

The second, or motions for adjournment, it has been heretofore shown, are unknown in the usages or in the parliamentary law of Masonry, and may therefore be dismissed without further discussion. The third and fourth will constitute the subject-matter of succeeding chapters.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

### OF THE MOTION FOR RECONSIDERATION.

By the original parliamentary law, a motion for reconsideration is not a privileged question. Indeed, in the English House of Commons, whence our laws of parliament have derived their origin, the question of reconsideration is unknown. There a question, having been once carried, cannot be questioned again, but must stand as the judgment of the house; and when a bill is once rejected, another of the same substance cannot be proposed at the same session. This rule has often led to much inconvenience, and many expedients have been resorted to obviate its effects; such as to pass an act to explain, or to enforce and make more effectual, or to rectify the mistake, of an act which has been once, however unwisely, passed.

Nothing could possibly be more absurd than such a regulation, which forbid all change of opinion; and therefore the American House of Representatives has adopted a rule, that a motion for reconsideration, on the same day or the day after, is always in order, and shall take precedence of all other motions, except motions to adjourn. Hence, in this country, the motion for reconsideration has become a privileged question.

It is, however regulated by certain rules, which prescribe the time when, the person by whom, and the questions on which, it may be proposed.

1. The motion for reconsideration must be made, says the congressional rule, on the same day or the day after. The operation of this rule in a Grand Lodge or Grand Chapter must evidently be the same. In a Lodge where the session does not continue beyond a day, or rather an evening, it is evident that the motion for reconsideration, to be within this rule, must be made at the same communication, at any time before the Lodge is closed. Whatever has been done at one communication cannot be reconsidered at a subsequent, any more than an act passed by Congress at one session can be reconsidered at another. If it is deemed advisable at a future communication to do away with a resolution which had been adopted at a preceding one, the proper motion would be not to reconsider, but to rescind or repeal.

2. No one who had voted in the minority on any question can move a reconsideration. The right of doing so is restricted to those who had voted in the majority. And the reason of this obvious: If it were permitted that those who had been defeated might seek to renew the contest in another trial of strength, then the time of the assembly might be wasted by the repeated efforts of the few, who were discontented, to obtain a reconsideration and a new discussion of questions which had been already settled by the many to their own satisfaction.

3. The motion of reconsideration can only be made in reference to matters that remain within the control of the meeting. Thus when an appropriation has been made, and under its authority the Treasurer has paid out the money, it will be too late to move a reconsideration of