

ing under the guidance of a skilful and experienced master, without feeling that every sign and symbol, and indeed the whole working of our beautiful and impressive ritual, are calculated to inculcate in the advanced Mason, as well as in the neophyte, a sincere love for true morality and goodness, and an honest hatred of hypocrisy and insincerity, whatever forms they may assume. If your officers and members keep these principles always in view, they will insure that perfect order and harmony in the lodge, without which it cannot prosper, nor can you carry out the true objects of Freemasonry, a desire to do so being imperatively necessary in every body of Masons who associate themselves together to form a new lodge. When properly carried out you will not only avoid the contentions and difficulties which have proved fatal to some lodges, but you will also be able by your actions to convince the community in which you live, that Masonry is that beautiful and perfect moral science which all its devotees claim it to be. Your success will also depend in a great degree, upon the material by which your ranks are recruited from the outside world, you should be careful that they are intelligent, moral and good men whom you admit to a participation in your mysteries, for "once a Mason is always a Mason," and the admission of an improper person will reflect a lasting disgrace upon, not only your own lodge, but upon the Craft in general. Guard well your portals, and see that none be permitted to enter the mystic circle of Masonry but such men as you have good grounds for believing will reflect honor upon the fraternity. On the other hand you must be equally careful to exclude no man who is otherwise a proper person to be admitted because of his creed, his politics, or least of all, because of any private pique or quarrel, for I regret to say that many a man against whose moral character no word of reproach could be uttered, has been excluded from the privileges of the Craft, because of the personal dislike of some unthinking or dishonest Mason. No man should for such a reason be denied the privileges of Masonry—on the contrary, should any one apply for admission against whom a member of the lodge entertains a private grudge, the question for the Mason to discuss and settle with himself, whether the applicant for admission is a man of good character, honest, upright and under the tongue of good report in the community. If such be the case, and if he be found worthy of admission, then it is a Mason's undoubted duty to sink his personal dislike and grant him admittance, and the result will probably be that when he becomes a Mason, the difficulties which could not be adjusted while he was without the pale of Masonry, will melt away before the kindly breath of a common brotherhood. If I may seem to have dwelt too long upon this subject, it is only because I feel that much of your future will depend upon the manner in which individual members of the lodge exercise their right of ballot, for in my short experience, I have seen much injury to the Craft result from the improper exclusion as well as from the improper admission of candidates for Masonry. Another matter of great importance to your success, will be keeping the lodge perfectly free from cabals and cliques among its members. Masons, simply because they are Masons, are no more free from the ordinary vices and failings of poor humanity, than the rest of the world, and the mere fact that Masonry is (though so perfect a science) of mere human origin, and that Masonic lodges are made up of men of different modes of thinking, render it an almost inevitable result, that different and indeed very opposite opinions will prevail in matters which come up for the decision of the lodge. In such cases it is the undoubted right, as well as the duty of every Mason, to express his views in a calm temperate manner, saying nothing likely to offend the most sensitive brother, but when the vote of the lodge is once taken, it is the duty of the minority to bow to the decision of the majority. No brother should therefore endeavor by outside canvassing, to induce members of the lodge to adopt his views and vote with him, but should remember, that Masons are men of sufficient intelligence to judge and act for themselves in all matters pertaining to the lodge, and that no brother has any right to attempt by undue means to gain his own ends, or sway a brother's judgment from what that brother may deem right. Believe me, brethren, it is only by such a course that you will prevent the formation of those antagonistic cliques which have worked much injury in many lodges. Let every Mason upon every subject exercise the judgment wherewith the Almighty has blessed him, and having come to an unprejudiced decision, let him carry it out uninfluenced by any person, and at the same time let him learn that the harmony of the lodge is only to be preserved by each of its members (should occasion require it) being prepared to sacrifice his own schemes when such a sacrifice shall be for the general good. There is but one subject more to which I wish to direct your attention, and that is that you be constant in your attendance at the communications of the lodge, for it is only by such constant attendance that your officers will perfect themselves in the lodge ritual, and your members learn to appreciate the true beauties of that system of morality which is veiled in allegory, and illustrated by symbols. Let each member do all in his power to render