

**A MANUAL OF PRACTICE  
AND  
RULES OF ORDER  
AND DEBATE  
FOR DELIBERATIVE  
ASSEMBLIES  
OF  
THE CHURCH OF JESUS  
CHRIST OF LATTER DAY  
SAINTS**

COMPILED BY  
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PLANO, ILLINOIS:

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY THE BOARD  
OF PUBLICATION OF THE CHURCH OF  
CHRIST

Examined and approved by Committee from  
General Conference, April, 1875.

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## INTRODUCTION.

The apology offered for presenting this work to the Church is, the necessity for one of the kind.

The want of understanding how to conduct and preside, in various meetings held by the Church; such as Branch Counsel, Business; Courts of Elders, and the several Conferences local, district and general; together with the lack of understanding and order in preparing, presenting and supporting, before the respective assemblies, the several motions and resolutions, for which consideration is asked and action demanded, make such a work a necessity.

A decent respect for the fear entertained by some, that form. may supersede the injunction that, "The Elders are to conduct all meetings as they are led by the Holy Ghost," compels us to state that no such design is contemplated by this work. On the contrary, it is designed to aid the Saints, officers and members, to a unity of thought and manner, in their

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efforts to comply with the declaration, " Let all things be done decently, and in order;" that they may "Seek diligently and teach one another words of wisdom," seeking "learning, even by study and also by faith."

Order promotes peace; hence, a uniform understanding how to conduct meetings held for the contemplation, consideration and decision of matters of importance, will greatly aid in preserving the harmony, dignity and peace, of co-workers in Christ and will in no wise prevent the prevailing of the Spirit of God, which must be ever a spirit of harmony and order.

To the lovers of order, the seekers after wisdom, and the laborers in the kingdom, this work is commended.

The work on Parliamentary Practice and usages which, we have used; and from which quotations are made, and to which we have referred, is Cushing's Manual," issued in 1872.

PARLIAMENTARY PRACTICE.  
CHAPTER 11  
ORGANIZATION.

SEC.1. The purposes, whatever they may be, for which a deliberative assembly of any kind is constituted, can only be effected by ascertaining the sense or will of the assembly, in reference to the several subjects submitted to it, and by embodying that sense or will in an intelligible, authentic, and authoritative form. To do this, is necessary, in the first place, that the assembly should be properly constituted and organized; and, secondly, that it should conduct its proceedings according to certain rules, and agreeably to certain forms, which experience has shown to be the best adapted to the purpose.

SEC. 2. General Assemblies of the Church, where no organization, preliminary nor permanent has been effected; may be called to order by any member present moving that another be called to

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preside, naming the one so to be chosen. Upon this motion being seconded, the one making the motion should put it before the meeting; and after the vote is taken he should declare the result in a tone sufficiently loud for all present to hear. If the motion -prevail, the one so chosen should assume the charge of the meeting, perfecting the further organization, if it be necessary that minutes of the meeting should be kept, by the appointment of a secretary or clerk, by Motion, second and vote.

SEC. 3. In all promiscuous assemblies of the Church, where there is no organization, (branch or district), it will be well to observe the rule, "The highest in authority shall preside;" and where there are several of the same authority, preference should be given to the eldest in years, other things being equal.

SEC. 4. Branches are the primary and congregational organizations of the Church, and may be formed wherever "six or more members in good standing may be resident in any one neighborhood, one of whom must be an Elder, Priest, Teacher, or Deacon." Such organization may be effected under the care and supervision of any local or traveling Elder, by the desire and consent of those who shall constitute such branch, when

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organized; or by the consent, advice, or direction of district authorities, where such exist.

SEC. 5. All persons who are to have permanent charge of an organized branch, should be chosen, they being previously eligible, by vote properly taken at a regular meeting of such branch, or one specially called for that purpose, of which due notice has been given.

SEC. 6. 'A branch is said to be fully organized, when there is a presiding Elder, a Priest, a Teacher and a Deacon; there may be, if necessity require, two or more Priests, Teachers and Deacons. In addition to these officers, there maybe a secretary or clerk, who may or may not be an Elder, Priest, Teacher or Deacon.

SEC. 7. The rules governing the General Assembly of the Church in its deliberations, should also govern branch meetings; subject to the modifications of organization only.

SEC. 8. Conferences are secondary and governmental organizations of the Church, and are quarterly, special, district and general.

SEC. 9. Special conferences are such assemblies of the members of the Church, as may be called by traveling ministers, in places where no previous organization has been effected, and for the temporary purposes of their ministry in that locality.

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Where two or more are traveling together, unless separated by agreement or, appointment in their labor, they, or a majority of them, should concur in the call for such conference.

SEC. 10. District conferences are regular assemblies authorized by the General Conference, or by the common consent of two or more branches lying in near proximity to each other, for mutual improvement, religious association, and for the permanent organization of the local ministry.

SEC. 11. Two or more branches not already connected with a district organization, the members of which may desire that such branches should be formed into a district conference, may, upon notice having been previously given, meet together at the place and upon the time agreed upon, *en masse*, or by delegates, duly appointed by vote of such branches, at a regular, or special meeting called for such purpose, due notice of which had been previously given; and upon such meeting together, the members so assembled may proceed to organize such district.

SEC. 12. Upon such assembling, some one who may have been instrumental in calling the meeting should rise in his place, and, addressing the rest, request them to come to order; silence being secured, he should then suggest the necessity of a ORGANIZATION.

temporary organization, that business may be properly done, and request them to nominate some



one to act as chairman or president; this nomination being made and meeting favor by being seconded, he should then declare that such a person, (calling the name he first hears, if more than one has been named), has been nominated to act as chairman, and asking the question, "Shall the person so named take the chair?" If it be decided in the affirmative, the one so chosen at once assumes the presidency and proceeds with the business of the meeting; should it be decided in the negative, names are presented and voted upon until a choice is effected.

SEC. 13. The temporary organization being completed, the desire for more permanent organization should be presented by those favoring it; when, if it be decided upon, the assembly should proceed to make choice of one of their number to act as President of the District, whose duty it shall be to have charge of the several congregations forming the district; a Vice President may be chosen, if deemed advisable; and a Secretary, and the organization is completed, and the officers may at once assume the discharge of their duties, the temporary officers retiring to the body of the assembly, which proceeds to the consideration of

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any business necessary to be done, or adjourns to a given time and place for further deliberation. The presiding officer of a meeting is usually called the President, and the recording officer the Secretary; though they are sometimes called the Chairman and the Clerk.

SEC. 14. The General Conference is a convocation of the general authorities of the Church, empowered to take cognizance of and act for the entire Church. All officers of the Church may attend, and delegates may be appointed for districts and branches, who may present such questions as they may be specially instructed to do, and ask for consideration and decision thereon.

SEC. 15. A General Assembly of the Authorities of the Church is a convocation of the officers in the Church for deliberative purposes as quorums, and is the highest and only authoritative body known to the Church as an Assembly.

SEC. 16. In both the General Conference and Assembly, the one holding the highest authority should preside, and in case of a number of equal standing, the rule of seniority should be regarded.

SEC. 17. In all cases the place where an Assembly is held, the same being in the possession and rightfully used for such purpose, is under the control and subject to the will of such Assembly:

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hence, no one has a right to be present, against the consent of the Assembly; and should any refuse to withdraw when notified or requested to do so, or conduct themselves in a disorderly or improper manner, the Assembly has the right to enforce its order -and remove them, by force, if necessary.

SEC. 18. "Every deliberative Assembly, by the mere fact of its being assembled and constituted, does thereby necessarily adopt and become subject to those rules and forms of proceeding, without which it would be impossible for it to accomplish the purpose of its creation." Every Assembly may, however, adopt certain rules for its own government; and where this is done, these rules supersede all others relating to the same subjects, but do not affect the common rules which remain in force in all other respects.

SEC. 19. The judgment, opinion, sense, or will of a deliberative Assembly is expressed, according to the nature of the subject, either by a resolution, order, or vote. When it commands, it is by an order; but facts, principles, its own opinions, or purposes, are most properly expressed in the form of a resolution; the term vote may be applied to the result of every question decided by the Assembly. In whatever form, however, a question

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is proposed, or by whatever name it may be called, the mode of proceeding is the same.

SEC. 20. The judgment or will of any number of persons, considered as an aggregate body, is that which is evidenced by the consent or agreement of the greater number, of them; and the only mode by which this can be ascertained, in reference to any particular subject, is, for some one of them to begin by submitting to the others a proposition, expressed in such a form of words, that, if assented to by the requisite number, it will purport to express the judgment or will of the Assembly. This proposition will then form a basis for the further proceedings of the Assembly; to be assented to, rejected, or modified, according as it expresses or not, or may be made to express, the sense of a majority of the members. The different proceedings which take place, from the first submission of a proposition, through all the changes it may undergo, until the final decision of the Assembly upon it, constitute the subject of the rules of debate and proceeding in deliberative Assemblies.

