

or fellow could be absent from his lodge, especially when warned to appear at it, without incurring a severe censure ; unless it appeared to the master and wardens that pure necessity hindered him.

The persons made masons and admitted members of a lodge must be good and true men, free-born, and of mature and discreet age and sound judgment , no bondmen, no women, no immoral or scandalous men, but of good report.

IV.—OF MASTERS, WARDENS, FELLOWS, AND APPRENTICES.

All preferment among masons is grounded upon real worth and personal merit only, that so the lords may be well served, the brethren not put to shame nor the royal craft despised ; therefore no master or warden is chosen by seniority, but for his merit. It is impossible to describe these things in writing, and therefore every brother must attend in his place, and learn them in a way peculiar to this fraternity. Candidates may, nevertheless, know that no master should take an apprentice, unless he has sufficient employment for him ; and unless he be a *perfect youth, having no maim or defect in his body*, that may render him incapable of learning the art, or serving his master's lord, and of being made a brother and then a fellow-craft in due time, after he has served such a term of years as the custom of the country directs ; and that he should be descended of honest parents, that so, when otherwise qualified, he may arrive to the honor of being the warden, and then the master of the lodge, the grand warden, and at length the grand master of all the lodges, according to his merit.