soon after the Master asks, if the Gentleman proposed last Lodge-Night, is ready to be made; and on being answered in the Affirmative, he orders the Wardens to go out and prepare the Person, who is generally waiting in a Room at some Distance from the Lodge-Room, by himself, being left there by his Friend who proposed him. He is conducted into another Room, which is totally dark; and then asked, whether he is conscious of having the Vocation necessary to be received? On answering Yes, he is asked his Name, Surname, and Profession. When he has answered these Questions, whatever he has about him made of Metal is taken off, as Buckles, Buttons, Rings, Boxes, and even the Money in his Pocket taken away\*. Then they make him uncover his Right Knee, and put his Left Foot with his Shoe on, into a Slipper †; hoodwink him with a Handkerchief, and leave him to his Reflection for about half an Hour. The Chamber is also guarded within and without, by some of the Brethren, who have drawn Swords in their Hands, to keep off all Strangers, in case any should dare approach. The Person who proposed the Candidate, stays in the Room with him; but they are not permitted to ask any Questions, or converse together.

During this Silence, and while the Candidate is preparing, the Brethren in the Lodge are putting every Thing in Order for his Reception there;

\* In some Lodges, they are so exact in this Respect, that they oblige the Candidate to pull off his Cloaths, if there be Lace on them.

† This is not practised in every Lodge; some only slipping the Heel of the Shoe down.

such as drawing the annexed Figure on the Floor at the upper Part of the Room : which is generally done with Chalk, or Chalk and Charcoal intermixed ; though some Lodges use Tape and little Nails to form it ; which prevents any Mark or Sign on the Floor. It is drawn East and West. The Master stands in the East, with the Square about his Neck, and the Bible opened at the Gospel of St. *John*, and three lighted Tapers are placed in the Form of a Triangle in the Midst of the Drawing on the Floor.

The Proposer then goes and knocks Three Times at the Door of the Grand Apartment, in which the Reception is to be performed ; the Master answers within by Three Strokes with the Hammer, and the Junior Warden asks, Who comes there ? The Candidate answers (after another who prompts him) " One who begs to receive Part of the Benefit of this Right Worshipful Lodge, dedicated to St. *John*, as many Brothers and Fellows have done before me." The Doors are then opened, and the Senior and Junior Warden, or their Assistants, receive him, one on the Right, and the other on the Left, and conducts him blindfold Three Times\* round the Drawing on the Floor, and brings him up to the Foot of it, with his Face to the Master †, the Brethren ranging themselves in Order on each Side, and making an odd Noise, by striking on the Attributes of the Order, which hang to the Ribbon they wear about their Necks ‡.