DUTY OF OFFICERS  
CHAPTER 11.  
OFFICERS-THEIR DUTIES.

SEC. 21. As it is impracticable in so small a work to consider the duties of every separate officer in connection with the body over which he presides, or for which he acts in any given capacity, the general duties of officers of deliberative Assemblies will be stated; promising that the rules are good and should be observed subject only to modification by difference of organization.

SEC. 22. The President-

1. The President should be so seated in the Assembly over which he is to preside, that he can see and be seen by every member who is expected to take part in the deliberations; and also be able to see every part of the room in which the Assembly is hold.
2. He should not engage in reading, writing, or conversation during the sitting; except such remarks as may be made necessary by the exigencies of consideration and debate.
3. He should keep the subject presented for consideration clearly and constantly in view.
4. He should see and hear and know every-

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thing going on pertaining to the subject under consideration; bear in mind what has passed and what is yet to be done, and be able to suggest whatever may tend to facilitate the speedy accomplishment of the design of the body.

5. He should keep the attention of the Assembly upon the business before it-and to do this more fully he should himself set the example, by being dignified, orderly, and attentive to every speaker.

6. To open the sitting, at the time to which the Assembly is adjourned, by taking the chair and calling the members to order;

7. To announce the business before the Assembly in the order in which it is to be acted upon;

8. To receive and submit, in the proper manner, all motions and propositions presented by the members;

9. To put to vote all questions, which are regularly moved, or necessarily arise in the course of the proceedings, and to announce the result;

10. To restrain the members, when engaged in debate, within the rules of order;

11. To enforce on all occasions the observance of order and decorum among the members;

12. To receive all messages and other communications and announce them to the Assembly;

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13. To authenticate, by his signature, when necessary, all the acts, orders, and proceedings of the Assembly;

14. To inform the Assembly, when necessary, or when referred to for the purpose, in a point of order or practice;

15. To name the members (when directed to do so in a particular case, or when it is made a part of his general duty by a rule), who are to serve on committees; and, in general,

16. To represent and stand for the Assembly, declaring its will, and, in all, things, obeying implicitly its commands.

17. If the Assembly is organized by the choice of a president, and vice-presidents, it is the duty of one of the latter to take the chair, in case of the absence of the president from the Assembly, or of his withdrawing from the chair for the purpose of participating in the proceedings.

18. Where but one presiding officer is appointed, in the first instance, his place can only be supplied, in case of his absence, by the appointment of it president or chairman *pro tempore*; and in the choice of this officer who ought to be elected before any other business is done, it is the duty of the secretary to conduct the proceedings.

19. The presiding officer may-read sitting; but

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should rise to state a motion, or put a question to the Assembly.

### SEC. 23. The Secretary-

1. The principal duties of this officer consist in taking notes of all the proceedings, and in making true entries in his journal of all "the things done and past" in the Assembly; but he is not, in general, required to take minutes of "particular men's speeches," or to make entries of things merely proposed or moved, which are not seconded. He is to enter what is done and past; but not what is merely said or moved. It is generally expected of the Secretary, that his record shall be both a journal and in some sort a report of the proceedings.

2. It is also the duty of the Secretary to read all papers, &c., which may be ordered to be read; to call the roll of the Assembly, and take note of those who are absent, when a call is ordered; to call the roll and note the answers of the members, when a question is taken by yeas and nays; to notify committees of their appointment and of the business referred to them; and to authenticate by his signature, (sometimes alone and, sometimes in conjunction with the president), all the acts, orders and proceedings of the Assembly.



## DUTY OF MEMBERS

3. The Clerk' is also charged with the custody of all the papers and documents of every description, belonging to the Assembly, as well as the journal of its proceedings, and is to let none of them be taken from the table by any member or other person, without the leave or order of the Assembly.
4. When but a single Secretary or Clerk is appointed, his place can only be supplied, during his absence, by the appointment of some one to act *pro tempore*. When several persons are appointed, this inconvenience is not likely to occur.
5. The Clerk should stand while reading or calling the Assembly.

## CHAPTER III, MEMBERS-DUTTES,

SEC. 24. Every person entitled to a seat in and a right to act as a member of a deliberative Assembly, holds that right in equality with every other member; and however humble he may be, has the same right "to submit his propositions to the Assembly,-to explain and recommend them in discussion, and to have them patiently examined and deliberatively decided upon; on the other

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hand, it is the duty of every member so to conduct himself, both in debate, and in his general deportment in the Assembly, as not to obstruct any other in the enjoyment of equal rights. The rights and duties of members require to be explained only in reference to words spoken in debate and to general deportment."

SEC. 25. The observance of decorum, by the members of a deliberative assembly, is not only due to themselves and to one another as gentlemen assembled together to deliberate on matters of common importance and interest; but is also essential to the regular and satisfactory proceeding of such an Assembly. The rules on this subject, though generally laid down with reference to decorum in debate, are equally applicable whether the Assembly be at the time engaged in debate, or not; and, therefore, it may be stated, generally, that no member is to disturb another, or the Assembly itself, by hissing, coughing unnecessarily, or spitting; by speaking or whispering to other members, by standing up to the interruption of others; by passing between the presiding officer and a member speaking; going across the assembly room, or walking up and down in it; taking books or papers from the table, or writing there.

SEC. 26. All these breaches of decorum are

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doubtless aggravated by being committed while the Assembly is engaged in debate, though equally contrary to the rules of propriety, under any other circumstances. Assaults, by one member upon another, threats, challenges, affrays, &c., are also high breaches of decorum.

SEC. 27. It is also a breach of decorum for a member to come into or remain in the Assembly room with his head covered, without permission.

SEC. 28. In all instances of irregular and disorderly deportment, it is competent for every member, and is the special duty of the presiding officer, to complain to the Assembly, or to take notice of the offense, and call the attention of the Assembly to it. When a complaint of this kind is made by the presiding officer, he is said to name the member offending; that is, he declares to the Assembly, that such a member, calling him by name, is guilty of certain irregular or improper conduct. The member, who is thus charged with an offense against the Assembly, is entitled to be heard in his place in exculpation, and is then to withdraw. Being withdrawn, the presiding officer states the offense committed, and the Assembly proceeds to consider of the degree and amount of punishment to be inflicted. The Assembly may allow the member complained of to remain,

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when he offers to withdraw; or, on the other hand, it may require -him to withdraw, if he do not offer to do so of his own accord. The proceedings are similar, when the complaint is made by a member, except that the offense is stated by such member, instead of being stated by the presiding officer.

SEC. 29. No member ought to be Present in the Assembly, when any matter or business concerning himself is being debated; nor, if present, by the indulgence of the Assembly, ought he to vote on any such question. Whether the matter in question concern his private interest or relate to his conduct as a member, as for a breach of order, or for matter arising in debate, as soon as it is fairly before the Assembly, the member is to be heard in exculpation and then to withdraw, until the matter is settled. If, notwithstanding, a member should remain in the Assembly and vote, his vote may and ought to be disallowed; it being contrary, not only to the laws of decency, but to the fundamental principle of the social compact, that a man should sit and act as a judge in his own case.

SEC. 30 The only *punishments*, which can be inflicted upon its members by a deliberative Assembly of the kind now under consideration, con-

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sist, of reprimanding, excluding from the Assembly, prohibiting to speak or vote, for a specified time, and expulsion; to which are to be added such other forms of punishment, as by apology, begging pardon, &c., as the Assembly may see fit to impose, and to require the offender to submit to, on pain of expulsion.

SEC. 31. Every member of an Assembly is entitled to a vote upon every question, where such vote is not herein before interdicted, subject only to this restriction, the presiding officer is not usually permitted to engage in debate, and only votes when the Assembly is equally divided, in which case he casts the deciding vote.

SEC. 32. All deliberative Assemblies provide by rule what shall constitute a ruling majority of their number when convened; and this majority is called a quorum. This is necessary to secure fairness in the transaction of necessary business, and prevent hasty and improper legislation, by such a minority as not to command the respect due to the body.

SEC. 33. The number necessary to constitute a quorum of an Assembly may be fixed by law, as is the case with most of our legislative Assemblies; or by usage, As in the English House of Commons; or it may be fixed by the Assembly itself; but if

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no rule is established on the subject, in any of these ways, a majority of the members composing the Assembly is the requisite number.

SEC. 34. No business can regularly be entered upon until a quorum is present; nor can any business be regularly proceeded with when it appears that the members present are reduced below that number; consequently, the presiding officer ought not to take the chair until the proper number is ascertained to be present; and if, at any time, in the course of the proceedings, notice is taken that a quorum is not present, and, upon the member's being counted by the presiding officer, such appears to be the fact, the assembly must be immediately adjourned.

SEC. 35. Every deliberative assembly is subject to those rules, without which it could not accomplish the purposes of its creation. It may provide rules for itself, either by the adoption of a general code, or by special enactment from time to time, as may be necessary or convenient. When a code is provided, the manner of changing or amending should be stated; if this be not done, the Assembly may change, amend, or suspend by vote at will; if dispensing with a rule in a particular case, if no provision is made upon the subject, general consent is necessary, or it can not be done.

