

BYE-LAWS
OF
The Fletcher Lodge,
(No. 1021.)

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Most Ancient and Honourable
FRATERNITY OF
FREE & ACCEPTED MASONS
OF ENGLAND.

BYE-LAWS
OF THE
FLETCHER LODGE,
(No. 1031.)
BIRMINGHAM.

Honorary Members.

- BRO. C. W. ELKINGTON, D.P.G.M.
,, T. B. S. FLETCHER, P.D.P.G.M.
,, J. H. BEDFORD, P.G.S.W.
-

Officers and Founders.

- BRO. THOMAS PARTRIDGE, W.M.
,, W. H. SPROSTON, P.M.
,, J. F. WEST, S.W.
,, J. G. BLAND, J.V.
,, E. T. PITMAN, CHAPLAIN.
,, ISAAC SMITH, TREASURER.
,, ALFRED HARRISON, SECRETARY.
,, WILLIAM W. ROSE, ASS. SECRETARY.
,, BENJAMIN PURNELL, S.D.
,, T. D. MILLER, J.D.
,, M. A. PARKER, D.C.
,, V. H. CUISSET, ORGANIST.
,, JAMES TEAGUE, I.G.
,, THOMAS KELLY, S.
,, J. COATES, TYLER.

BYE-LAWS
OF THE
FLETCHER LODGE, No. 1031.

I.

The Lodge shall meet on the second Wednesday in every month, at the Masonic Rooms, in Newhall Street, Birmingham, at such hours as may be deemed desirable by the W.M.

II.

The subscription to the Lodge shall be two guineas per annum, payable half-yearly in advance, in the months of December and June.

III.

Any member being twelve months in arrear with his subscription shall be ineligible to hold

office in the Lodge or to vote on any question before it ; but he shall, in writing, be requested to pay what may be due, and in case of non-compliance, his membership shall then be determined.

IV.

The fee for initiation shall be eight guineas ; which shall include all dues to the Grand Lodge, and Provincial Grand Lodge, and also the Grand Lodge Certificate, with the M.M. Apron when raised to that degree. The joining fee shall be one guinea.

V.

Any Member wishing to propose a candidate, shall send his name, occupation, and place of abode, in writing, to the W.M., who shall cause inquiry to be made into the candidate's character and qualifications (see Constitutions, page 80), and should nothing appear against him, he may then be proposed at one Lodge, and balloted for at the next regular Lodge, and shall then be declared elected, unless one black ball appear against him, and may be initiated at any subsequent meeting the W.M. may direct.

VI.

Brethren may be elected honorary members by a majority of three-fourths of the members present at any regular meeting, but cannot be permitted to vote or hold office in the Lodge.

VII.

The W.M., the Treasurer, and the Tyler shall be elected annually by ballot, on the regular lodge night in the month of November; and the installation of the Master, and the investiture of the Officers, at the meeting in December.

VIII.

There shall be one festival annually, on the day of installation; but refreshments may be provided at the discretion of the Master, after any lodge meeting.

IX.

The Secretary shall receive the subscriptions and other moneys, and shall immediately pay the same over to the Treasurer; he shall take minutes of all the proceedings of the Lodge, and fairly

enter them in the proper minute book ; and shall issue summonses to every member of the Lodge, at least seven days previous to each meeting.

X.

The Treasurer shall make payments only by order of the W.M., or of the Lodge.

XI.

No money shall be voted from the funds of the Lodge, for other than ordinary purposes, without notice having been given at the previous monthly meeting ; except in cases of extreme urgency, when it shall be imperative that notice thereof appear in the circular.

XII.

An audit Committee, consisting of the W.M., the Past Master, the two Wardens, and two other members whom the Lodge may appoint, shall be held annually, to examine the Treasurer's accounts.

XIII.

The Treasurer shall keep a correct account of all moneys received and paid by him ; and shall lay his accounts, regularly balanced, before the Lodge at each monthly meeting.

XIV.

Should the Officers of the Lodge be at any time absent from their duties at the hour for which the meeting has been convened, they shall each pay to the Secretary a fine of one shilling, unless they have previously intimated, in writing, to the W.M. their inability to attend.

XV.

Any brother wishing to resign his membership shall give notice, in writing, to the Secretary.