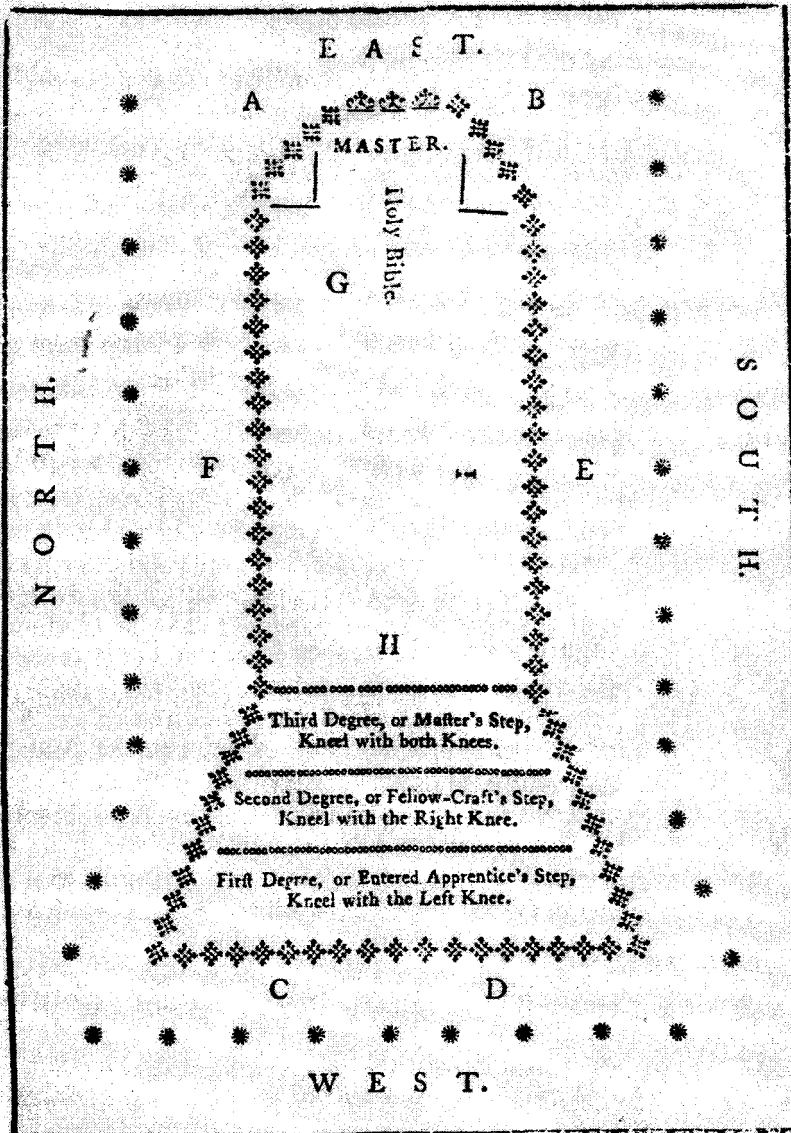
\* In some Lodges the Candidates are led Nine Times round ; but as this is very tiresome to the Person who is to undergo the Operation, his Patience being pretty well tried by being blinded so long before-hand, it is very justly omitted.

† Many Lodges throw a fine Powder, or Rozin, on the Floor, which, together with the extraordinary Illumination of the Room, has a pretty Effect, even though the Person is blindfold.

‡ This Custom is not observed in all Lodges.

When





**EXPLANATION.**

- A Senior Deacon, with a black Rod.
- B Pafs-Master, with the Sun and Compasses, and a String of Cords.
- C Senior Warden, with the Level, and a Column in his Hand.
- D Junior Deacon, with a black Rod.
- E Junior Warden, with a Column in his Hand.
- F The Secretary, with the Cross-Pens.
- G H, I, Candles.
- ☉ Masons standing round at the Ceremony.

N. B

*N. B.* The preceding Figure is the exact Form of the Drawing on the Floor at the making a Ma-son, according to the most antient Custom, and is still retained in all regular Lodges. It is most commonly drawn with Chalk and Char-coal ; and as soon as the Ceremony of making is over, the New-made Ma-son (though ever so great a Gentleman) must take a Mop from a Pail of Water, and wash it out. In some Lodges they use red Tape and Nails to form it, which prevents any Mark or Stain on the Floor, as with Chalk.

The Reader is to understand, that after this Figure is washed out, they sit at the Table in the same Form, as near as possible ; the New Mem-ber being placed the First Night on the Mas-ter's Right-Hand.

When this Part of the Ceremony is ended, the Master, who stands at the upper End, facing the Foot or Steps of the Drawing on the Floor, behind an Arm-Chair, asks the following Question, Whether you have a Desire to become a Mason? and if it is of your own free Will and Choice? Upon which the Candidate answers, Yes. "Let him see the Light;" says the Master; they then take the Handkerchief from his Eyes, and whilst they are so doing, the Brethren form a Circle round him with their Swords drawn in their Hands, the Points of which are presented to his Breast. The Ornaments borne by the Officers, the glittering of the Swords, and the fantastic Appearance of the Brethren in White Aprons, all together, creates great Surprise, especially to a Person, who for above an Hour has been fatigued with the Bandage over his Eyes; and his Uncertainty concerning what is further to be done for his Reception, must, no doubt, throw his Mind into great Perplexity\*.