## DUTY OF MEMBERS

SEC. 36. When rules in force in an Assembly are disregarded or infringed, every member has the right to take notice thereof, and to require that the presiding officer, or any other whose duty it is, shall put such rule so violated into execution; and, in such case, the rule must be at once enforced, without debate. It is not proper then to alter, repeal or amend the rule, it is too late; so long as any one insists it must be enforced.

SEC. 37. When Assemblies do not finish their deliberations at one sitting, it is as well to adopt some order relating to their session, its adjournment, reassembling, &c.

SEC. 38. The principle of decision is usually that of the majority of the votes cast; which rule holds good, not only to questions which may be decided by yes or no, but also in elections. This rule may, however, be modified by special rule governing the case or causes sought to be reached.

SEC. 39. As no specific number which may constitute a quorum has been yet fixed upon by the Church; it will be well to consider it as a rule that all regular meetings of branches, local, district and general conferences, the decision by vote, of the majority of those present and voting at such meeting, shall be regarded as the expressed will of such conference or branch; and that those

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present at Such meeting, shall be and constitute a quorum for business; and that the same rule be held to apply to called meetings for special purposes; provided that the notice of such called meeting be sufficiently general, as to make it probable that all the members comprising such branch or conference might have had information of the time, place and object of such meeting.

### CHAPTER IV. OF BUSINESS-INTRODUCTION, ETC.

SEC. 40. Proceedings in an organized deliberative Assembly with regard to a specific subject, usually begin by some one presenting a communication front those who are not members, or by offering a proposition respecting it himself, asking for a consideration thereof.

SEC. 41. Communications made to the Assembly are of two kinds, namely, those which are merely for its information in matters of fact, and those which contain a request for some action on the part of the Assembly, either of a general nature, or for the benefit of an individual. The latter only, as they alone constitute a foundation for future proceedings, require to be noticed.



## INTRODUCTION OF BUSINESS.

SEC. 42. Propositions presented by members should be drawn up in the form which the mover designs that they shall bear, and are introduced by motion; and are either orders, resolutions or votes, should they be adopted by the Assembly. They are called motions until adopted, then the name properly belonging to them is given them.

SEC. 43. When a member has occasion to make any communication whatever to the Assembly, whether to present a petition or other paper, or to make or second a motion of any kind, or merely to make a verbal statement, as well as when one desires to address the Assembly in debate, he must, in the first place, as the expression is, "obtain the floor" for the purpose he has in view. In order to do this, he must rise in his place, and, standing uncovered, address himself to the presiding officer, by his title; the latter, on hearing himself thus addressed, calls to the member by his name; and the member may then, but not before, proceed with his business.

SEC. 44. If two or more members rise and address themselves to the presiding officer, at the same time, or nearly so, he should give the floor to the member whose voice he first heard. If his decision should not be satisfactory, any member may call it in question, saying that in his opinion

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such a member (not the one named) was first up, and have the sense of the Assembly taken thereon, as to which of the members should be heard. In this case, the question should be first taken upon the name of the member announced by the presiding officer; and, if this question should be decided in the negative, then upon the name of the member for whom the floor was claimed in opposition to him.

SEC. 45. Petitions. - A petition, to be received, should be subscribed by the petitioner by his own hand; and should not be offered by himself, but by some member to whom it is entrusted for that purpose. The member to whom it is entrusted should so inform himself of the contents of the petition that he may be able to state its object, and also whether its language is respectful to the Assembly or otherwise.

SEC. 46. Being thus prepared, the member rises in his place, with the petition in his hand, and informs the Assembly that he has a certain petition, stating the substance of it, which he thereupon presents or offers to the Assembly, and, at the same time moves (which, however, may be done by any other member) that it be received; this motion being seconded, the question 'is put whether the Assembly will receive the petition or

## PETITIONS

not. This is the regular course of proceeding; but, in practice, there is seldom any question made on receiving a petition; the presiding officer usually taking it for granted, that there is no objection to the reception, unless it be stated. If, however, any objection is made to a petition, before it has been, otherwise disposed of, the presiding officer ought to retrace his steps and require a motion of reception to be regularly made and seconded.

SEC. 47. The petition, if received, is brought to the table by the one presenting it. It is then to be read by the clerk, unless otherwise provided, and no order respecting it can properly be made until it is read; it is usual, however, to make the reading a subject of vote. When the petition is thus brought to the table and placed in the clerk's hands, it is properly before the Assembly, and is subject to their will. The usual course is either to consider it at once, to set some future time for its consideration; or to order it to lie on the table for examination of the members.

SEC. 48. A motion must be submitted in writing; otherwise the presiding officer will be justified in refusing to receive it. He may receive it if he chooses, and write it himself. This rule applies only to principal motions, which when adopt-

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ed, become the act and express the sense of the Assembly; but subsidiary and incidental motions, such as, to adjourn-lie on the table-previous question-to postpone, or to commit, are excepted; a motion to amend, though subsidiary, so far as regards the insertion of additional words, is an exception, for this as well as the motion to be amended must be in writing.

SEC. 49. A motion must be approved by one member other than the mover, at least, who signifies his approval by rising and saying that he seconds the motion; if a Motion is not seconded, no notice is to be taken of it by the presiding officer, though some motions which may occur in the ordinary routine of business may be admitted without a second. There are apparent exceptions to this rule; these are, to proceed with an order of the day, to enforce some order of decorum, or regularity of proceeding.

SEC. 50. When a motion has been properly made and seconded, it is to be stated by the presiding officer to the Assembly, it then becomes a question for decision; until the question is so stated it is not in order to make any other motion, or for any member to speak to it. A motion made, seconded, and stated from the chair is in the possession of the Assembly, and cannot be

## TO WITHDRAW MOTIONS

withdrawn by the mover, except by special leave of the Assembly, obtained by request, motion and vote. However, after a motion has been made, or made and seconded, but not yet stated, the mover may withdraw or modify it, at his own or the suggestion of another member or the presiding officer, without a vote or motion. The presiding officer may permit suggestion or remark for the purpose of aiding the mover to frame his question; but must not permit debate or observations that may excite it.

SEC. 61. When a motion is properly before the Assembly, the duty of the presiding officer requires that he shall state it, if it be not in writing, or to cause it to be read, if it be, as often as any member desires to have it read or stated for his information.

SEC. 52. When a motion, or proposition is regularly before the Assembly, no other motion can be received, unless it be one which is previous in its nature to the question under consideration, and consequently entitled to take its place for the time being, and be first decided.

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### CHAPTER V. MOTIONS.

SEC. 53. It is seldom that an Assembly is in such a state, or a question in such a form as to be acted upon at once by vote; but generally, the question is in such form, and the Assembly in such a frame of mind, as to prefer some other course of proceeding to an immediate decision of the question in the form in which it is presented; and to do this it is necessary that there should be some methods of fitly disposing of every proposition which may be made to it; this necessity has given rise to certain forms of question which are now in general use for that purpose. These forms of question are called subsidiary, to distinguish them from principal motions or questions to which they relate. These may be stated as follows:

1. The proposition may be regarded as useless, or inexpedient-and the Assembly may desire to suppress it, either for a time or altogether: The motions designed to effect this are the "previous question" and "indefinite postponement."
2. The proposition may be of that character that the Assembly, though willing to consider it, may have other matters more pressing, or members may wish time to gain information, to reflect

## MOTIONS

upon and examine the subject presented. The motions used to secure these ends, are "postponement" to a future day and time, and to "lie on the table."

3. The subject-matter of the proposition may be regarded with favor; but the form of the proposition itself may be so irregular, or defective, that the necessary deliberation can not be given to it in the Assembly as a whole, to put it, into satisfactory form. The motion then is to refer to a committee."

4. The proposition may be acceptable, and the form in which it is presented so far satisfactory, that the Assembly may be willing to consider and act upon it, with such alterations and amendments as may be thought proper. The motion adapted to this case is to 11 amend."

SEC. 54. A deliberative Assembly, at its pleasure, may frame new motions that will express its will or pleasure more definitely than the above may do; but these may be sufficient and are those in most common use.

(The rule in the House of Representatives of Congress is, that, 11 When a question is under debate, no motion shall be received, but to adjourn, to lie on the table, for the previous question, to postpone to a day certain, to commit, to amend, to postpone indefinitely, which, several motions shall have precedence in the order in which they are arranged.")

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### CHAPTER VI. MOTIONS TO SUPPRESS.

