

## MASONIC COURTESY.

BY BRO. ROBERT RAMSAY.

As our former article upon this subject, which appeared in these columns has apparently excited some attention, we propose to once more allude to this important matter. We believe too much cannot be said upon a subject which so closely concerns every member of the Fraternity, and such being the case, we think it is not only the duty of the masonic journalist to write upon it, but that of the Worshipful Master and Officers of every lodge throughout the world, to impress upon the minds of their members, the necessity of cultivating an amicable relationship with sister lodges, and a courteous manner towards visiting brethren. Such being our views, we propose once more to express our opinions upon Masonic Courtesy; a courtesy that should exist between brothers not only *within*, but also *without* the portals of the lodge room.

We maintain in the first place that Freemasonry is something more than a mere ephemeral institution that exists simply for the purpose of practising certain rites and ceremonies—in a word, it is not an Order, but a Fraternity. What are our principles? What do our tenets inculcate? Are they not Equality, Fraternity and Morality? Do we not teach Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth? Is not Charity the very corner stone of our Society? If so, our duties are clear. The Mason who coldly treats a brother when in distress, is a traitor to the Brotherhood. The Mason who neglects to welcome as a brother, the visiting brother, is guilty of gross unmasonic conduct, and the Worshipful Master who thus forgets his duty is a disgrace to that Oriental Chair, in which so many great and noble men have sat. Still such things are done every day, and it is this coldness that has driven thousands of our best men from our lodges. There can be no denial to this assertion, as every mason must have heard expressions of annoyance and regret at this unfortunate state of affairs. If such is the case, (and though plain facts are often disagreeable ones, we must adhere to the statement just made,) what remedy is there for the evil? Our correspondent says "The Ballot-box." That is a power of strength alone, but however careful we may be, we will still find masons lacking in masonic courtesy. We believe the remedy is in the hands of the masters of subordinate lodges. *Example* is what the Fraternity require. Too many masons fancy the moment they become W. M., that the dignity of their office places them above the ordinary members of that lodge, a most preposterous idea.

We hold then that it is the duty of every Master to see that the officers and members of his lodge should welcome with a right good cordial grip and smile, the visitor; and he (the W. M.) may rest