The Candidate is then directed to advance Three Times to a Stool at the Foot of the Arm-Chair; he is taught to step in the proper Manner by one of the Assistants. Upon the Stool are placed the Rule and Compass; and one of the Brethren says to the Candidate to this Effect: "You are now entering into a respectable Society, which is more serious and important than you imagine. It admits of nothing contrary to Law, Religion, or Morality; nor does it allow of any Thing inconsistent with the Allegiance

\* The Ancient Masons made Use of a Prayer inserted in the Apprentice's Lecture; but the Moderns leave it out when they make a Brother.

“ due to his Majesty; the Worshipful Grand Master will inform you of the rest \*.

As soon as the Speaker has ended his Speech, he is desired to put his Right Knee upon the Stool, which is bare, as mentioned above †, and his Left Foot is put into a Slipper, with the Shoe on, or the Shoe slipped at the Heel to represent a Slipper.

The Candidate being in this Posture, the Worshipful Grand Master addresses him to the following Effect: “ Do you promise never to tell, write, or disclose, in any Manner whatever, the Secrets of Free Masonry and Free Masons, except to a Brother at the Lodge, and in the Presence of the Worshipful Grand Master?” On which the Person says, “ I do.” His Breast is then opened ‡, and the Point of a Pair of Compasses ¶ placed upon his naked Left Breast, and he

\* It is here to be understood, that in different Lodges this Speech varies; as also do the Forms of Making in some respects, which may be seen in the Entered Apprentice's Lecture, where the only proper and ancient Method is clearly pointed out. Some make long and insipid Harangues, the extravagant Jargon of which has given just Reason of Complaint to the Judicious.

† The ancient Custom was thus: The Candidate, though kneeling on his Right Knee, should have his Left Foot in the Air; but this Position appears troublesome, so that it is omitted in most Lodges.

‡ This is done, lest a Woman should offer herself; and though many Women are as flat chested as some Men, the Brethren are generally satisfied with a *slight* Inspection. I would advise them to be more cautious, for it is probable that a Woman, with a tolerable Degree of Effrontery and Spirit, may one Time or other slip into their Order for want of *necessary Prudence*. If we believe the *Irish*, there is a Lady at this Time in *Ireland*, who has gone through the whole Ceremony, and is as good a Mason as any of them.

¶ The Antients used a Sword or Spear, instead of the Compass.

himself

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himself holds it with his Left Hand, his Right being laid upon the Gospel opened at St. *John*; when the following Oath is administered to him, he repeating it after the Master :

*The OATH.*

“ I — A. B. of my own Free Will and Accord,  
 “ and in the Presence of Almighty *God*\*, and this  
 “ Right Worshipful Lodge, dedicated to St.  
 “ *John*, do hereby and herein most solemnly and  
 “ sincerely swear, that I will always hale, con-  
 “ ceal, and never reveal any of the Secrets or  
 “ Mysteries of Free Masonry, that shall be deli-  
 “ vered to me now, or at any Time hereafter, ex-  
 “ cept it be to a true and lawful Brother, or in a  
 “ just and lawful Lodge of Brothers and Fellows,  
 “ him or them whom I shall find to be such, after  
 “ just Trial and due Examination.—I further-  
 “ more do swear, that I will not write it, print it,  
 “ cut it, paint it, stint it, mark it, stain or  
 “ engrave it, or cause so to be done, upon any  
 “ thing moveable or immoveable, under the Ca-  
 “ nopy of Heaven, whereby it may become legi-  
 “ ble or intelligible, or the least Appearance of  
 “ the Character of a Letter, whereby the secret  
 “ Art may be unlawfully obtained. All this I  
 “ swear, with a strong and steady Resolution to  
 “ perform the same, without any Hesitation, men-  
 “ tal Reservation, or Self-Evasion of Mind in me  
 “ whatsoever, under no less Penalty than to have  
 “ my Throat cut across, my Tongue torn out by  
 “ the Root, and that to be buried in the Sands of  
 “ the Sea, at Low Water Mark, a Cable’s Length

