

DUTIES OF MASTER.

The office of Master of a lodge is elevated and responsible, and the most important in the whole system of Freemasonry, as the entire Institution is largely dependent upon that officer for its character, reputation and prosperity. It may be safely asserted, as a general rule, that the character and standing of the members of a lodge can be correctly judged by the character and standing of their Master. If he be a man of intelligence and high moral worth, we may be sure that his lodge is composed of "good men and true."

In view of the magnitude of the office, it is important that the powers, prerogatives and privileges of the Master should be well understood, both by those who rule, and those who are governed. The powers and privileges of a Master of a lodge are fully equal to the prominence and importance of his office in the Masonic system. No one,—except the Grand Master or his Deputy,—can preside in his lodge in his presence without his consent. He may call to his assistance any Master Mason he pleases, whose work in his presence he is alone responsible for, and is equally authoritative and binding as his own. Such Master Mason may even occupy the chair, and confer the degrees, and his work will be strictly legal, if the Master be present and consenting.

A Master is solemnly bound to support the by-laws of his lodge. He may command the attendance of his officers and members, at any time, by summons, and they are bound to obey. He may appoint all committees of his lodge not otherwise specially provided for; may decide all questions of order, or Masonic law; and his decisions are final, unless reversed by the Grand Lodge upon appeal regularly taken. He is not bound by the usages of parliamentary bodies, except as he may please to adopt them. He has the right to install his officers

after he has been himself installed, and also his successor in office.

The Master is, however, in all cases bound to conform to the Constitution and edicts of the Grand Lodge, the by-laws of his own lodge, and the ancient established usages and landmarks of the Order. He would not be justified in refusing to put any motion, regularly made and seconded, not conflicting with these. He cannot refuse to declare a vote or ballot, when regularly taken. Though he may call any brother to the chair in his presence, he cannot authorize any brother, not even a Past Master, to preside in his absence. In the absence of the Master, all his powers and privileges are vested in the Wardens, in regular succession, and cannot be delegated to any one.

But there is another and no less important light in which we should view the office. We mean the Master's part in conferring the degrees, as no member of the Order can have failed to observe the manner in which the degrees are communicated has a large influence upon the mind of the candidate for our mysteries. It is hardly too much to say, that the first impressions of a candidate remain with him through life, and in proportion as he is favorably or unfavorably impressed upon his first admission to the lodge, will be his future zeal and usefulness as a Mason. In view of this fact, how important it is that the Master of a lodge should not only be a man of unblemished character, but of impressive manner and speech. When delivered with deliberation of manner, and in distinct and feeling tones, the beautiful symbolism and moral teachings of Freemasonry fall upon the mind and heart of a candidate with tenfold power. Indeed, there is no resisting their force. Though they fall as gently as the dew, they penetrate as thoroughly as that silent messenger of heaven.—*Messenger and Times*.

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The druggist is known by his phizz.