

pled. In many parts there is, I fear, too much disposition to destroy the *sacredness* of the ballot. It is a sacred trust committed to us; in our hands let it never be abused. Properly used it is a most effectual protection; abused, it becomes a potent weapon of wrong and discord. The doors of our temple are closed only to the unworthy. Each brother holds the sacred right to keep them out forever."

ADMITTING MEMBERS FREE.

WEST VIRGINIA, 1881.—Grand Master Faulkner decided that a lodge had no right to refund the initiation fee to a "minister of the gospel," after he had taken his degrees, as it would be merely an evasion of the law requiring the payment of the fee.

We should think that this would be a very easy law to evade, for, if lodges have control of their own funds, they could vote an amount equal to the fee, for a sermon which they might ask the reverend brother to preach, but if there was any understanding that the fee should be refunded, it would seem very much like using influence to get a candidate, which would be very unmasonic.

NUMBER OF MASONS REQUIRED AT A LODGE.

VERMONT, 1882.—Grand Master Butler says: "The number necessary to constitute a lodge is seven; to continue a lodge, seven; and to transact the business of a lodge, seven."

RHODE ISLAND, 1881.—Grand Master Freeman says: "In answer to the question as to whether the second degree could be conferred when only six brethren were present, I replied that while I should think it advisable under such circumstances to postpone the work, yet I was not aware of any regulation of this Grand Lodge or in the general regulations of freemasonry that would forbid it. That while it requires seven members of a lodge to ballot for initiation or membership, yet according to the old rituals three master masons could open a master's lodge for work, provided they possessed the necessary constitutional qualifications."

In Quebec an entered apprentice is a member of the Lodge, every lodge must be opened in the first degree, when at least seven must be present, but of these seven only three need be master masons, if two fellow crafts and two entered apprentices are present the lodge would be complete. Three rule a lodge, five hold a lodge, seven or more make it perfect. If the lodge is perfectly formed as above why should not the five pass a candidate and the three raise him if properly opened and properly closed in the first degree?

RIGHT OF VISITATION.

MAINE, 1882.—Grand Master King says: "In answer to the question: 'Can a mason, by stating to the master of his lodge, that he objects to sitting with a brother not a member, prevent the brother's visiting the lodge until the objection is withdrawn?' I have answered, no.