

never enter the mind. They are almost as empty of meaning as the Choctaw language would be to one who understood only the English language.

It is a mistake to suppose that it is the office that makes the Mason, and not the man. There was a time when it was thought that the mere touch of a king would cure the king's evil; but it is futile to think that the touch or the naked words of a W. M. can make a Mason. The office or dignity of W. M. is largely respectable or venerable in proportion to the genius of the officer who fills it. After all, the man is the substance and the office the shadow, but sometimes the latter appears to be the larger and more objective of the two. Whenever the office overshadows the man, you may confidently expect that the lodge will be thinly attended, and the interest of the members continually on the wane.

It is not a mistake to think that all work should be done in a workmanlike manner. This includes a number of particulars. First, it must be the true work. Next, it must lack no necessary idea or words. Lastly, it must be done in such a manner as to impress the candidate. This is, perhaps, the most important of all. For a candidate to go through a form or ceremony that to him is meaningless is worse than a farce, yet this is the case of every one who stands before a W. M. who wields the implements of Masonry and is clothed with its office, but lacks all natural ability to reinforce the language he uses with the spirit and power that are needed to give them either present or lasting effect.

Freemasonry affords scope for the exercise of the highest talents of speech. For a brother who has no natural gift of impressive utterance, and no acquired ability therein, to assume to fill the W. M.'s station, is to insure a dull reign in the East—a sort of reign of terror to the members, the large majority of whom soon tire and come no more.

REMINISCENCES OF A SECRETARY.

One night, as the Worshipful Master was about to commence "work," an announcement came that Bro. Brown, from Lodge No. 999, England, wished to be examined. The W. M. cast an enquiring look upon me, and I retired to examine the stranger. I found in the ante-room a very handsome young man, dressed genteely, but clothes rather worse for wear, who began by apologizing that he was rusty, and that this was the first lodge he had attempted to visit in America. He had never made himself known as a Mason, although living more than six months in New York. He spoke a good grammatical English, with a decided English accent—that is, the accent of the better class—and I soon found him by his conversation to be a man of very good education. He produced the ponderous certificate in use by the Grand Lodge of England, half Latin and half English, by which I found that he had been a Mason about two years. I proceeded with the examination until I found that he was legally entitled to visit my lodge, and brought him inside. When he found that I was the secretary, he came up near my desk, and remained near me until the lodge closed. There was something so sad, so suppressed and subdued in the man's manner and speech, that I could not make it out. He looked poor enough, yet the stamp of the gentleman was unmistakably upon him. Before closing I mustered up courage to ask him if the lodge could do anything for him. He looked startled, blushed, thanked me very kindly, and said no, not now; and when the Master, in the words of the beautiful old ritual, asked is any brother of our Lodge, or a sojourning brother, in need of our aid or sympathy, I looked sharply at him. Again the blood mantled his face; he bowed his head as if in meditation, but said nothing. After lodge closed I gave him one of our visiting cards, and cordially invited him to call again. This he did several times, looking paler, sadder and poorer each time.

One day a letter was brought to my house requesting me to call that day upon Bro. Brown, my pale English friend; but as I only got the letter late in the evening, and it being lodge night, I resolved to call before going to the lodge, even at the risk of letting the brethren wait for me—which, by the way, they seldom had to do. I found the address given me to be in the most crowded east side tenement district, and as I mounted stair after stair, I felt indeed that I was in the home of that greatest monster of our present civilization—Poverty.

I knocked at the door of room No. 46,