XVI.

All matters relating to the affairs of the Lodge not provided for in the bye-laws, or in the Book of Constitutions, shall be decided by a majority of votes of members present.

XVII.

Any member refusing to abide by these bye-laws shall be forthwith excluded from the Lodge, and intimation thereof given to the Grand Lodge.

XVIII.

These bye-laws shall not be altered without a month's special notice having been given to every member of the Lodge of such change as may be intended.

Signed,

LEIGH.

G.M.

October, 1864.

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THE CHARGE,

Delivered at the Initiation of every Brother into Freemasonry.

BROTHER,

As you have now passed through the ceremonies of your initiation, allow me to congratulate you on being admitted a Member of our ancient, honourable Society: ancient no doubt it is, as having subsisted from time immemorial; and honourable it must be acknowledged to be, because by a natural tendency it conduces to make all those honourable who are strictly obedient to its precepts. Indeed, no institution can boast a more solid foundation than that on which Freemasonry rests,—the practice of every moral and social virtue; and to so high an eminence has its credit been advanced, that in every age Monarchs themselves have been promoters of the art; have not thought it derogatory from their dignity to exchange the sceptre for the trowel; have patronized our mysteries and joined our assemblies. As a Mason, I would first recommend to your most serious contemplation the volume of the sacred law, charging you to look to it as the unerring standard of truth and justice, and to regulate your actions by the Divine precepts it contains. Therein you will be taught the important duties you owe to God, to your neighbour, and to yourself. To God, by never mentioning His name but with that awe and reverence which are due from the creature to his Creator; by imploring his aid in all your lawful undertakings; and by looking up to him in every emergency for comfort and support. To your neighbour, by acting with him on the square; by rendering him every kind office which justice or mercy may require; by relieving his necessities and soothing his afflictions; and by doing unto him as in similar circumstances you would wish he should do unto you. And to yourself, by such a pru-

dent and well-regulated course of discipline as may best conduce to the preservation of your corporeal and mental faculties in their fullest energy, thereby enabling you to exert the talents wherewith God has blessed you, as well to His glory as the welfare of your fellow-creatures.

As a citizen of the world, I am next to enjoin you to be exemplary in the discharge of your civil duties, by never proposing, or at all countenancing, any act which may have a tendency to subvert the peace and good order of society; by paying due obedience to the laws of any State which may for a time become the place of your abode, or afford you its protection; and, above all, by never losing sight of the allegiance due to the Sovereign of your native land, ever remembering that nature has implanted in your breast a sacred and indissoluble attachment to that country from which you derived your birth and infant nurture.

As an individual I am further to recommend the practice of every domestic as well as public virtue. Let Prudence direct you, Temperance chasten you, Fortitude support you, and Justice be the guide of all your actions. Be especially careful to maintain in their fullest splendour those truly Masonic ornaments which have already been amply illustrated,—Benevolence and Charity. Still, however, as a Mason, there are other excellencies of character to which your attention may be peculiarly and forcibly directed. Among the foremost of these are Secrecy, Fidelity, and Obedience. Secrecy may be said to consist in an inviolable adherence to the compacts you have entered into, never improperly to disclose any of these Masonic secrets which have now been, or may at any future time be entrusted to your keeping, and cautiously to avoid all occasions which might inadvertently lead you so to do. Your Fidelity must be exemplified by a close conformity to the constitutions of the fraternity; by adhering to the ancient land-marks of the order, by never attempting to extort or otherwise unduly to obtain the secrets of a superior degree, and by refraining to recommend any one to a participation of our secrets, unless you have strong grounds to believe that, by similar fidelity, he will ultimately reflect honour on our choice. So must your Obedience be proved by a strict observance of our laws and regulations, by prompt attention to all signs and summonses, by modest and

correct demeanour whilst in the Lodge, by abstaining from every topic of religious or political discussion, by a ready acquiescence in all votes and resolutions duly passed by a majority of the Brethren, and by perfect submission to the Master and his Wardens whilst acting in the discharge of their respective offices. And, as a last general recommendation, let me exhort you to dedicate yourself to such pursuits as may enable you to become at once respectable in your rank of life, useful to mankind, and an ornament to the Society of which you have this day been admitted a Member; that you will more especially devote a part of your leisure hours to the study of such of the liberal arts and sciences as may be within the compass of your attainment; and that without neglecting the ordinary duties of your station, you will feel yourself called upon to make a daily advancement in Masonic knowledge.

