

dering of the Ritual and the manner of conferring the several Degrees by the various Chapters, and the necessity for demanding more careful attention to the strict letter of the work authorized by the Grand Chapter is very pressing, as greater uniformity is much to be desired.

The Committee on the Ritual of the Mark, Past and Most Excellent Masters Degrees, are ready to report, and so soon as their action has been approved by Grand Chapter, we will have a complete authorized Ritual and no further innovations should be permitted. Grand Superintendents of Districts are required to give this important subject their earnest consideration, with a view to secure that uniformity in work which is so desirable. I understand that some First Principals of Chapters allow visiting Companions, or Members, to take part in the ceremonies, who do not work according to the recognized Ritual. This should not be permitted, as it is a clear dereliction of duty on the part of the presiding officer of a Chapter to permit any lecture, charge or part of a ceremony to be given in his Chapter which is not in accordance with that laid down by Grand Chapter.

SUSPENSION FOR NON-PAYMENT OF DUES.

My attention has been forcibly directed to the large and increasing number of Companions annually suspended by Subordinate Chapters for non-payment of dues, and the time has arrived when Grand Chapter, in the true interests of Capitular Masonry, should deal with this important and difficult subject, with a view to prevent the reckless and indiscriminate slaughter of every Companion who cannot meet the demands made upon him. To those who are unable to pay, it is apparently said—

"Plank down, plank your shekels,
Don't say you can't afford;
You had better let other Creditors wait,
Than try to cheat the Lord."
"For God loveth a cheerful giver,

No matter, down with the dust,
Pay freely, willingly, if you choose,
But anyhow, pay you must."

Companions who possess the means of paying and *will not*, deserve but little consideration; but as to those who are willing to pay, but for want of means *cannot*, it is the refinement of cruelty to cut them off from Masonic fellowship with their Companions, for an offence that is not a crime, but a misfortune. If as much energy were displayed in quietly ascertaining the ability of our members to meet the demands made upon them, as is sometimes exhibited by Companions who possess more zeal than discretion in "touting" for candidates to join the Chapters, there would be less suspensions for non-payment of dues, or indeed for any other cause.

SUSPENSIONS BY A LODGE DOES NOT AFFECT CHAPTER.

The decision given by some of my predecessors, "that suspension by a Craft Lodge does not affect the standing of the Companion in the Chapter," has led to considerable discussion among Royal Arch Masons. It is claimed, and apparently with much reason, that a member under suspension by a Lodge should not be permitted to remain in good standing in a Chapter, as it is not consistent with the honor and dignity of the Royal Craft that suspended Masons should be permitted to associate on terms of equality in the Chapter with those who cannot meet them in a Lodge. Nor can I avoid calling your attention to the fact that a Companion might meet with us to-day in Grand Chapter, who could not have met with us *yesterday* in Grand Lodge, being at the time under suspension by a Lodge. It can hardly be conducive to the well-being of Capitular Masonry, to permit such a state of matters to continue, and I cannot believe it to be right. I invite your careful consideration of this question, feeling assured that after you have done so, Grand Chapter will declare that suspension