

Nothing is Lost.

Where is the show?
 'Tis not long ago
 It cover'd the earth with a veil of white;
 We heard not its footsteps soft and light,
 Yet there it was in the morning bright;
 Now it hath vanished, away from sight
 Not a trace remains
 In fields or lanes.

Where is the frost?
 It is gone and lost
 The forms of beauty it gaily made,
 The pictures rare on win'ows array'd.
 "Be silent," it said; the brooks obey'd.
 The frost work's wild pictures all did fade;
 At the smile of the sun
 All was undone.

Where is the rain?
 Its pattering came;
 Dancing along with a merry sound,
 A grassy bed in the fields it found;
 Each drop came on the roof with a bound.
 Where is the rain? It hath left the ground.
 What god hath it done,
 Going away so soon?

Ever, ever
 Our best endeavor
 Seemeth to fall like the melted snow;
 We worked out our thoughts wisely and slow;
 The seed we sow—but it will not grow;
 Our hopes, our resolves—where do they go?
 What doth remain—
 Memory and pain?

Nothing is lost—
 No snow nor frost
 That come to enrich the earth again;
 We thank them when the ripening grain
 Is waving over the hill and plain,
 And the pleasant rain springs from earth
 again.

All endeth in good—
 Water and food.

Never despair;
 Disappointment bear.
 Through hope seemeth vain, be patient still;
 Thy good intents God will fulfill.
 Thy hand is weak; His powerful will
 Is completing thy life work still.
 The good endeavor
 Is lost!—ah! never.

The Secret Ballot.

The founders of the institution of the Fraternity of Freemasons wisely provided that a unanimous consent must be first obtained before a man could become a member thereof—that as long as one member demanded that he should not be received, no profane should be made a Mason. They also prudently ordained that the ballot for reception of candidates should be had in such a manner as that none could know how others voted, so that, with the theory honestly carried out in practice, it would be impossible that one should be able to say, "you rejected my friend."

The Grand Lodge of Illinois has, in our opinion, done wisely in going a step further, and prohibiting from the records of the subordinate Lodges the reports of the Committees to which are entrusted the duties of examining the characters of candidates proposed for membership, and passing upon their fitness to be allowed to enter the circle of the Fraternity. By these means no record is left of a procedure, or of the persons engaged in it, which, however conscientiously the task may have been performed, may possibly give offense, and acting upon human sensibilities, may create a coolness between Brethren.

It seems to us that this rule of the Grand Lodge is strictly in line with, and auxiliary to the principle upon which the secret ballot is founded, and that it is a sort of necessary *addendum* to that provision of Ancient Freemasonry, which is not fully sustained without it. But it seems to us that many members do not fully understand, or at least do not appreciate their duties under the law of the secret ballot, and regarding this we wish to say a few words. How frequently it

is the case that a member, being interested in the introduction of a candidate, the report of the Committee being favorable, rises in his place and endorses the favorable report, or, perhaps, proceeds further and gives the members present the benefit of his knowledge and convictions relative to the qualifications of the proposed initiate. And many do this without even thinking for an instant that they are violating the secrecy of the ballot.

Surely, if one member has the right to "explain his vote," in this manner, then all the rest have the same right, and cannot be debarred from exercising it.—Where would be the secrecy of the ballot, should such a right be conceded and acted upon? Suppose a candidate is to be balloted for, and liberty is given for any or all who desire to express their opinion as to whether he is fit to become a member. We will say there is a quorum of seven members present, and six of them profess their willingness for the candidate's reception. The ballot is spread and returned not clear. Of course every one knows where the unfavorable ballot came from, and the Brother who cast it has no shield between him and the certain knowledge of his Brethren. The ballot is no more secret than it would have been had it been taken *viva voce*, or by the uplifted hand. The whole intent of the secret ballot is neutralized and defeated by such a course of conduct.

But such procedure, destructive as it is of the secrecy of the ballot, is not merely suppositious. We have heard of cases where this supposition has been carried out to the letter, and have seen some instances where a limited number of members were allowed to define their position on an approaching ballot, and it was highly probable that all might have done so, had they desired. We presume that the matter need only be stated, to have its general wrongfulness understood and appreciated by those whom it most concerns.

There is another method of partially revealing the secrets of the ballot that obtains in some Lodges. In this case the Master announces the result of the ballot, stating the number of black balls cast. The impolicy of this course may be seen by noticing that members, as soon as the result is given, at once set themselves to guessing, perhaps not in words, but mentally, as to who cast the rejecting ballots, and they must be very poor specimens of the smart ones of the guessing nation, if they do not frequently guess right.

It is enough that the Master declares the candidate rejected, and the least number that knows farther than this, is the best. In the language of an old Master who was inquired of after the Lodge closed, how a ballot stood on a particular application—"the Junior Warden knows, the Senior Warden knows, and the Master knows, and they are enough to know." No good and much evil can result from this method of partially revealing the result of a ballot that was intended to be, and should be kept sacred.

But we think the secrecy of the ballot should be sacredly observed still further. Has a member the right under the rules requiring secrecy, to reveal to a Brother the manner in which he voted? We say most decidedly not. If one Brother has this right, so have they all, and under all circumstances favoring such a plan, it might be established beyond a question, by this system of confession, by whose vote a candidate has been rejected and the whole secret of the ballot revealed. Hence, we say that no member has the right to say to another that he cast a

white or a black ball in any known instance. And yet, many well meaning Brethren are, unthinkingly, let us hope, guilty of this practice.

