

position held by our lodges, or individual Masons.

It is your duty, my duty, and every brother's duty, to closely examine the material that is being offered. It is not the welfare of any one individual that must occupy our attention, but that of the whole craft.

We must have perfect men; not as much in a physical as in a moral sense. We must have good material or none at all; better by far have a few genuine Masons than scores of *imitation* ones; therefore, if he who asks for admission does not conform literally to the tests of true manhood, reject him as you would a viper; better by far have a man that is not quite perfect physically than one that is perfect physically, yet imperfect in mind, tastes, habits, character or morality.

Committees to whom petitions are referred do not always perform their whole duty. In by far too many instances petitions are reported favorably upon without that due inquiry that there should be; occasionally there will be found committees that know their duty, and not hesitate to perform it. On the supposition that the examining committees are derelict in the performance of their duty, let each brother appoint himself a committee of one; let him examine closely into the character, habits and associates of the petitioner, and if he does not conform to the true standard, use the negative ballot without fear or favor, and consequently benefit the craft more than any one act that can be performed. If the petitioner is found worthy, then accept him; but do not stop there. He has much to learn; he is commencing a new life; then take him by the hand and teach him true Masonry. With the rest, he has a long ritual to learn before he can prove himself a brother Mason when amongst strangers. My experience has been that unless one commits the ritual as he advances, in nine cases out of ten he never does; just as soon as the new wears off, it be-

gins to be an old story; his interest flags, and when that happens the ritual is never learned.

The candidate must not acquire the erroneous idea that lodge-room work is all the work that there is to be performed; it is but a small portion of it, and must not by any means be considered the desideratum of Masonry. There is a history to be learned; a literature to be carefully perused; laws to be studied and thoroughly understood; and not only a study, but an application of the principles, teachings and maxims of Masonry.

It is the duty of every candidate to follow, literally, that part of the charge which says, "You are to converse with well-informed brethren, who will be as willing to give as you will be willing to receive information." I have seen candidates who went about with a lantern trying to find those "well-informed brethren" spoken of in the charge; they complained that although anxious and ready to do their part, they could find no one to "post them."

Fie upon such a lodge of so-called, but mis-called Masons as that; here is a candidate seeking for more light, but can find no one to bring him light, and he wonders to himself if there is not a good deal of sham in the charge given. No, my brother, there is no sham in the charge itself, but there is many times in the person that gives it.

I have seen brothers that have grown gray in the service, that were as ignorant of the laws, literature, history and practical workings of Masonry as the candidate that had just been brought to light; but you must not tell them that fact; their egotistical pride would at once revolt against the young upstart that dared tell them what Masonry was or is, outside of their own limited circle. I, too, have seen plenty of old Masons that accepted as literal facts every word of the ritualistic work of Masonry, and who honestly thought that the work that they had so often