

What are called the "Old York Constitutions," say that "every workman shall receive his wages weekly, and without scruple;" which, symbolically interpreted, means that the decisions of the Master shall be accepted without question.

But the case is different when the Lodge, having completed its work, proceeds to the transaction of ordinary business. Rules of order are now required to regulate the discussions which spring up, and the parliamentary law, as it affords the best system, may now be applied to the government of the Lodge.

But a Masonic Lodge, even when engaged in business only, differs very materially from any other society. The features of undivided responsibility which accrued to the Master, and of implicit obedience which was required from the craft in the operative system, continue to exert their influence upon the conduct of a Lodge, not only when at work, but also when engaged in business; and even here, therefore, the parliamentary law must be applied with some modification. This will appear in the subsequent chapters of this treatise. But it must always be borne in mind, that whenever we speak of the application of parliamentary law to a masonic Lodge, we mean a Lodge, engaged in business, and not a Lodge at work; and this distinction between a business Lodge and a working Lodge must never be forgotten.

CHAPTER III.

OF A QUORUM.

The parliamentary law provides that a deliberative body shall not proceed to business until a quorum of its members is present. What this quorum is has to be settled by a specific regulation of each organization. Thus, in the English House of Lords three constitute a quorum, and forty in the House of Commons. In both Houses of the American Congress, and in many of the State Legislatures, a majority of the members is required to make a quorum. But, no matter what is the number, it is settled by the general parliamentary law, that no business can be transacted unless the quorum, whatever it may be, is present. The only exception to this rule is, that after waiting a reasonable time, if no quorum can be obtained, the members present may organize for the purpose of an immediate adjournment to some other time.

With the exception of this provision, the parliamentary law of quorums is applicable to Freemasonry, and indeed is made so by special regulations. In the technical language of our ritual, a Lodge, to be capable of doing work or transacting business, must be "just, perfect, and regular." A "just Lodge," is one which has the Book of the Law unfolded, with the square and compass lying thereon; a "perfect Lodge" is one that consists of the requisite number of brethren; and a "regular Lodge" is one that has a warrant of constitution authorizing it to meet. The second only of these provisions refers to a quorum, but each is equally necessary to the validity of the meeting. In other words, no Lodge of Freemasons can be opened unless there be a sufficient number of brethren present, having a Bible, square, and compass, and a charter, or warrant of constitution. According to Oliver, an exception in the English Lodges made be made in the latter case; for he says, that "after the Lodge has been legally recognized by the authorities and registered in the Grand Lodge books, the absence of the warrant would not vitiate the proceedings, (*"Masonic Jurisprudence, chapter 6, section 1 ;"*) but a different doctrine prevails in this country, where it