

There are various forms of voting, both in Masonic Lodges, and in the general transactions of other Societies of the world, which may be divided into two essentially different methods. The first, which the vote is recorded openly, so that all present may know to what end it is given, the other, which is given secretly, so that the purpose of the vote is only known to the person recording it.

In making use, therefore, of this powerful agent—the ballot—brothers should never forget to give the probable consequences of each vote their full and earnest consideration before recording it, remembering it fairly with respect to the advantage or disadvantage it may be to the Lodge, as well as with regard to the well-being of or against whom it is given. If they act thus, they will give of the greatest advantage to themselves, their brethren, and their Lodge, and assist in promoting the prosperity of the Society to which they belong.

A wedding took place at La Crosse a few days ago at which, according to the *Danvers Herald*, the bride was given away by the city, and the city was mighty glad to get rid of her.

On a recent trip of the Memphis Belle, near Vicksburg, Mrs. C. W. Carhart, already confined, was confined, and the twins were cribbed in less than two hours after the lady came on board.

The new treaty between Brazil and Paraguay provides for the cession to the former of all the territory comprised within the margin of the river Apa; for the recognition on the part of Paraguay of a war debt to Brazil of \$300,000,000; Brazil promises to protect Paraguay against all foreign and domestic attacks, and will maintain in Paraguay for ten years a permanent military force.

A St. Louis woman hearing that the boarding house of her lover was in flames and that he was in the upper story unable to escape, rushed frantically to the spot, seized a ladder and mounted it, despite the cries of the firemen.

Dolly Varden mother shoes are advertised by a Troy blacksmith.

St. Louis is swept by tornadoes, Chicago is carried away by conflagrations, Cincinnati perishes by the thousands from poisoned whiskey, Louisville is the future great city.

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By F. Q. BENDALL

There are various forms of voting, both in Masonic Lodges, and in the general transactions of other Societies of the world, which may be divided into two essentially different methods.

In its application with regard to Freemasonry, the ballot is used for two essentially different purposes, which we may term: I. The Competitive Ballot, and II. The Elective or Exclusive Ballot.

The first, or Competitive form of ballot, is employed in the election of Master and officers of the Lodge. In this form of ballot out of a number of members, who may be equally well qualified to discharge the duties of the office for which the election is made, it is necessary that the Lodge should, by a majority of its members, appoint to such office the one member whose acceptance of its duties will, in their opinion, best conduce to the benefit of the Lodge.

In an election of this kind it is eminently the duty of the Craft, to consider with great care and attention the qualifications of the several individuals who are eligible for the office in which it is proposed to place them, and when the election has been decided in favor of one or other, it is equally incumbent on all to bow with submission to their lawfully constituted authority, and to render to them the duty which of right they acquire by virtue of their position.

The second class of ballot, which may be called the Elective or Exclusive ballot, is that form which is employed in the ballot for candidates for initiation into the mysteries of the Masonic Society, or as adjoining members of a Lodge. In this case, as Masons and members of an organization founded upon the excellent and noble principles of the Masonic Society, it is an essential duty to see that none enter the precincts of the Sanctuary, save those whose conduct is in every way correct, and whose character is quite unimpeachable; in fact, every candidate for admission into Freemasonry should be calculated to reflect credit on it as a body, and to those who will at all times strictly regard the Cardinal Virtues, and other noble teachings, which are openly or symbolically inculcated in the Lodge room.

By a due care in this important and essential particular, the success which true Freemasonry has acquired will be enhanced, and its reputation extended among the outer world; and while every ready and willing to welcome into the fraternity good men and true, it should be the most earnest endeavor of all to prevent the admission of any who are at all likely by their conduct or character, either in or out of the Lodge, to bring discredit thereon, or to throw the slightest reproach upon so ancient and honorable a Fraternity. We say the slightest discredit; advisedly, for when the outer world attempts to criticize a secret society, of whose doings and affairs it must be in perfect ignorance, it is always too ready to look upon the dark side, and to magnify any dereliction from the path of duty, which may have been committed by any of its members; thereby throwing odium upon the whole fraternity, on account of the failings of one or two persons who have gained admission into its Society.

While the two forms of ballot, which we have just described, have much in common, we have also to notice some important points of difference. In the Competitive ballot, such as, for example, that for the election of a Lodge, there are of necessity a great many brethren, who are undoubtedly well qualified for the chair—qualified from the fact of having duly and diligently filled the station of a Warden for the prescribed period, and qualified to preside over the Lodge from a true and genuine knowledge of the work and lectures, and of the science of Masonry; and, were it possible to select, in a perfect manner, with only one chair to be filled; it therefore follows of necessity that the honor cannot be given to all, and that at least twenty-four persons are necessary to be among the non-elected. Such being the case, the non-election of any brother cannot be considered to cast any reflection upon him, either as to his character, or the respect in which he is held by his brother Masons, but simply shows that in the judgment of the majority of the members present at the Lodge, (be that majority large or small) it has been considered advisable that another brother should preside over the Lodge for the ensuing year.

With regard to the Elective or Exclusive ballot, we have this very important difference, that instead of one individual being selected from a number to fill a certain office, the number of persons who may be elected is unlimited, and as all true Craftsmen are desirous of seeing Freemasonry progress by the addition of worthy men to the Fraternity, the fact of a candidate being rejected, makes it appear that there is probably something in his conduct at variance with the principles of the Society in which he has been refused admittance; and as the world in general entertains a favorable opinion of the Ancient and Honorable Fraternity of Free and Accepted Masons, the fact of the exclusion of a candidate from that Society must tend to give to others an adverse opinion of his character and conduct.

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