It may be thought unnecessary to say that it would be a grievous fault and wrong for a brother to reveal what kind of a ballot another brother cast, the first having accidentally become known to the fact, and it would seem that one's sense of propriety would always prevent a transgression of the rules in this direction. But experience convinces us that facts do not justify this conclusion. We have known several, if not many instances, where a brother became, by accident, cognizant of the casting of a black ball, and revealed it to others. We have known many cases where the fact that a white ball had been cast by a brother become known to the Lodge by a brother too wise to keep such a secret. Though the injury may not be as great as where a black ball has been cast, yet in both cases to reveal the fact is contrary to the design of the secret ballot, and therefore wrong.

If the above principles are sound, it follows that a member cannot be dealt with for any ballot he may see fit to cast, because neither the Lodge nor its officers and members have any right or business to know how he ballots. In plain terms, it is none of their business how or what kind of a ballot he casts, and they cannot legally or justly inquire into that matter at all. That is a question between the individual and his conscience, and no power in Masonry—not even the Grand Master nor the Grand Lodge—has the prerogative to interfere with its solution. Though it may appear to his Brethren that his ballot is cast from wrong or even from base motives, yet he cannot be asked: "Why do ye do so?"

And yet, right here is where many inexperienced Masons wish to commence proceedings against a Brother. Having assumed or learned that a Brother has cast a ballot against a candidate they desired to have accepted, and, being satisfied in some way that he did it from unworthy motives, they propose to call upon him to give his reasons for such conduct, forgetting that they ask an explanation of an act which they have no right to know has taken place. But this course is taken only by the inexperienced Mason, and even he can see the utter inappropriateness, if he will think a moment.

The ballot is secret in all that term implies, and if these lines shall have the effect on the Fraternity to make its members more generally observant of the fact, the purpose for which they were written will have been accomplished.—WM. ROUNDEVILLE, in *Voice of Masonry*.

The forests of Europe are estimated as being 500,000,000 acres in extent. In North America 1,460,000,000 acres are covered with trees, of which area 900,000,000 are in British North America. In South America forests occupy 700,000,000 acres. The proportion of forest land to the whole area of Europe is computed at 20 per cent.; in America, 21. Supposing, therefore, 20 per cent. to be the proportion in Asia, Africa and Australia, the grand total of the forests of the world cover a space of 7,734,000 geographical miles.

There are a number of Masonic lodges now at work in Valparaiso, Chili—two of them working under the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, one under the Grand Lodge of England, and one under that of Scotland. All meet in the same building and the most fraternal relations exist between them.

Profanity.

The extent to which the vulgar and vile practice of cursing and swearing is carried is truly appalling, and I am pained to say that the practice prevails to a fearful and alarming extent even amongst the members of the Masonic Fraternity. This is a practice alike shameful and disgraceful. As Masons, we are taught never to mention the name of Deity but with that reverential awe which is due from the creature to the Creator, and at the mention of whose name we should with reverence most humbly bow. The Holy Bible, that great light of Masonry, proclaims in tones of thunder, and says, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy god in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain." That great light, we are taught will guide us into all truth; if so, then its mandates must be obeyed.

Swearing, or the use of profane language in any manner, is not gentle; it is not manly, it is not Masonic. Swearing is low; it is vile; it is degrading. It has never been received as a recommendation from any one; it is harsh to the ear of the refined; it is repugnant and shocking to the ear of the pious and godly. Cursing and swearing never made a man wiser; it never made a man richer; it never made a man happier; it never made a man better, or brought him any honors. Cursing and swearing is a high offense against the institution of Freemasonry, and no Mason can indulge in its practice with impunity; whenever he does so, he lays himself liable to Masonic discipline, and should be dealt with accordingly. The Freemason who curses and swears is a blight and curse to the institution; and as the dignity and honor of the institution depends upon the morality and good reputation of its members, I entreat and exhort you as a friend and Brother, one who has your interest and the interest and good reputation of the institution at heart, to refrain from the vulgar and horrid practice of cursing and swearing. Live and act according to the sublime teachings of our ancient and honorable institution, then you will be pure and upright, as God has designed you should be. Finally, my Brethren, be ever guarded, and "swear not at all."—C. W. HAMISFAR, in *Masonic Review*.

Wait and Hope.

This is a world full of trouble, full of disappointment, as we all know; but there is, after all, no folly so great as that of ceasing to invite the smiles of Hope, not only because her smiles are so sweet, but also because while we live, there must always be some good as well as some sorrow, awaiting us.

We can no more stand still in life than we can turn back. When we have no desire to go on, invisible forces are at work to compel us to do so. There are things we must do; people we must meet; events that will accrue to us. We cannot believe that the deeds will all be such as we must regret, the events all sorrowful ones, the new acquaintances all enemies.

And since we may do good and have good done to us—since true hearts may meet ours, though we to-day do not so much as know that they beat what may we not hope?

Your home may be cold and dark, but it is not because the sun does not shine. It only needs a hand to open the door, and put aside the curtain, to let in warmth and light. So, any moment the shut doors of your life may open, and earth's sunshine fall across your heart. Wait and hope; it is not only that the angel whose mission it is to do this deed carries for a little on the road.