From the very commendable attention you appear to have given to this charge, I am led to hope that you will duly appreciate the excellencies of Freemasonry, and imprint indelibly on your mind the sacred dictates of truth, of honor, and of virtue.

CHARGE,

At Initiation into the Second Degree.

Being advanced to the Second Degree of the Order, we congratulate you on your preferment. The internal and not the external qualifications of a man are what Masonry regards: as you increase in knowledge you will consequently improve in social intercourse. It is unnecessary to recapitulate the duties, as a Mason, you are now bound to discharge, or enlarge on the necessity of a strict adherence to them, as your own experience must have established their value. It may be sufficient to observe that your past behaviour and regular deportment have merited the honour which we have conferred, and in your new character it is expected that you will not only conform to

the principles of the Order, but steadily persevere in the practice of every commendable virtue. The study of the liberal arts (that valuable branch of education which tends so effectually to polish and adorn the mind) is earnestly recommended to your consideration, especially the science of Geometry, which is established as the basis of our art. Geometry, or Masonry (originally synonymous terms,) is of a divine and moral nature, and enriched with the most useful knowledge; while it proves the wonderful properties of nature, it demonstrates the more important truths of morality.

As the solemnities of our ceremonies require a serious deportment, you are to be particularly attentive to your behaviour in our regular assemblies; you are to preserve our ancient usages and customs sacred and inviolable, and induce others by your example to hold them in due veneration.

The laws and regulations of the Order you are strenuously to support and maintain. You are not to palliate or aggravate the offences of your Brethren; but in the decision of every trespass against our rules, judge with candour, admonish with friendship, and reprehend with mercy.

As a Craftsman in our private assemblies, you may offer your sentiments and opinions on such subjects as are regularly introduced in the lecture, under the superintendence of an experienced Master, who will guard the land-marks against encroachment. By this privilege you may improve your intellectual powers, qualify yourself to become an useful member of society, and, like a skilful Brother, strive to excel in what is good and great.

All regular signs and summonses, given and received, you are duly to honour and punctually obey, inasmuch as they consist with our professed principles. You are to encourage industry and reward merit; supply the wants and relieve the necessities of Brethren and fellows to the utmost of your power and ability; and on no account to wrong them or see them wronged, but apprise them of approaching danger, and view their interests as inseparable from your own. Such is the nature of your engagements as a Craftsman, and these duties you are now bound to observe by the most sacred ties.

CHARGE,

At the Initiation into the Third Degree.

Your zeal for the institution of Freemasonry, the progress which you have made in the art, and your conformity to the general regulations, have pointed you out as a proper object of our favour and esteem.

In the character of a Master Mason, you are henceforth authorised to correct the errors and irregularities of Brethren and Fellows, and guard them against a breach of fidelity. To improve the morals and correct the manners of men in society must be your constant care; with this view, therefore, you are always to recommend to inferiors, obedience and submission, — to superiors, kindness and condescension. Universal benevolence you are to inculcate, and, by the regularity of your own behaviour, afford the best example for the conduct of others. The ancient land-marks of the Order, which are here entrusted to your care, you are to preserve sacred and inviolable, and never suffer an infringement of our rites, or a deviation from established usage and custom. Duty, honour, and gratitude, now bind you to be faithful to every trust, to support with becoming dignity your new character, and to enforce, by example and precept, the tenets of the system.

Let no motive, therefore, make you swerve from your duty, violate your vows, or betray your trust; but be true and faithful, and imitate the example of that celebrated artist, whom you have once represented. By this exemplary conduct, you will convince the world that merit has been the title to our privileges, and that on you our favours have not been undeservedly bestowed.—*Illustrations of Freemasonry*, by W. PRESTON, P.M.

TO BE REHEARSED AT THE CLOSING OF THE LODGE.

When the Lodge is closed, you are to enjoy yourselves with innocent mirth, and carefully to avoid excess. You are not to compel any Brother to act contrary to his inclination, or give offence by word or deed, but enjoy free and easy conversation. You are to avoid immoral or obscene discourse, and at all times support with propriety the dignity of your character.

