

investigate the case previous to balloting for him. If, however, the brother should see fit to rejoin his former Lodge on payment of his dues up to the time of his exclusion, I am of the opinion that he would be in the same position as any other joining member and would therefore be required to be re-balloted for. In support of the above, I refer you to pages 31, 46, 47, 80, 109 and 111, on Suspension; and 67, 68, 81 on Exclusion—Edition 1871, the latest published, and remain

Yours fraternally,

ROUGH ASHLAR.

Montreal, Oct. 17, 1879.

Personal Differences.

The following article from the pen of R. W. Bro. Robt. Ramsay we take from the *Voice of Masonry*, and will be found worthy of perusal:—

"A circumstance greatly to be regretted is that brethren too often are apt to allow their personal predilections to sway their action toward their fellows in the craft. This is not as it should be. Brethren may have personal differences, may view matters from entirely different standpoints, may be separated as far as the poles in their political or municipal ideas, may be diametrically opposed to each other in church matters, may be running in opposition to each other in business, but none of these things should ever allow them to forget that they are bound to each other by the most sacred ties of brotherly love and the most solemn covenants, given on the Book of the Law of the Most High, and in the presence of their brethren.

"As Masons we should never allow personal differences to influence us, so far as our relations with each other are concerned. Of course, Masons are but men, and not immaculate, still if they have any regard for the lambskin, they would scorn to permit such feelings to outweigh the principles inculcated by the fathers of the fraternity. It is lamentable to see brethren so far forget the duties they owe to the Craft universal, as to permit their slight personal differences to interfere with the harmony of the Lodge. Yet how often do we see it! What an example it is to the younger brother when he notices the bickerings between officers, the miserable, puny disputes, "about nothing," between Past Masters, and the disgraceful cutting and jibing at times exhibited by those in authority.

"The very spirit of Freemasonry revolts at such an outrage upon its very principles, and such men should be severely and promptly dealt with: *They have prepared*

themselves, and are unworthy the name of Masons. A brother who permits his personal differences, with regard to another brother, to so influence him as to allow his tongue to slander him whom he has sworn to support, uphold and defend, is a traitor to our institution, and should be driven from our midst as a monster unsound and unclean. Freemasonry only wants pure and good men to enroll themselves under its banners, and he who asperses a brother's character is not such, and consequently not worthy of being enlisted in the Masonic army.

"I regret to say that in my Masonic experience I have met such creatures, who, for some difference of opinion have cried aloud, as it were, like the Pharisees of old: "Thank God, I am holier than thou," and dared to "cut dead" in the public streets, brethren, as good, if not better, than themselves. Too strong language cannot be applied to brethren (?) who set such an example to the younger members of the Craft. Such a proceeding does more harm to our glorious cause than a hundred lectures can do good. As one good example is better than a thousand lectures upon virtue and truth, so does one bad act injure the Craft more than many lessons can rub out. Brethren, then, be careful.

"These personal differences have done, and continually are doing a vast amount of injury to the Craft. What must the profane think when he hears prominent members of the Order traducing each other's characters, and villifying each other's names? Have they not the right to point with scorn at our society when we permit such things? Can we blame them if they ask: Is this your brotherly love? Is this your boasted union of kindred hearts with kindred thoughts? Of course, we cannot censure them for so judging us and it is high time, I think, that these things should cease, and that brethren should respect their obligations and be true to their vows.

"If we allow brethren either inside or outside the lodge-room to injure the honor and sully the fair name of the Craft without duly admonishing them of their error and, if necessary, bringing them to trial for the same, and, if found guilty, meting out to them their just punishment we are as guilty as those who indulge their serpent tongues in these vile personal differences. Our esoteric work and our exoteric teaching mean something or nothing. If the former, then we are a band of men linked together around the globe by the fetters of brotherly love, relief and truth; we are brethren in the purest and holiest sense of the word. We should be ready at all times and under all circumstances to support a falling brother, to cheer a deceased brother's weeping widow, to educate a deceased brother's orphan child, to soothe the sick, and cheer, by hopeful words, the dying.

"If, on the other hand, they mean nothing,