

The first clear ballot obtained in that lodge in nearly two years. A sigh of relief went up that night, and *eight* genuine propositions were at once handed in. The ice was broken, and there was no more black-balling, unless for just cause.

Another expediency: One single black ball appeared every time. No matter who had proposed the candidate, no matter how urgently favorable the committee reported, this single black cube was there all the while. The point was to find out who was the malcontent and yet keep the secret of the ballot inviolate. This time the Master kept his own counsel, and knowing that there were only just one dozen black cubes in the box, instead of balloting when the S. D. handed him the ballot-box he quietly removed one black ball each time.

Eleven times this maneuver was gone through with, and eleven times this single little black devil stared the Master in the face, and again he ordered the ballot spread, when, to everybody's surprise, an old and heretofore respected member of the lodge walked up, looked into the box, and deliberately adjusted his glasses, and made search, but not finding what he wanted, thrust his fingers into his vest pocket and deposited a black cube; but in his triumph at the thought of being prepared and thus foiling the Master, he held up the black ball, *exposed his ballot*, and the Master had him there. He had a little quiet conversation with him in the ante-room, and our old brother did not come to the lodge thereafter, and the little black joker disappeared with him. *Venia necessitati datur.*—*E. Loeveinstein, in N. Y. Dispatch.*

SLANDERS IN MASONRY.

We had frequent occasions to notice the restless state of brethren when in the presence of persons given to tattling, and on former occasions

have expressed our dislike of the poor practice of tale-bearing.

In looking over the decisions made by Grand Master, John T. Irion, and reported in January last to the Grand Lodge of Tennessee, we notice one that should arrest the attention of scandal-mongers, and excite the approval of all true Masons. The question that called for the decision, alluded more especially to the profane—how much should Masons take heed when speaking of brethren.

Question.—Should a Mason be disciplined for slandering a person who is not a Mason?

Answer.—He should.

One of the former edicts of the Grand Lodge, and which still expresses our sentiments on this subject, says:—"The despicable habit of tattling and slandering is unworthy any man or Mason, and that in *every* case of well-attested slander the calumniator be immediately expelled from all the benefits of Masonry." These are words fitly spoken, "like apples of gold in pictures of silver," and should be emblazoned in letters of enduring light on the walls of every Masonic hall. Slander is one of the most heinous crimes against the peace and harmony of our order and society.

'T is Slander

Whose edge is sharper than the sword,
whose *tongue*

Outvenoms all the worms of *Nile*.

Our reputations are dearer to us than life itself. The poet understood this when he said:—

Good name in man or woman

Is the immediate jewel of their souls.

Who steals my purse, steals trash,

But he that filches from me my good name,

Robs me of that which not enriches him,

And makes me poor indeed.

Our Grand Master, King Solomon, felt this when he said, "A good name is like precious ointment," and "is better than great riches." Of all places, the bosom of our fraternity should be the last to give shelter to a wilful slander. How can an institution that teaches unswerving obedi-