

The Canadian Craftsman.

Port Hope, July 15, 1886.

ELECTIONEERING FOR OFFICE.

We commend to the representatives of the Grand Lodge of Canada the following comments of M. W. Bro. Granger, Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Iowa. They apply in this jurisdiction with equal force:—

"I could not go into retirement and feel that I had endeavored fully to discharge my duty if I should neglect this final opportunity to call your attention officially to this prevalent and growing evil.

"The law of this jurisdiction, enacted by this Grand Lodge, is as follows: 'Electioneering for office in the Grand Lodge, or the constituent lodge, is a Masonic offence, and therefore is sternly forbidden.' I have no information that this rule of law is violated in constituent lodges. Its violation in the Grand Lodge is so open and notorious that no member can be ignorant of the fact that it exists.

"Prior to my first visit to this Grand Lodge, in 1880, I had never known an instance of a violation of that law in letter or spirit. I had been educated to believe that it was un-Masonic to ask for, or if elected to an office, to decline it, if able to render the services demanded. And here, where of all places I expected every rule to be observed as a sacred duty, and among the law-makers of the craft, I found among many a seeming disregard of that wise provision of the law.

"In 1879, Past Grand Master Guilbert, in his address of welcome to the Grand Lodge, at Dubuque, submitted the very significant inquiry:—'Is there not higher and holier claims upon us as Grand Lodge representatives than those involved in a scramble for Grand Lodge offices?' And those

who have, year by year, witnessed the zeal and efforts for self or friends for official rank, must have felt that, with some at least, an office 'is the first great care of Masons,' at our annual gatherings.

"Now I do not criticise an honorable ambition for preferment or high rank in the craft, for if I did, the shaft must recoil and strike with unwonted force at home. But on the other hand, I would encourage that ambition, and recommend to my brothers that course of Masonic life, that, 'others seeing his good works,' might fill for him the measure of his ambition. I readily imagine the queries that must arise in connection with this subject, and realize that it is something of a delicate question for treatment, but they furnish no excuse for silence. Duty is best rewarded when faithfully discharged. Do you ask, are the officers of this Grand Body to be chosen without question or comment as to their character or qualifications? I answer no. But on the contrary, the utmost freedom in that respect is to be exercised. When once installed in office, can there be no understanding or unity of action in support of an opposing candidate? I answer yes, with the fullest liberty of criticism consistent with candor and fairness as to official conduct on the one hand, with freedom of commendation and inquiry on the other. No censure can ever be laid at the door of honest inquiry or truthful commendation. Is your inquiry, then, what is the evil of which you complain, or what would you prevent? I can illustrate. I have reliable information that more than once, among the members, propositions like this have been made. A professed candidate for a particular office, by himself or his friend, would say, I am candidate for office, and have twenty-five, forty or fifty votes for a candidate for any other office, who will bring me as many votes in return. That is the employment of means to secure the election of a can-