

BRO. DRUMMOND, in his statistics for 1884, gives the total membership in Masonic lodges of this country, including Canada, as 567,321, showing an increase of 7,495 over the number reported last year. Nearly thirty thousand candidates were raised to the third degree during the twelve months covered by the report. In several jurisdictions a large amount of work has been done.

THE Square appears to have been one of the earliest geometrical figures, which was applied to any practicable purpose. And hence it became of great importance with the first Masons, which it still retains in our lodges, and is an emblem of morality and justice. As it is the duty of the Master of the Lodge, to preserve among its members a strict attention to moral deportment, and to mark and instantly correct the slightest deviation from the rules of propriety and good conduct, the Square is appropriately conferred upon him as the distinctive jewel of his office. The Square teaches us to regulate our conduct by the principles of morality and virtue.

FORMERLY it was laid down as a fundamental rule that "no man can be made a Mason under the age of twenty-five years, except by dispensation." This stringent law was subsequently thought worthy of limitation, and the condition now is that no man shall be made a Mason in any lodge under the age of twenty-one years, except by dispensation, which may be legally granted to a Lewis, or the son of a Mason. "Freemasons should be freeborn, of mature age, sound judgment, and strict morality. Freeborn, that the vicious habits of slavery might not contaminate the pure principles of freedom on which Masonry is founded," &c. Brothers Tucker and Orucefix differed. The former says, "I cannot but regret that the words 'free by birth' should have been altered. This, in my opinion, did form a Landmark of Masonry, and

such a one as no man who has ever given his assent to the ancient charges ought to have lent his hand to alter. But the edict has gone forth; and henceforth those beautiful lectures which were founded on this part of our ceremonies must be laid aside forever and forgotten." To this the latter replies with equal pertinacity: "With the idea that freedom by birth did form a Landmark, we differ. It not only never did, but never will. Landmarks of Masonry are unchangeable." So uncertain is the exercise of private judgment.

THE Master of a Masonic lodge is obligated to act fairly and discharge his full duty, but he cannot be called to account by the brethren who have placed him at their head. If he errs in exercising the authority with which he is invested, it is not within the province of the lodge to override his decisions. No appeal to the lodge from the pronounced judgment of its Master can be taken. While he continues to exercise the right of presiding, his decisions must be respected, and he must be deferred to according to what are the rights and prerogatives of the office he holds. One special element in the Masonic system is this investiture of the Master of a lodge with extensive powers. The wielding of such large authority may occasionally work badly, but on the whole is conducive, we believe, to the best interests of the craft. Of course, in case of any flagrant abuse of authority by the Master of a lodge, the interposition of the Grand Master may be sought.

THIRTY Masters of Lodges and three hundred Brethern greeted Grand Master Brodie, of New York, on his recent Grand Visitation to Commonwealth lodge, No. 409, Brooklyn, N. Y. Fraternal addresses were delivered by Grand Master Brodie, Past Grand Masters Couch and Evans, and Bro. Rob. Morris, P.G.M. of Kentucky.