SEC. 55. When a deliberative body is desirous of getting rid of a question before it, without coming to a decision by actual vote; or because the subject matter is unwise or impolitic, it is done in one of three ways:

1. By "moving the previous question." The original use of this motion was to suppress subjects of a delicate nature, or those which might call out observations of an injurious tendency. When first used the form was, "Shall the main question be put; if decided in the negative, the question was suppressed for the whole session. Now the form is, Shall the main question be now put; and if decided negatively it defers the question for the day only! But the question, shall the main question be now put;" if decided affirmatively, puts an end to the discussion, and the vote upon the principal motion must be taken, without further debate and in the form in which it then exists. This operation of the previous question, if decided affirmatively has given rise to the use of it for the purpose of stopping discussion on a principal question, and bringing it at once to a



## INDEFINITE POSTPONEMENT

vote; and ordinarily this is the only object of the previous question as in use in the legislative assemblies of the United States. The vote on the previous question, when negated, leaves the main question under debate for the remainder of the session; unless sooner disposed of by taking the question, or in some other manner. The object of the one who moves and those who sustain the previous question is to stop further discussion, by obtaining a vote in the affirmative; and hence great care should be observed in its use.

In this connection it is proper to state that the call "Question, question," so frequently heard in ordinary Assemblies is unseemly and out of place in deliberative bodies; hence, when it is thought advisable to suppress debate, the member who desires to call the question should rise, address the presiding officer, and when he has secured recognition, say "I move the previous question;" the presiding officer should then ask the Assembly, "Shall the main question be now put," those who favor say "Aye;" after the negative vote is called, if the vote be "aye," he should put the main question, without delay.

2. By "by indefinite postponement." SEc. 56. If it be desired to remove a question from consideration and debate, without a direct

## RULES OF ORDER.

vote upon it, it may be done by a motion to indefinitely postpone; the effect of which, should it be decided affirmatively, is to quash the proposition entirely; that is, it is an adjournment of the question, without day set for its consideration, which is understood to be a discontinuance.

3. By "a motion to lay on the table."

SEC. 57. If the Assembly is willing to entertain and consider a question, but not at the time when it is moved, the proper course is either to postpone the subject to another day, or to order it to lie on the table.

SEC. 58. When the members individually want more information than they possess, at the time a question is moved, or desire further time for reflection and examination, the proper motion is, to postpone the subject to such future day as will answer the views of the Assembly.

SEC. 59. If the Assembly has something else before it, which claims its present attention, and is therefore desirous to postpone a particular proposition, until that subject is disposed of, such postponement may be effected by means of a motion that the matter in question lie on the table. If this motion prevails, the subject so disposed of may be taken up, at any time afterwards, and considered, when it may suit the convenience of

## TO COMMIT

the Assembly. This motion is also sometimes made use of for the final disposition of a subject; and, it always has that effect, when no motion is afterwards made to take it up. When no motion or proposition, report, resolution, or other matter, has been ordered to lie on the table, it is not in strictness allowable to make any further order, with reference to the same subject, on the same day.

SEC. 60. When a proposition is defective in form, or the subject matter not sufficiently considered to permit definite action without delaying the Assembly to perfect the form of the proposition, it is proper and usual to refer the subject to a committee; with or without instructions, to perfect wholly or in part and report for the further consideration of the Assembly. This is called a commitment, or if it has been already in the hands of a committee, a recommitment.

SEC. 61. When a subject is referred or recommitted, the committee may be instructed or ordered by the Assembly, as to any part or the whole of the duties assigned them; or the subject may be left with them without instructions. In the former case, the instructions must be obeyed, of course; in the latter, the committee have full power over the matter, and may report upon it, in

## RULES OF ORDER.

any manner they please, provided they keep with- in the recognized forms of parliamentary proceedings. A part only of a subject may be committed, without the residue; or different parts may be committed to different committees. A commitment with instructions is sometimes made use of, as a convenient mode of procuring further information, and, at the same time, of postponing the consideration of a subject to a future though uncertain day.

### CHAPTER VII

#### MOTIONS TO AMEND.

SEC. 62. The last case, for the introduction of subsidiary motions, is when the Assembly is satisfied with the subject-matter of a proposition, but not with the form of it, or with all its different parts, or desires to make some addition, to it. The course of proceeding then is, to bring the proposition into the proper form, and make its details satisfactory, by means of amendments, or of certain proceedings of a similar character, and having the same general purpose in view.

SEC. 63. A proposition or motion may be complicated, or so composed of two or more parts, so

## FILLING BLANKS

far independent of each other as to be susceptible of being considered separately; and part may be approved; and part rejected or amended; in such case it is usual to divide the question into its separate parts to be severally considered, voted upon and decided. . This may be done either by order, or by motion and vote. The parts of a motion so divided become independent propositions, to be disposed of in the order in which they stand. The mover of a motion to divide should present his method of division, which is subject to amendment, as are other motions. A mere demand by a member for the division of a question into its several parts, is not sufficient, it must be done by motion; unless there be a specific rule providing for such demand, in which case it is the duty of the presiding officer to decide as to whether it may be properly divided, and how. A proposition to be divisible, must contain parts so entire, that if others are taken away they will remain entire; an exception or proviso is not of this class.

SEC. 64. FILLING BLANKS. It sometimes happens that motions are made in which blanks are left to be filled, by sums, dates or statements, at the discretion of the Assembly. This may be done by one or several motions to fill with specific

## RULES OF ORDER.

dates or figures, &c., and such motions are to be considered as original motions, to be decided before the principal question. In determining which of several motions to fill blanks should first be put, it is usual to select the one likely to be least in favor, and so proceed until an agreement is reached.

SEC. 65. When the matters contained in two separate propositions might be better put into one, the mode of proceeding is, to reject one of them, and then to incorporate the substance of it with the other by way of amendment. A better mode, however, if the business of the Assembly will admit of its being adopted, is to refer both propositions to a committee, with instructions to incorporate them together in one. So, on the other hand, if the matter of one proposition would be more properly distributed into two, any part of it may be struck out by way of amendment, and put into the form of a new and distinct proposition. But in this as in the former case, a better mode would generally be to refer the subject to a committee. In like manner, if a paragraph or section requires to be transposed, a question must be put on striking it out where it stands, and another for inserting it in the place desired. The numbers prefixed to the several sections, paragraphs, or

#### TO AMEND BY THE MOVER

resolutions, which constitute a proposition, are merely marginal indications, and no part of the text of the proposition itself; and, if necessary, they may be altered or regulated by the clerk, without any vote or order of the Assembly.

#### TO AMEND BY THE MOVER.

SEC. 66. The mover of a proposition is sometimes allowed to modify it, after it has been stated as a question by the presiding officer; but, as this is equivalent to a withdrawal of the motion, in order to substitute another in its place, and, since, as has already been seen, a motion regularly made, seconded, and proposed, can not be withdrawn without leave; it is clear that the practice alluded to rests only upon general consent; and, that, if objected to, the mover of a proposition must obtain the permission of the Assembly, by a motion and question for the purpose, in order to enable him to modify his proposition. So, too, when an amendment has been regularly moved and seconded, it is sometimes the practice for the mover of the proposition to which it relates to signify his consent to it, and for the amendment to be there upon made, without any question being taken upon it by the Assembly. As this proceeding, however, is essentially the same with that described in

## RULES OF ORDER.

the preceding paragraph, it, of course, rests upon the same foundation, and is subject to the same rule.

## GENERAL RULES TO AMEND.

SEC. 67. All amendments, of which a proposition is susceptible, so far as form is concerned, may be effected in one of three ways, namely, either by inserting or adding certain words; or by striking out certain words; and inserting or adding others. These several forms of amendments are subject to certain general rules, which being equally applicable to them all, require to be stated beforehand.

Rule a. A proposition containing several separate parts, may be amended by paragraphs or sections, beginning at the beginning. It is not in order to recur back and amend parts that have once been passed.

Rule b. Amendments may be amended; but here the rule stops.

Rule c. Whatever is agreed to by the Assembly, adopting or rejecting a proposed amendment, is not to be afterward amended.

Rule d. Whatever is disagreed to on vote, is not to be moved again.

Rule e. The inconsistency or incompatibility of a proposed amendment with one which has al-



#### TO AMEND BY STRIKING OUT

ready been adopted, is a fit ground for its rejection by the Assembly, but not for the suppression of it by the presiding officer, as against order; for, if questions of this nature were allowed to be brought within the jurisdiction of the presiding officer, as matters of order, he might usurp a negative on important modifications, and suppress or embarrass instead of subserving the will of the Assembly.

#### TO AMEND BY STRIKING OUT.

SEC. 68. If an amendment is proposed by striking out a particular paragraph or certain words, and the amendment is rejected, it can not be again moved to strike out the same words or a part of them; but it may be moved to strike out the same words with others; or to strike out a part of the same words with others, provided the coherence, to be struck out be so substantial, as to make these, in fact, different propositions from the former.

If an amendment to strike out is agreed to, it cannot be afterwards moved to insert the same words struck out or a part of them; but it may be moved to insert the same words with others, or a part of the same words with others.

Should it be proposed to amend by striking out

## RULES OF ORDER.

a paragraph, this motion may be amended by striking out a part only, or by inserting or adding words, or by striking out and inserting words.

