

Fault trifling; then the other brothers can better exercise their judgment when casting their ballots. After a ballot is cast let it be final, and let there be no re-consideration, unless some brother announces that he made a mistake in balloting. Let me here state that while each brother has a vast power conferred on him by the black ball, he should remember that an indiscriminate use of it is decidedly wrong. He should consider well the character of every applicant. I trust it is unnecessary to remind you that it is entirely wrong for anyone to black-ball an applicant through any personal animosity. Should there be such a brother, he is certainly guilty of gross un-masonic conduct.

The next point: Why do men ask to become members of the Order? They are prompted to do so by a favorable opinion preconceived of the institution; a desire of gaining knowledge and rendering themselves more extensively serviceable to their fellow creatures. They must, however, arrive at these opinions unbiased by the improper solicitations of friends, and uninfluenced by mercenary or any other unworthy motives. I believe almost every candidate applies with the above good intentions, and if admitted, intends to fulfill all that is implied. At first he is pleased with the workings and surroundings of the lodge, and makes noble resolutions to become a true and useful Mason. But it is a common thing to see him before long become indifferent. He finds older Masons negligent of their duties, and he soon forgets to be true to himself, and falls away to become a Mason only in name. The older and more experienced Masons should take the new member by the hand and lead him kindly along the path of virtue, honor, and truth, until he attains a certain knowledge of the practical working of Masonry. It is a great mistake to allow him to grope along alone and unaided amid the comparative darkness with which he is more

or less surrounded. Teach him to practice the glorious principles of the Order; teach him to be firm to his faith, true to himself, and true to his fellow Masons.

In the unwritten laws of Masonry there is the command, attend your lodge. It is most important that every Mason should regularly go to his lodge and take part in the proceedings. No Mason can know or care much for Freemasonry, who fails to take an interest in the lodge and its doings. The younger members should be there to learn, and those that have experience and wisdom should be there to teach. It is matter of regret that the majority of the members of St. George's, (and I believe that the same may be said of most lodges,) make it a practice not to attend the meetings, and thus not only disobey the command of their lodge, but deliberately ignore their solemn obligation. Our lodge has a membership of one hundred and fifteen, and of which nearly one hundred live within a cable tow of this place of meeting, but out of that number we very seldom have twenty present. The largest attendance is on the night for election of officers, when there may be as many as thirty-five on the register. There might be many explanations for this non-attendance. One is: the brethren may not have been sincere when they said that they joined the Order from the preconceived good opinion they had of it, and a desire to be of further assistance to their fellow-creatures, but rather joined from curiosity, and that curiosity very soon exhausted itself; or possibly, joined owing to the solicitation of some over zealous, but very unwise brother. Another explanation is, they may have been quite sincere, but found, after being a member for a short time, that the preconceived idea they had formed was a mistaken one, and also found the meetings very monotonous and uninteresting. This, however, will not excuse them. They should remain