

Our distinguished Brother begs to refer us to the learned discussion of Bro. Richard Vaux on this subject. We have already referred ourselves to it, and still agree to differ with our good Brother of Pennsylvania, even after having tilted a lance with him on the subject. But will Brother Atkinson permit us to refer him to his own Grand Lodge on the subject, which apparently in a better frame of mind in November, 1892, than in 1890, adopted a report of the Committee on Jurisprudence, which gives the following reasons for declaring a candidate ineligible for the degrees of Freemasonry :—

“ Your Committee are of the opinion that such petitioner is not eligible to the mysteries of Freemasonry, *because his deformity is such as “ to prevent him from meeting fully the requirements of the Ritual.”* (See edict 8 and decision 42, Book of Masonic Law.)”

We should have mentioned sooner, that the same Committee made an interesting report, which Grand Lodge also approved, as follows :—

“ The Committee on Work asks for a definition of what constitutes legal Masonic information. As to this, we would answer that no rigid rule can be laid down. The information should be such as to convince a prudent man beyond any reasonable doubt. This may be had from strict trial and due examination—that is, that the trial or the examination should not be slight, trivial, or loosely conducted. And the legal Masonic information should possess similar certainty and be based upon carefully ascertained truth.

To insist that a Mason cannot vouch for another unless he has sat in Lodge with him is to confine the power of vouching within limits unreasonably close. There are other means of information as to Masonic character just as trustworthy as the fact of having met a Brother within the tiled recesses of the Lodge. In fact, the power of avouchment may be safely left to the good common sense and sound judgment of a cautious man, and it cannot be properly limited by cast-iron rules which must in all cases be complied with ; and hence the best definition of legal Masonic information, which we can readily frame in words is that already mentioned, viz. : It must be such as to satisfy a prudent man beyond any reasonable doubt. It may be derived from having sat in Lodge with a Brother ; from the avouchment of one who has so met the brother in Lodge ; or, from other sources equally trustworthy and equally conclusive to the mind of a prudent and cautious man.”