

forth and which are to remain, because the latter gain all the indolent, the indifferent, and the inattentive; and the general rule has therefore been adopted, that those shall remain in who vote for the preservation of the existing order of things, and those go out who are in favor of a change. A similar manner of dividing the House in the American Congress having been found inconvenient, the present rule was adopted, by which those in the affirmative of the question first rise from their seats, and afterwards those in the negative. This mode has been adopted in many Lodges, where the count of the standing members is made by the Senior Deacon. But as it is just as easy to count uplifted hands as uplifted bodies, it is perhaps better to retain the old system of voting. When, therefore, a division is called for, those in the affirmative should raise their right hands, which are to be counted by the Senior Deacon, and then those in the negative raise their hands, which are counted in the same manner. It is a general principle of parliamentary law, that all who are present shall vote on one side or the other, unless excused by the House. As this rule is founded on the just principle, that no man shall be permitted to evade his responsibility as a legislator, the rule seems equally applicable to masonic bodies, where every Mason owes a certain responsibility to the Order of which he is a member.

In the usual mode of voting, either with or without a division, it is difficult to enforce the rule, because it is impossible to determine with certainty those who have declined to vote. In parliamentary bodies, when the yeas and nays are called, it is easy to enforce the rule; but it is not customary, and I think not proper, to demand the yeas and nays in Lodges. In Grand Lodges, where the members are responsible to a constituency whom they represent, the vote by Lodges is often called for, which is equivalent to demanding the yeas and nays; and we have no doubt that in such cases every member is bound to vote, unless excused by the Grand Lodge.

The rule must also be enforced in a subordinate Lodge on the ballot for a candidate for initiation, where every member is required to deposit his ballot. And this is founded on the great unanimity, as it is set forth in article VI of the General Regulations of 1791, where it is said that "no man can be entered a brother of any particular Lodge, or admitted to be a member thereof, without the *unanimous consent of all the members of that Lodge then present* when the candidate is proposed, and their consent is formally asked by the Master."

In parliamentary law, the presiding officer votes only when the House is equally divided, or when his vote, if given to the minority, will make the division equal, and in such case the question is lost.

The rule in Masonry is different from this: There the presiding officer is entitled to a vote like any other member, and, in addition to this, gives a casting vote when the Lodge is equally divided. The parliamentary rule, therefore, that when the House is equally divided the vote is lost, can never apply in Masonry, since on an equal division of the Lodge the casting vote of the presiding officer always gives a preponderance to one side or the other, as the case may be.

There are some other regulations of parliamentary law in reference to voting which seem applicable to masonic bodies, because they are founded on the principles of right and expediency, and do not contravene any of the landmarks or constitutions of the Order.

Thus, in putting the question, the affirmative must be put first, and then the negative, and until both are put it is no full question.