

was a wise and prudent proceeding, as the undue multiplicity of lodges does not strengthen the position or standing of the Craft

The suggestion that Masters of lodges should endeavour to make meetings attractive and instructive, and that the brethren should acquire a knowledge of the history of the Craft, was an excellent one and worthy of thoughtful consideration.

In our opinion the Grand Master took the right view of the physical qualifications of candidates, his opinion being that mental rather than bodily qualifications should be the passport to our Institution, provided the candidate is able to receive, perform and communicate all parts of the ceremonies and duties of the Order.

Grand Lodge was informed that it had met for "the settlement of matters of difference in our subordinate lodges," and that "the brethren throughout our jurisdiction are loyal, happy and contented." THE CRAFTSMAN has pointed out on several occasions where serious differences existed in a lodge, and that the life of that lodge was in danger, in the hope that something might be done to remedy an evil which, if not checked, may extend to other lodges. From an intimate knowledge of this case we fail to see where happiness and contentment exist in the lodge referred to. The brethren of that lodge are capable, however, of ending the long and disastrous difference, but in doing so they will compromise the dignity of Grand Lodge. Indifference, as well as vice, has its punishments.

The Grand Master's announcement that he deemed the decisions made by himself during the year, as unworthy of being reported to Grand Lodge, was a peculiar one. In other jurisdictions in America much importance is placed upon the decisions of Grand Masters, as they are taken as precedents in the absence of any laws bearing upon the cases decided, or they may be explicit

explanations of obscure clauses in the constitution. Bro. Walkem was fortunate if he had no knotty problems to solve, while the members of the Craft are unfortunate in not knowing his decisions if intricate points were submitted to him. Bro. Walkem further informed Grand Lodge that he had declined to answer a number of questions presented to him during the year, on the ground that there would be a possibility of them coming before him for adjudication. With all due respect for the Grand Master we fail to see why he should refrain from giving an opinion on all worthy matters submitted to him, even should they be based on *ex parte* statements, as he is not the supreme judge, final judgment being passed by Grand Lodge, of which he is but a unit, albeit he is the acknowledged ruler. Bro. Walkem has, in this instance, taken refuge behind a legal technicality that might be appropriate in a court of law, but which is out of place in Freemasonry.

Bro. Walkem clearly defined his position relative to amending the constitution for the mere sake of change, as he held it important "that our laws should be stable and certain, which cannot be the case if we constantly change them. They may not be, and probably are not, perfect, but, as regards minor defects, I believe it to be better for us to

"bear those ills we have
Than fly to others that we know not of."

There is no disguising the fact that a radical element is creeping into Grand Lodge, and that many absurd changes will be demanded, owing to several causes. Among them may be mentioned the feeling that there is too much of the machine controlling Grand Lodge, and further, the haughtiness displayed by some Grand Lodge officers when proper questions are asked them is galling. No matter how exalted the personage he never sacrifices his dignity by answering a question courteously. If some of the Grand Master's associates would follow his example there would be less cause for fault-finding.