

subsidiary questions. Thus it may be moved to lay one of them on the table, to postpone, or to commit it. As a general rule, however, the adoption of the subsidiary motion does not necessarily carry the main proposition under debate with it; but, the incidental question being laid on the table, or postponed, or otherwise disposed of by a subsidiary motion, the main discussion is resumed as if no such incidental question had been made. This rule, although general, is not universal, and the exception must be determined by the nature of each question.

CHAPTER XIX.

OF QUESTIONS OF ORDER.

In any assembly of persons met together for the purposes of deliberation and discussion, no satisfactory result can be attained unless the discussion is regulated by well-known and generally recognized rules. It is by such rules only that order and decorum can be maintained, discord and confusion prevented, and a concurrent harmony of opinions be reached. These are therefore the rules of order, and their importance is such that it becomes the interest of every member to see them enforced.

Rules of order relate to the present action of the body, not to any past or prospective proceedings. They prescribe the character of the motions that may be made, the time at which they ought to be made, and the precedency of one motion over another; they impose the necessary limits to debate, and indicate the bounds beyond which it is not lawful for a speaker to pass in his discussion of the question before the body.

Every permanent deliberative body adopts a code of rules of order to suit itself; but there are certain rules, derived from what may be called the common law of parliament, the wisdom of which having been proven by long experience, they have been deemed of force at all times and places, and are, with a few necessary exceptions, as applicable to Lodges and Chapters as to other societies.

These universal rules of order, sanctioned by uninterrupted usage and approved by all authorities may be enumerated under the following distinct heads, as applied to a masonic body:

1. Two independent original propositions cannot be presented at the same time to the meeting. If a Lodge is discussing a motion, no other independent motion can be entertained, although a subsidiary one may, until the first is disposed of.

2. A subsidiary motion cannot be offered out of its rank of precedence. Thus, when a motion has been made to lay any proposition on the table, it would be a breach of order to attempt to supersede that motion by one to commit or to postpone.

3. When a brother intends to speak, he is required to stand up in his place, and to address himself always to the presiding officer. It is a breach of order to address any other member or brother during the debate.

4. When two or more brethren rise nearly at the same time, the presiding officer will indicate, by mentioning his name, the one who, in his opinion, is entitled to the floor.

5. A brother is not to be interrupted by any other member, except for the purpose of calling him to order, nor while he is on the floor can any motion be made or question put.