Amendments to an amendment must be put to the vote before the amendment, or main question; but amendments to an amendment must be put to vote in the order in which they are made.

In putting a motion to strike out words the form is, shall the words stand as part of the principal motion; and not, shall they be struck out.

On a motion to amend by striking out certain words, the manner of stating the question is, first to read the passage proposed to be amended, as it stands; then the words proposed to be struck out; and, lastly, the whole passage as it will stand if the amendment is adopted.

The same rules apply in amending by inserting words, as in striking out; varying only to suit the different terms "to strike out," or "to insert."

The same rules apply in amending by striking out and inserting, varied only by a change of the terms; with the addition, that the question may be divided, either by a vote of the Assembly or on the demand of a member, the motion to strike out being put first, if affirmed, then the motion to

## AMENDMENTS

insert. If the motion to strike out fails, the motion to insert of course falls.

### AMENDMENTS AFFECTING THE NATURE OF A QUESTION.

SEC. 69. The term amendment is in strictness applicable only to those changes of a proposition by which it is improved, that is, rendered more effectual for the purpose which it has in 'view, or made to express more clearly and definitely the sense which it is intended to express. Hence it seems proper, that those only should undertake to amend a proposition, who are friendly to it; but this is by no means the rule; when a proposition is regularly moved and seconded, it is in the possession of the Assembly, and can not be withdrawn but by its leave; it has then become the basis of the future proceedings of the Assembly, and may be put into any shape, and turned to any purpose 'that the Assembly may think proper.

It may therefore be so amended as to entirely alter its nature, and make it have a meaning so different from what was originally intended, that its friends at the first may be compelled to oppose it in its amended form. This is sometimes done to defeat a proposition by compelling its friends to vote for its rejection. Sometimes a proposi-

## RULES OP ORDER.

tion is purposely changed by amendments to mean something else, in order to secure its adoption in a sense opposite to that originally intended. The absurdity, error or danger of a proposition is sometimes shown by proposed amendments.

It is not unusual to amend by striking out all after the words, "Resolved that," and inserting a proposition of an entirely different character.

### CHAPTER VIII.

#### QUESTIONS. ORDER AND SUCCESSION.

SEC. 70. As a rule, when a proposition is regularly brought before a deliberative Assembly, for its consideration, no other can be made or arise, to be first acted upon; unless it be either a privileged, subsidiary, or an incidental question. These when made take the place of the main question, and are to be first put to the question; and among them there are also thom which take precedence. Some of these supersede the main question only until decided, and when so decided, either affirmed or denied, leave it as before; but some supersede the main question until decided; and then, if decided in one way, dispose of it; if the other way, leave it as before.

## MOTION TO ADJOURN

SEC. 71. Privileged questions are certain motions or propositions which when presented take the place of any then being considered and are to be first considered and acted upon. These questions are; motions to adjourn; motions or questions relating to the rights and privileges of the Assembly; and motion<sup>3</sup> for the order of the day.

A motion to adjourn takes the precedence of all others; otherwise an assembly might be kept sitting against its will; but a motion to adjourn in order to be entitled to precedence must be simply, "That this Assembly do now adjourn; if carried affirmatively, the Assembly stands adjourned till next sitting, unless otherwise provided by rule of the Assembly. A motion to adjourn must not be made immediately after' a similar one has been denied by the Assembly; but may be made as soon as any business has been done. Motions to "adjourn" are not debatable; but motions to adjourn to a day, time, or place, may be debated.

When a question is interrupted by a final adjournment, before any vote or question has been taken upon it, it is thereby removed from before the Assembly, and will not stand before it, as a matter of course, at its next meeting, but must be brought forward in the usual way.

## RULES OF ORDER.

### QUESTIONS OF RIGHTS OF MEMBERS.

SEC. 72. The questions, next in relative importance, and which supersede all others for the time being, except that of adjournment, are those which concern the rights and privileges of the Assembly, or of its individual members; as, for example, when the proceedings of the Assembly are disturbed or interrupted, whether by strangers or members; and, in these cases, the matter of privilege supersedes the question pending at the time, together with all subsidiary and incidental ones, and must be first disposed of. When settled, the question interrupted by it is to be resumed, at the point where it was suspended.

### ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SEC. 73. 1. When the consideration of a subject has been assigned for a particular day, by an order of the Assembly, the matter so assigned is called the order of the day for that day. If, in the course of business, as commonly happens in legislative assemblies, there are several subjects assigned for the same day, they are called the orders of the day.

2. A question, which is thus made the subject

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

of an order for its consideration on a particular day, is thereby made a privileged question for that day; the order being a repeal, as to this special case, of the general rule as to business. If, therefore, any other proposition (with the exception of the two preceding) is moved, or arises, on the day assigned for the consideration of a particular subject. A motion for the order of the day will supersede the question first made, together with all subsidiary and incidental questions connected with it, and must be first put and decided; for if the debate or consideration of that subject were allowed to proceed, it might continue through the day and thus defeat the order.

3. But this motion, to entitle it to precedence, must be for the orders generally, if there is more than one, and not for any particular one; and, if decided in the affirmative, that is, that the Assembly will now proceed to the orders of the day, they must then be read and gone through with, in the order in which they stand; priority of order being considered to give priority of right.

0 4. If the consideration of a subject is assigned for a particular hour on the day named, a motion to proceed to it is not a privileged motion, until that hour has arrived; but, if no hour is fixed,

## RULES OF ORDER.

the order is for the entire day and every part of it.

5. Where there are several orders of the day, and one of them is fixed for a particular hour, if the orders are taken up before that hour, they are to be proceeded with as they stand, until that hour, and then the subject assigned for that hour is the next in order; but, if the orders are taken up at that time or afterwards, that particular subject must be considered as the first in order.

6. If the motion for the orders of the day is decided in the affirmative, the original question is removed from before the Assembly, in the same manner as if it had been interrupted by an adjournment, and does not stand before the Assembly, as a matter of course, at its next meeting, but must be renewed in the usual way.

7. Orders of the day, unless proceeded in and disposed of on the day assigned, fall, of course, and must be renewed for some other day.

## INCIDENTAL QUESTIONS.

SEC. 74. Incidental questions are such as arise out of other questions, and are, consequently to be decided before the questions which give rise to them. Of this nature are, first, questions of order; second, motions for the reading of papers,



## QUESTIONS OF ORDER

&c.; third, leave to withdraw a motion; fourth, suspension of a rule @ and, fifth, amendment of an amendment.

### QUESTIONS OF ORDER.

SEC. 75. It is the duty of the presiding officer of a deliberative Assembly, to enforce the rules and orders of the body over which he presides, in all its proceedings; and this without question, debate, or delay, in all cases, in which the breach of order, or the departure from rule, is manifest. It is also the right of every member, taking notice of the breach of a rule, to insist upon the enforcement of it in the same manner.

SEC. 76. But, though no question can be made, as to the enforcement of the rules, when there is a breach or manifest departure from them, so long as any member insists upon their enforcement; yet questions may and do frequently arise, as to the fact of there being a breach of order, or a violation of the rules in a particular proceeding; and these questions must be decided before a case can arise for the enforcement of the rules. Questions of this kind are denominated questions of order.

SEC. 77. When a question of order. is raised, as it may be by any one member, it is not stated

## RULES OF ORDER.

from the chair, and decided by the Assembly, like other questions; but is decided, in the first instance, by the presiding officer, without any previous debate or discussion by the Assembly. If the decision of the presiding officer is not satisfactory, any one member may object to it, and have the question decided by the Assembly. This is called appealing from the decision of the chair, the question is then stated by the presiding officer, on the appeal, namely: shall the decision of the chair stand as the decision of the Assembly?

and it is thereupon debated and decided by the Assembly, in the same manner as any other question; except that the presiding officer is allowed to take part in the debate, which, on ordinary occasions, he is prohibited from doing

SEc. 78. It is, for obvious reasons, a general rule, that, where papers are laid before a deliberative Assembly, for its action, every member has a right to have them once read at the table, before he can be compelled to vote on them; and, consequently, when the reading of any paper, relative to a question before the Assembly, is called for under this rule, no question need be made as to the reading; the paper is read by the clerk, under the direction of the presiding officer, as a matter of course.

## WITHDRAWAL OF A MOTION

SEC. 79. But, with the exception of papers coming under this rule, it is not the right of any member to read himself, or to have read, any pa. per, book, or document whatever, without the leave of the Assembly, upon a motion made and a question put for the purpose.

SEC. 80. When, therefore, a member desires that any paper, book, or document, on the table, whether printed or written (except as above mentioned) should be read for his own information, or that of the Assembly; or desires to read any such paper, book, or document, in his place, in the course of a debate, or otherwise; or even to read his own speech, which he has prepared beforehand and committed to writing; in all these cases, if any objection is made, he must obtain leave of the Assembly, for the reading, by a motion and vote for the purpose.