\* The Form of the Oath differs in many Lodges, though this is the strictest in Use; and in some Societies, instead of saying, “ in the Presence of Almighty *God*,” it runs thus, “ I promise before the Great Architect of the Universe,” &c.

“ from the Shore, where the Tide ebbs and flows  
 “ twice in Twenty-four Hours. So help me God,  
 “ and keep me stedfast in this my Entered Ap-  
 “ prentice's Obligation.” [He kisses the Book.]

When this is pronounced, the new-made Mem-  
 ber is taught the Sign, Grip, and Pass-Word of  
 the Entered Apprentice, which will be seen more  
 clearly in the following Lecture belonging to that  
 Part of Masonry\*.

He is also learnt the Step, or how to advance  
 to the Master upon the Drawing on the Floor,  
 which in some Lodges resembles the grand Build-  
 ing, termed a Mosaic Palace, and is described with  
 the utmost Exactness. They also draw other Fi-  
 gures, one of which is called the Laced Tuft, and  
 the other the Throne beset with Stars. There is also  
 represented a perpendicular Line in the Form of  
 a Mason's Instrument, commonly called the Plumb-  
 Line; and another Figure which represents the  
 Tomb of *Hiram*, the first Grand-Master, who has  
 been dead almost Three Thousand Years. These  
 are all explained to him in the most accurate Man-  
 ner, and the Ornaments or Emblems of the Order  
 are described with great Facility. Then he is  
 conducted back, and every thing he was divest-  
 ed of, as mentioned at his Entrance, is restored;  
 and he takes his Seat on the Right-Hand of the  
 Master. He also receives an Apron, which he  
 puts on, and the List of the Lodges is likewise  
 given him.

The Brethren now congratulate the new-made  
 Member, and all return to the Table to regale  
 themselves; when the Master proposes a Health

\* In some Lodges, the new-made Member is obliged to take  
 a Mop out of a Pail of Water, and wash the Drawing on the  
 Floor out, which puts him in some Confusion, and creates great  
 Mirth among the Brethren. This is the Reason of having a  
 Mop and Pail.

to the young Brother, which is drank with the greatest Applause by the whole Body, the new Mason sitting all the while. After which he, instructed by a Brother, takes a Bumper, and drinks "to the Worshipful Grand-Master, the Senior and Junior Wardens, the rest of the Officers, and Members of the Lodge, wishing them Success in all their public and private Undertakings, to Masonry in General, and that Lodge in particular, craving their Assistance:" To which they answer, "they will assist him." After he has drank, he throws his Glass from him, and brings it back Three Times, and then sets it down on the Table, the rest doing the same in exact Order. This they call Firing: then they clap their Hands Nine Times, divided into Three, and stop between each, keeping true Time.

The Reader having been led thus far, it is high Time to introduce the Apprentice's Lecture, which is intended, not only to amuse, but likewise to instruct him in the Part he is entered into. The Readiness of many of the Brethren in answering the Questions, add a Lustre to the Order, the Members vying with each other, who shall most contribute to the Edification of their new Brother.

*The Entered Apprentice's Lecture\*.*

*Mas.* **B**rother, is there any thing between you and me?

*Ans.* There is, Right Worshipful.

*Mas.* What is it, Brother, pray?

*Ans.* A Secret.

*Mas.* What is that Secret, Brother?

*Ans.* Masonry.

\* The Reader is desired to observe, that I here give the *Whole* of the Lectures, as delivered in the primitive Time; but the Modern Masons leave out at least one half.

*Maj.*