You are to be cautious in your words and carriage, that the most penetrating stranger may not discover what is not proper to be intimated, and if necessary, you are to waive the discourse, and manage it prudently for the honour of the Fraternity.

At home and in your secret neighbourhoods, you are to behave as wise and moral men; you are never to communicate to your families, friends, or acquaintances, the private transactions of our different assemblies, but, on every occasion, consult your own honour, and the reputation of the Fraternity at large.

You are to study the preservation of health, by avoiding irregularity and intemperance, that your families may not be neglected and injured, or yourselves be disabled from attending to your necessary employments in life.

If a stranger apply in the character of a Mason, you are cautiously to examine him in such a method as prudence may direct, and agreeably to the forms established among Masons, that you may not be imposed upon by an ignorant false pretender, whom you are to reject with contempt, and beware of giving him any secret hints of knowledge. But if you discover him to be a true and genuine brother you are to respect him; if he be in want, you are without prejudice to relieve him, or direct him how he may be relieved; you are to employ him, or recommend him to employment; however, you are never charged to do beyond your ability, only to

prefer a poor Mason, who is a good man and true, before any other person in the same circumstances.

Finally, these rules you are to observe and enforce, and also the duties which have been communicated in the Lecture, cultivating brotherly love, the foundation and keystone, the cement and glory of this ancient Fraternity; avoiding on every occasion, wrangling and quarrelling, slandering and backbiting; not permitting others to slander honest Brethren, but defending their characters, and doing them good offices, so far as may be consistent with your honour and safety, but no farther. Hence all may see the benign influence of Masonry, as all true Masons have done from the beginning of the world, and will do to the end of time. So must it be.



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THE ENTERED APPRENTICE'S SONG

BY BROTHER MATHEW BIRKHEAD.

Come, let us prepare,
 We Brothers that are
 Assembled on merry occasion ;
 Let's drink, laugh, and sing ;
 Our Wine has a spring :
 Here's a health to an Accepted Mason.

The World is in pain
 Our secrets to gain ;
 And still let them wonder and gaze on
 Till they're shown the Light
 They'll ne'er know the right
 Word or sign of an Accepted Mason.

'Tis This and 'tis That
 They cannot tell What,
 Why so many GREAT MEN of the Nation
 Should Aprons put on,
 To make themselves one
 With a Free and an Accepted Mason.

Great KINGS, DUKES, and LORDS
 Have said by their Swords,
 Our Myst'ry to put a good Grace on,
 And ne'er been asham'd
 To hear themselves named
 With a Free and an Accepted Mason.

Antiquity's Pride
 We have on our side,
 And it maketh men just in their station :
 There's nought but what's good
 To be understood
 By a Free and an Accepted Mason.

We're true and sincere,
 And just to the Fair :
 They'll trust us on any occasion :
 No mortal can more
 The Ladies adore
 Than a Free and an Accepted Mason.

Then join Hand in Hand,
 By each other firm stand;
 Let's be merry, and put a bright Face on:
 What mortal can boast
 So NOBLE A TOAST
 As a Free and an Accepted Mason?

CHARGES.

That excellent key, a Freemason's Tongue, which should speak as well of a Brother when absent as present; and if unfortunately that cannot be done with honour and propriety, let us adopt that excellent virtue of the Craft, which is Silence.

The heart that conceals, and the tongue that never improperly reveals any or either of the secrets or mysteries of or belonging to Free and Accepted Masons in Masonry.

May Brotherly Love, Relief, and Truth, in conjunction with Temperance, Fortitude, Prudence, and Justice, ever actuate our minds, and guard our passions; the three grand principles, and four cardinal virtues.

May Virtue, Honour, and Mercy, ever be the distinguishing characteristics of every Free and Accepted Mason.

May the fragrance of Virtue, like the sprig of Acacia, bloom over the grave of every deceased brother.

To him who did the Temple rear,
Who lived and died within the S——,
And now lies buried none know where,
But we who M—— Masons are.

To all poor and distressed Masons, wherever scattered over the face of earth and nature, wishing them a speedy relief from their misfortunes, and a safe return to their native country if they require it. To all poor and distressed Masons.

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