SEC. 81. When, in the course of a debate or other proceeding, the reading of a paper is called for, and a question is made upon it, this question is incidental to the former, and must be first decided.

## WITHDRAWAL OF A MOTION.

SEC. 82. A motion, when regularly made, seconded, and proposed from the chair, is then in the possession of the Assembly, and can not be

## RULES OF ORDER.

withdrawn by the mover, or directly disposed of in any manner, but by a vote; hence if the mover of a question wishes to modify it, or to substitute a different one in its place, he must obtain the leave of the Assembly for that purpose; which leave can only be had, if objection is made, by a motion and question in the usual mode of proceeding. If this motion is decided in the affirmative, the motion to which it relates is thereby removed from before the Assembly, as if it had never been moved; if in the negative, the business proceeds as before.

## SUSPENDING A RULE.

SEC. 83. When any contemplated motion or proceeding is rendered impracticable, by reason of the existence of some special rule by which it is prohibited, it has become an established practice in this country, to suspend or dispense with the rule, for the purpose of admitting the proceeding or motion which is desired. This can only, be done by a motion and question; and, where this course is taken in order to a motion having reference to a proposition then under consideration, a motion to suspend the rule supersedes the original question for the time being, and is first to be decided.

## SECONDARY QUESTIONS

SEC. 84. Subsidiary, or secondary, questions or motions, as has already been stated, are those which relate to a principal motion, and are made use of to enable the Assembly to dispose of it in the most appropriate manner. These motions have the effect to supersede, and, in some cases, when decided one way, to dispose, of the principal question. They are also of different degrees among themselves, and according to their several natures, supersede and sometimes dispose of, one another. The subsidiary motions in common use are the following, namely:- lie on the table,-the previous question,-postponement, either indefinitely or to a day certain,-commitment,-and, amendment.

SEC. 85. It is a general rule, with certain exceptions which will be immediately mentioned, that secondary motions can not be applied to one another; as, for example, suppose a motion to postpone, commit, or amend a principal question, it can not be moved to suppress the motion to postpone, &c., by putting a previous question on it; or, suppose the previous question is moved, or, a commitment, or amendment, of a main question, it can not be moved to postpone the previous question, or the motion for commitment or amendment. The reasons for this rule are: 1. It would

## RULES OF ORDER.

be absurd to separate the appendage from its principal;

2. It would be a piling of questions one on another, which, to avoid embarrassment, is not allowed; and,

3. The same result may be reached more simply by voting against the motion which it is attempted to dispose of by another secondary motion. The exceptions to the rule above stated are, that motions to postpone, (either to a day certain or indefinitely), to commit or to amend, a principal question, may be amended for the reason, that "the useful character of amendment gives it a privilege of attaching itself to a secondary and privileged motion;" that is, a secondary motion to carry out and improve another may be applied to that other, but a secondary motion to dispose of or suppress another is not admissible. Hence, the secondary motions above mentioned may be amended. A previous question, however, cannot be amended; the nature of it not admitting of any change.

Parliamentary usage has fixed its form to, be, shall the main question be now put? that is, at this instant; and, as the present instant is but one, it cannot admit of any modification; and to change it to the next day or any other moment is without example or utility. For the same reasons, also, that the form of it is fixed by parliamentary usage, and is

## PREVIOUS QUESTION

already as simple as it can be, a motion to lie on the table can not be amended.

## LIE ON THE TABLE.

SEC. 86. This motion is usually resorted to, when the Assembly has something else before it, which claims its present attention, and therefore desires to lay aside a proposition for a short but indefinite time, reserving to itself the right to take it up when convenient. This motion takes precedence of and supersedes all other subsidiary motions. If decided in the affirmative, the principal motion, together with all the other motions, subsidiary and incidental, connected with it, is removed from before the Assembly, until it is again taken up; (which it may be, by motion and vote, at any time, when the Assembly pleases.) If decided in the negative, the business proceeds in the same manner as if the motion had never been made.

## PREVIOUS QUESTION,

SEC 87. This motion has already been described and the nature and effect of it fully stated. It stands in an equal degree with all the other subsidiary motions, except the motion to lie on the table; and, consequently, if first moved, is not subject to be superseded by a motion to postpone,

## RULES OF ORDER

commit, or amend. If the previous question is moved before the others above mentioned, and put to the question, it has the effect to prevent those motions from being made at all; for if decided affirmatively, to-wit, that the main question shall now be put, it would of course be contrary to the decision of the Assembly, and therefore against ordering to postpone, commit, or amend.

### POSTPONEMENT.

SEC. 88. The motion to postpone is either indefinite, or to a day certain; and, in both these forms, may be amended; in the former, by making it a day certain, in the latter, by substituting one day for another.

SEC. 89. This motion stands in the same degree with the motions for the previous question,- to commit,-and to amend; and, if first made, is not susceptible of being Superseded by them. If a motion for postponement is decided affirmatively, the proposition to which it is applied is removed from before the Assembly, with all its appendages and incidents, and consequently there is no ground for either of the other subsidiary motions; if decided negatively, that the proposition shall not be postponed, that question may then be suppressed by the previous question, or committed, or amended.



## COMMITMENT

SEC. 90. A motion to commit, or recommit, may be amended, by the substitution of one kind of committee for another, or by enlarging or diminishing the number of the members of the committee, as originally proposed, or by instructions to the committee. This motion stands in the same degree with the previous question and postponement and, if first made, is not superseded by them but it takes precedence of a motion to amend. If decided affirmatively, the proposition is removed from before the Assembly; and, consequently, there is no ground for the previous question, or for postponement, or amendment; if negatively, to-wit, that the principal question shall not be committed, that question may then be suppressed by the previous question, or postponed, or amended.

## AMENDMENT.

SEC. 91. A motion to amend, as has been seen, may be itself amended. It stands in the same degree only with, the previous question and in- definite postponement, and neither, if first Moved, is superseded by the other. But this motion is liable to be superseded by a motion to postpone to a day certain; so that amendment and postponement competing, the latter is to be first put. A motion to amend may also be superseded by a

## RULES OF ORDER.

motion to commit; so that the latter, though subsequently moved, is to be first put; because, "in truth, it facilitates and befriends the motion to amend."

## CHAPTER IX.

### ORDER OF PROCEEDING.

SEC. 92. When several subjects are before the Assembly, that is, on their table for consideration, and no priority has been given to any one over another, the presiding officer is not precisely bound to any order, as to what matters shall be first taken up; but is left to his own discretion, unless the Assembly on a question decide to take up a particular subject. A settled order of business, however, where the proceedings of an Assembly are likely to last a considerable time, and the matters before it are somewhat numerous, is useful if not necessary for the government of the presiding officer, and to restrain individual members from calling up favorite measures, or matters under their special charge, out of their just time. It is also desirable, for directing the discretion of the Assembly, when a motion is made to take up a particular matter, to the prejudice of others, which are

## ORDER OF PROCEEDING

of right entitled to be first attended to, in the general order of business. The order of business may be established in virtue of some general rule, or by special orders relating to each particular subject; and must, of course, necessarily depend upon the nature and amount of the matters before the Assembly.

SEC. 93. In considering a proposition consist. In of several paragraphs, the course is, for the whole paper to be read entirely through, in the first place, by the clerk; then, a second time, by the presiding officer, by paragraphs; pausing at the end of each, and putting questions for amending, if amendments are proposed; and, when the whole paper has been gone through with, in this manner, the presiding officer puts the final question on agreeing to or adopting the whole paper, as amended, or unamended. When a paper, which has been referred to a committee, and reported back to the Assembly, is taken up for consideration, the amendments only are first read, in course, by the clerk. The presiding officer then reads the first, and puts it to the question, and so on until the whole are adopted or rejected, before any other amendment is admitted, with the exception of an amendment to an amendment. When the amendments reported by the committee have

## RULES OF ORDER.

been thus disposed of, the presiding officer pauses, and gives time for amendments to be proposed in the Assembly to the body of the paper (which he also does, if the paper has been reported without amendments, putting no questions but on amendments proposed; and when through the whole, he puts the question on agreeing to or adopting the paper, as the resolution, order, etc., of the Assembly.

