

## Law of physical perfection

The physical perfection upholder will find in the G. H. P. no advocate so far as Chapter qualifications go.

"What is this law of physical perfection and from whence did it derive its origin?"

"The Law of the old charges which declares that a candidate must be a perfect youth, 'having no maim or defect in his body,' was a practical rule adopted by operative masons, not for any symbolic reason, I take it, but purely for utilitarian reasons.

"The medieval guild of Catholic builders for whom the old charges were made was a body of superior workmen jealous of its position. It considered itself better than any local guild of ordinary masons, as it was, for its members constructed works of stone which the average mason of this day could not undertake. It did not want any apprentice who, when he had learned his trade and arrived at manhood, was not the equal in skill and physical ability of his fellows. From their viewpoint physical perfection was as important or more so than moral perfection. This was practical and operative, not symbolical or mystical.

"The working tools of the operative mason have become to us symbolic of spiritual truths, and the physical perfection required of the ancient apprentice should become to us but a symbol of that moral and spiritual perfection which we demand in our candidates, with due allowance for the essential imperfection of human nature. But even this view need not be considered in Royal Arch Masonry. Those who apply to us for further light are of necessity Master Masons, and if they have proven themselves to be morally such as we are authorized to receive, what right have we to debar them from Capitular Masonry?"

Having thus delivered his view of the situation, he recommended a change in the law, and subsequently the Committee agreed that, as Grand Lodge had left the matter to the discretion of the constituent lodges, a similar concession should be granted to the Chapters by Grand Chapter.

### **Sources:**

Proceedings of the Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of Canada at the annual convocation, 1912 report on Foreign Correspondence - MICHIGAN