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Of all the symbols that adorn a Masonic Lodge, the Great Lights take precedence. All the others are subordinated to them and all the activities of the Lodge revolve around the Altar, supporting the Great Lights, to derive light from their eternal rays. Even the sun, the moon and the Master of the Lodge, representing the Lesser Lights, are rendered impotent and the Lodge darkened, in the absence of the Great Lights. All the symbols inside the Lodge, therefore, should conform with their (Great Lights) arrangement, in faithful obedience and reverence to Divine Will. Accordingly, when the Great Lights are arranged or rearranged to signalize a change in the degree on which the Lodge is at labor, all the other symbols, including the wearing of the aprons must conform with it, thereby effecting harmony with the new arrangement of the Great Lights.

Thus, in lowering the Lodge from the Third or Second degree, down to the First degree, the Master calls the Lodge to Order and directs the Senior Deacon to *arrange the Great Lights*. Then he directs the Junior Deacon to inform the Tyler that the Lodge is opened on the First degree of Masonry. Based on the above criterion, the Lodge at this time represents the ground floor of King Solomon's Temple and all that compose it, except the Master, are, for the time being considered Entered Apprentices, because according to Masonic tradition, "Entered Apprentices assembled on the ground floor of King Solomon's Temple, and their Lodges consisted of no less than seven; one Master, the other Entered Apprentices."

At the closing of the Lodge, the Master asks: "Bro. Senior Warden, at the opening of this Lodge you informed me *that you were an Entered Apprentice Mason* made within the body of a just and legally constituted Lodge of Entered Apprentice Masons. How many compose such a Lodge?" This further supports the contention, that all that compose the Lodge at the time, except the Master, are Entered Apprentices.

From the above circumstances, it is evident that while the Lodge is at labor on the Entered Apprentice degree, until again raised to a higher degree, all the Fellowcrafts and Master Masons within, except the Master of the Lodge have been momentarily reduced to Entered Apprentices, in conformity with the arrangement of the Great Lights. If the Lodge can be reduced, at the will and pleasure of the Master, much more can its members be so reduced in the same manner. To emphasize this fact, even the Senior Warden who is next in rank to the Master, is an Entered Apprentice Mason (sic) and is so addressed by the Master as such. During the time the Lodge remains open, every brother, including the Master, advances as an Entered Apprentice Mason, gives the due-guard, sign, token and word of the First degree. The presence, therefore, of Master Masons in the Lodge, as overseers or superintendents of the work, is superfluous and unnecessary, because only one Master has the right to sit therein, according to our written customs and traditions.

Based on the premise that the la-

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bors of the Lodge are on the First degree, the following questions may now be asked:

1. Why are not all the members present, except the Master, required to wear the white apron with the top turned up as Entered Apprentices, in conformity with the injunction: "As an Entered Apprentice Mason you will thus wear yours?" In any Masonic Lodge, all symbolisms, should, logically be subordinated to the Great Lights, which was reduced by the Master by being arranged accordingly; so should by propriety, the aprons follow suit, they being subordinate symbols of lesser or minor importance than the former.

2. Since the Lodge is at labor on the First degree, it follows that all the members present, except the Master, have to be bearers of burden, the usual duty of Entered Apprentice Masons. As such, they have to use the tools and implements of the First degree — not the tools and implements of the Second or Third Degrees. That being the case, will they not "protect their clothings from becoming soiled", by turning the top of their aprons up, as "Masonic tradition informs us?"

3. Since Masons meet on the level, will it not run counter to that very principle, if some brethren will be clothed as Master Masons and the others as Entered Apprentices in the same Lodge?

4. At the opening of the Lodge on the First degree, the Master directs the brethren to "come to Order and clothe themselves. Inasmuch as the Lodge being opened is on the First degree, why sould certain brethren clothe themselves as Fellowcrafts or as Master Masons by wearing the aprons of those degrees? If they are so clothed, they should meet in the middle chamber of KST and in the SS of HH, respectively, where they will appear to be proper-

ly clothed in accordance with the aprons they wear, instead of meeting with the brethren on the ground floor of KST, clothed as Entered Apprentices, who are below their levels.

It is contended by some brethren that as Master Masons they should wear the Master Mason's apron in attending the meetings in all the three degrees, because they are already Masters. While it may be true that as Masters they can attend such meetings and be present therein clothed as Masters, their presence in the Lodge opened on the First degree, should only be as *visitors or supernumeraries, and not as members of the Lodge*, and that, the moment they participate in the labors taking place, they should wear the apron of an Entered Apprentice Mason, otherwise, they will be improperly clothed. Let us not forget the fact, that in the Lodge of Entered Apprentice Masons, *there is only one Master*, the others Entered Apprentices. So should it be. Other Master Masons will thus be out of place — in the same situation of an expert mechanic going under the engine of a car to fix it, dressed in a white suit with a necktie. They will be likened to those Entered Apprentices, were they formally dressed, while cutting timbers in the forests of Lebanon.

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In Speculative Masonry, according to Bro George Oliver, "The great design of the Apron is to point out the figurative division of the human body into two distinct parts; separating the noble portion which contain the head and the heart, as the seat of reason and affections, from the more base and corporeal parts, which are merely intended to perform carnal functions of nature." Such being the case, let not the human body be unnecessarily exposed to temptations and excesses of life, by applying proper restraints, exemplified by an Entered Apprentice wearing the white lambskin apron with the top turned up, the symbol of innocence and the badge of a Mason. Without such restraint, even the Master Mason may fall into the infamous pit of sin and error. ^

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Freemasonry teaches the theory and practice of all that is good in relation to God and man, to the state and to be the individual and the great object for which it exists, indeed the only sufficient apology for its existing at all, is the endeavor to find a common ground upon which all good men, regardless of creed or country can stand. It is greatly to its praise that it can be truthfully said that in this respect it has excelled all other human agencies. In every age its device has been liberty, equality, fraternity, law, order, government and not anarchy. It recognizes the dignity of human nature and man's right to so much freedom as he is fitted for, and it knows nothing that should ignore, debasement and crime, and place one man below another except the necessity of subordination to lawful authority. ^

— Frederic Speed.