SEC. 94. It often happens, that, besides a principal question, there are several others connected with it, pending at the same time, which are to be taken in their order; as, for example, suppose, first, a principal motion; second, a motion to amend; third, a motion to commit; fourth, the preceding motions being pending, a question of order arises in the debate, which gives occasion; fifth, to a question of privilege, and this leads, sixth, to a subsidiary motion, as, to lie on the table. The regular course of proceeding requires the motion to lie on the table to be first put; if this is negatived, the question of privilege is then settled; after that comes the question of order; then the question of commitment; if that is negatived, the question of amendment is taken; and, lastly, the main question. This example will sufficiently illustrate the manner in which ques-

## RIGHT TO THE FLOOR

tions may grow out of one another, and in what order they are to be decided. When a motion is made and seconded, it is the duty of the presiding officer to propose it to the Assembly; until this is done, it is not a question before the Assembly, to be acted upon or considered in any manner; and consequently it is not then in order for any member to rise either to debate it, or to make any motion in relation to it whatever. When a member has obtained the floor, he can not be cut off from addressing the Assembly, on the question before it; nor, when speaking, can he be interrupted in his speech by any other member rising and moving an adjournment, or for the orders of the day, or by making any other privileged motion of the same kind; it being a general rule, that a member in possession of the floor, or proceeding with his speech, can not be taken down or interrupted, but by a call to order; and the question of order being decided, he is still to be heard through. A call for an adjournment, or for the orders of the day, or for the question, by gentlemen in their seats, is not a motion; as no motion can be made, without rising and addressing the chair, and being called to by the presiding officer. Such calls for the question are themselves breaches of order, which, though the member who has arisen may

## RULES OF ORDER.

respect them, as an expression of the impatience of the Assembly at further debate, do not prevent him from going on if he pleases.

## DEBATE.

SEC. 95. Debate in a deliberative Assembly must be distinguished from forensic debate, or that which take's place before a judicial tribunal; the former, being, in theory, at least, more the expression of individual opinions among the members of the same body; the latter more a contest for victory, between the disputants, before a distinct and independent body; the former not admitting of replies; the latter regarding reply as the right of one of the parties. It is a general rule, in all deliberative assemblies, that the presiding officer shall not participate in the debate, or other proceedings, in any other capacity than as such officer. He is only allowed, therefore, to state matters of fact within his knowledge; to in form the Assembly on points of order or the course of proceeding, when called upon for that purpose, or when he finds it necessary to do so; and, on appeals from his decision on questions of order, to address the Assembly in debate.

## MANNER OF SPEAKING.

SEC. 96. When a member desires to address

## MANNER OF SPEAKING

the Assembly, on any subject before it, (as well as to make a motion), he is to rise and stand up in his place, uncovered, and to address himself not to the Assembly, or any particular member, but to the presiding officer, who, on hearing him calls to him by his name, that the Assembly may take notice who it is that speaks, and give their attention accordingly. If any question arises, as to who shall be entitled to the floor, where several members rise at or nearly at the same time, it is decided in the manner already described as to obtaining the floor to make a motion. It is customary, indeed, for the presiding officer, after a motion has been made, seconded, and proposed, to give the floor to the mover, in preference to others, if he rises to speak; or, on resuming a debate, after an adjournment, to give the floor, if he desires it, to the mover of the adjournment, in preference to other members; or, where two or more members claim the floor, to prefer him who is opposed to the measure in question; but, in all these cases, the determination of the presiding officer may be overruled by the Assembly. It is sometimes thought, that, when a member, in the course of debate, breaks off his speech, and gives up the floor to another for a particular purpose, he is entitled to it again, as of right, when that

## RULES OF ORDER.

purpose is accomplished; but, though this is generally conceded, yet, when a member gives up the floor for one purpose, he does so for all; and it is not possible for the presiding officer to take notice of and enforce agreements 'of this nature between members. No person, in speaking is to mention a member then present by his name; but to describe him by his seat in the Assembly, or as the member who spoke last, or last but one, or on the other side of the question, or by some other equivalent expression. The purpose of this rule is to guard as much as possible against the excitement of all personal feeling, either of favor or of hostility, by separating, as it were, the official from the personal character of each member, and having regard to the former only in debate. If the presiding officer rises up to speak, any other member, who may have risen for the same purpose, ought to sit down, in order that the former maybe first heard; but this rule does not authorize the presiding officer to interrupt a member, 'Whilst speaking, or to cut off one to whom he has given the floor; he must wait like other members, until such member has done speaking. A member, whilst speaking, must remain standing in his place, uncovered; and, when he has finished his speech, he ought to resume his seat; but if una-



## THE MATTER IN SPEAKING

ble to stand without pain or inconvenience, in consequence of a.-C, sickness, or other infirmity, he may be indulged to speak sitting.

### THE MATTER IN SPEAKING.

SEC. 97. Every question, that can be made in a deliberative Assembly, is susceptible of being debated, according to its nature; that is, every member has the right of expressing his opinion upon it. Hence, it is a general rule, and the principal one relating to this matter, that, in debate, those who speak are to confine themselves to the question, and not to speak impertinently, or beside the subject. So long as a member has the floor, and keeps within the rule, he may speak for as long a time as he pleases, unless there is a rule in force limiting the time of each speech; though, if an uninteresting speaker trespasses too much upon the time and patience of the Assembly, the members seldom fail to show their dissatisfaction, in some way or other, which induces him to bring his remarks to a close. It is also a rule, that no person, in speaking, is to use indecent language against the proceedings of the Assembly, or to reflect upon any of its prior determinations, unless he means to conclude his remarks with a motion to rescind such determination; but while a propo,

## RULES OF ORDER.

sition under consideration is still pending, and not adopted, though it may have been reported by a committee, reflections on it are no reflections on the Assembly. The rule applies equally to the proceedings of committees; which are, indeed, the proceedings of the Assembly. Another rule in speaking is, that no member is at liberty to digress from the matter of the question, to speak reviling, nipping, or unmannerly words of or to another. The nature or consequences of a measure may be reprobated in strong terms; but to arraign the motives of those who advocate it, is a personality and against order. It is very often an extremely difficult and delicate matter to decide whether the remarks of a member are pertinent or relevant to the question; but it will, in general, be safe for the presiding officer to consider them so, unless they very clearly reflect, in an improper manner, either upon the person or motives of a member, or upon the proceedings of the Assembly; or the member speaking digresses from or manifestly mistakes the question. It often happens in the consideration of a subject, that, whilst the general question remains the same, the particular question before the Assembly is constantly changing; thus, while, for example, the C) general question is on the adoption of a series of

## TIMES OF SPEAKING

resolutions, the particular question may, at one moment, be on an amendment; at another, on postponement; and, again, on the previous question. In all these cases, the particular question supersedes, for the time, the main question; and those who speak to it must confine their remarks accordingly. The enforcement of order, in this respect, requires the closest attention on the part of the presiding officer. When a member is interrupted by the presiding officer, or called to order by a member, for irrelevancy or departing from the question, a question may be made as to whether he shall be allowed to proceed in his remarks, in the manner he was speaking when he was interrupted; but, if no question is made, or if one is made and decided in the negative, he is still to be allowed to proceed in order, that is, abandoning the objectionable course of remark.

### TIMES OF SPEAKING.

SEC. 98. The general rule, in all deliberative Assemblies, unless it is otherwise specially provided, is, that no member shall speak more than once to the same question; although the debate on that question may be adjourned and continued through several days. This rule refers to the same question, technically con-

## RULES OF ORDER.

sidered for, if a resolution is moved and debated, and then referred to a committee, those who speak on the introduction of the motion may speak again on the question presented by the report of the committee, though it is substantially the same question with the former; and, so, members, who have spoken on the principal or main question, may speak again on all the subsidiary or incidental questions arising in the course of the debate. The rule as to speaking but once on a question, if strictly enforced, will prevent a number from speaking a second time, without the general consent of the Assembly, so long as there is any other member who himself desires to speak; but., when all who desire to speak have spoken, a member may speak a second time by leave of the Assembly. It is sometimes supposed, that, because a member has a right to explain himself, he therefore has a right to interrupt another member, whilst speaking, in order to make the explanation : but this is a mistake; he should wait until the member speaking has finished; and if a member, on being requested, yields the floor for an explanation, he relinquishes it altogether.

## STOPPING DEBATER

SEC. 99. The only mode in use, in this country, until recently, for the purpose of putting an end to an unprofitable or tiresome debate, was by moving the previous question; the effect of which motion, as already explained, if decided in the affirmative, is to require the main or principal question to be immediately taken. When this question is moved, therefore, it necessarily suspends all further consideration of the main question, and precludes all further debate or amendment of it; though, as has been seen, it stands in the same degree with postponement, amendment, and commitment; and, unless in virtue of a special rule, cannot be moved while either of those motions is pending. The other mode of putting an end to debate, which has recently been introduced into use, is for the Assembly to adopt beforehand a special order in reference to a particular subject, that, at such a time specified, all debate upon it shall cease, and all motions or questions pending in relation to it shall be decided.. Another rule, which has lately been introduced for the purpose of shortening rather than stopping debate, is, that no member shall be permitted to speak more than a certain specified time on any question; so that, when the time allotted has expired, the presiding

## RULES OF ORDER.

officer announces the fact, and the member speaking resumes his seat.

### DECORUM IN DEBATE.

SEC. 100. It being the right of every member to speak and to be heard, every other member is bound to conduct himself in such manner, that this right may be effectual. But, if a member speaking find; that he is not regarded with that respectful attention, which his equal right demands, that it is not the inclination of the Assembly to hear him, and that by conversation or any other noise they endeavor to drown his voice, it is his most prudent course to submit himself to the pleasure of the Assembly, and to sit down; for it scarcely ever happens, that the members of an Assembly are guilty of this piece of ill manners, without some excuse or provocation, or that they are so wholly inattentive to one, who says any thing worth their hearing.

SEC. 101. It is the duty of the presiding officer, in such a case, to endeavor to reduce the Assembly to order and decorum; but, if his repeated calls to order, and his appeals to the good sense and decency of the members, prove ineffectual, it then becomes his duty to call by-name any member who obstinately persists in irregularity;

## DISORDERLY WORDS

whereupon the Assembly may require such member to withdraw; who is then to be heard, if he desires it, in exculpation and to 'withdraw; then the presiding officer states the offense committed, and the Assembly considers of the kind and degree of punishment to be inflicted.

### DISORDERLY WORDS.

SEC. 102. If a member, in speaking, makes use of language, which is personally offensive to another, or insulting to the Assembly, and the member offended, or any other, thinks proper to complain of it to the Assembly, the course of proceeding is as follows:

SEC. 103. The member speaking is immediately interrupted in the course of his speech, by an other or several members rising and calling to order; and, the member, who objects or complains of the words, is then called upon by the presiding officer to state the words which he complains of, repeating them exactly as he conceives them to have been spoken, in order that they may be reduced to writing by the clerk; or the member complaining, without being so called upon, may proceed at once to state the words either verbally or in writing, and desire that the clerk may take them down at the table. The presiding officer

## RULES OP ORDER.

may then direct the clerk to take them down; but if he sees the objection to be a trivial one, and thinks there is no foundation for their being thought disorderly, he will prudently delay giving any such directions, in order not unnecessarily to interrupt the proceedings; though if the members generally seem to be in favor of having the words taken down, by calling out to that effect, or by a vote, which the Assembly may doubtless pass the presiding officer should certainly order the clerk to take them down, in the form and manner in which they are stated by the member who objects.

SEC. 104. The words objected to being thus written down, and forming a part, of the minutes in the clerk's book, they are next to be read to the member who was speaking, who may deny that those are the words which he spoke, in which case, the Assembly must decide by a question, whether they are the words or not. If he does not deny that he spoke those words, or when the Assembly has itself determined what the words are, then the member may either justify them, or explain the sense in which he, used them, so as to remove the objection of their being disorderly; or he may make an apology for them.

SEC. 105. If the justification, or explanation, or apology, of the member, is thought sufficient



## HOW PUNISHED

by the Assembly, no further proceeding is necessary; the member may resume and go on with his speech, the Assembly being presumed, unless some further motion is made, to be satisfied; but, if any two members (one to make and the other to second the motion) think it necessary to state a question, so as take the sense of the Assembly upon the words, and whether the member in using them has been guilty of any offense towards the Assembly, the member must withdraw before that question is stated; and then the sense of the Assembly must be taken, and such further proceedings had in relation to punishing the member, as may be thought necessary and proper.

SEC.106. The above is the course of proceedings established by the writers of greatest authority, and ought invariably to be pursued; it might however be improved, by the member who objects to words writing them down at once, and thereup- on moving that they be made a part of the minutes; by which means, the presiding officer would be relieved from the responsibility of determining, in the first instance, upon the character of the words.

Sic. 107. If offensive words are not taken notice of at the time they are spoken, but the member is allowed to finish his speech, and then any

## RULES OP ORDER.

other person speaks, or any other matter of business intervenes, before notice is taken of the words which gave offense, the words are not to be written down, or the member using them censured. This rule is established for the common security of all the members; and to prevent the mistakes which must necessarily happen, if words complained of are not immediately reduced to writing.

## CHAPTER X.

### OF THE QUESTION.

SEC. 108. When any proposition is made to a deliberative Assembly, it is called a motion; when it is stated or propounded to the Assembly, for their acceptance or rejection, it is denominated a question; and, when adopted, it becomes the order, resolution, or vote, of the Assembly.

SEC. 109. When any proposition, whether principal, subsidiary, or incidental, or of what ever nature it may be, is made, seconded, and stated, if no alteration is proposed, or if it admits of none, or if it is amended, and the debate upon it, if any, appears to be brought to a close, the presiding officer then inquires whether the

STATING THE QUESTION. 75

Assembly is ready for the question? and, if no person rises, the question is then stated, and the votes of the Assembly taken upon it.

SEC. 110. The question is not always stated to the Assembly, in the precise form in which it arises or is introduced; thus, for example, when a member presents a petition, or the chairman of a committee offers a report, the question which arises, if no motion is made, is Shall the petition or the report be received? and, so, when the previous question is moved, it is stated in this form, Shall the main question be now put ?-the question being stated, in all cases, in the form in which it will appear on the journal, if it passes in the affirmative.

SEC. 111. In matters of trifling importance, or which are generally of course, such as receiving petitions and reports, withdrawing motions, reading papers, &c., the presiding officer most commonly supposes or takes for granted the consent of the Assembly, where no objection is expressed, and does not go through the formality of taking the question by a vote. But if, after a vote has been taken in this informal way, and declared, any member rises to object, the presiding officer should consider every thing that has passed as nothing, and, at once, go back and pursue the

## RULES OF ORDER.

regular course of proceeding. Thus, if a petition is received, without a question, and the clerk is proceeding to read it, in the usual order of business, if any one rises to object, it will be the safest and most proper course, for the presiding officer to require a motion for receiving it to be regularly made and seconded.

SEC. 112. The question being stated by the presiding officer, he first puts it in the affirmative, namely: As many as are of opinion that repeating the words of the question, say aye; and immediately, all the members who are of that opinion answer aye; the presiding officer then puts the question negatively'; As many as are of a different opinion, say no; and, thereupon, all the members who are of that opinion answer no. The presiding officer judges by his ear which side has "the more voices," and decides accordingly, that the ayes have it, or the no's have it, as the case may be. If the presiding officer is doubtful as to the majority of voices, he may put the question a second time, and if he is still unable to decide, or, if, having decided according to his judgment, any member rises and declares, that he believes the ayes or the no's (whichever it may be) have it, contrary to the declaration of the presiding officer, then the presiding officer directs the Assembly to

## DIVISION-HOW TAKEN

divide, in order that the members on the one side and the other may be counted.

SEC. 113. If, however, any new motion should be made, after the presiding officer's declaration, or, if a member, who was not in the Assembly room when the question was taken, should come in, it will then be too late to contradict the presiding officer, and have the Assembly divided.

SEC. 114. The above is the parliamentary form of taking a question, and is in general use in this country; but, in some of our legislative assemblies, and especially in those of the New England States, the suffrages are given by the members holding up their right hands, first, those in the affirmative, and then those in the negative, of the question. If the presiding officer cannot determine, by the show of hands, which side has the majority, he may call upon the members to vote again, and if he is still in doubt, or if his declaration is questioned, a division takes place. When the question is taken in this manner, the presiding officer directs the members, first on the affirmative side, and then on the negative, to manifest their opinion by holding up their right hand.

SEC. 115. When a division of the assembly takes place, the presiding officer sometimes directs the members to range themselves on different

## RULES OF ORDER.

sides of the assembly room, and either counts them himself, or they are counted by tellers appointed by him for the purpose, or by monitors permanently appointed for that and other purposes; or the members rise in their seats, first on the affirmative and then on the negative, and ,(standing uncovered) are counted in the same manner. When the members are counted by the presiding officer, he announces the numbers and declares the result. When they are counted by tellers or monitors, the tellers must first agree among themselves, and then the one who has told for the majority reports the number to the presiding officer, who, thereupon, declares the result.

SEC. 116. The best mode of dividing an assembly, that is at all numerous, is for the presiding officer to appoint tellers for each division or section of the Assembly-room, and then to require the members, first those in the affirmative, and then those in the negative, to rise, stand uncovered, and be counted; this being done, on each side, the tellers of the several divisions make their returns, and the presiding officer declares the result.

SEC. 117. If the members are equally divided, the presiding officer may, if he pleases, give the pasting vote; or, if he chooses, he may refrain

## VOTING BY YEAS AND NAYS

from voting, in which case, the motion does not prevail, and the decision is in the negative.

SEC. 118. It is a general rule, that every member, who is in the assembly-room, at the time when the question is stated, has not only the right but is bound to vote; and, on the other hand, that no member can vote, who was not in the room at that time.

SEC. 119. The only other form of taking the question, which requires to be described, is one in general use in this country, by means of which the names of the members voting on the one side and on the other are ascertained and entered in the journal of the Assembly. This mode, which is peculiar to the legislative bodies of the United States, is called taking the question by yeas and nays. In order to take a question in this manner, it is stated on both sides at once, namely: As many as are of opinion, that, &c., will, when their names are called, answer yes; and, As many as are of a different opinion will, when their names are called, answer no; the roll of the Assembly is then called over by the clerk, and each member, as his name is called, rises in his place, and answers yes or no, and the clerk notes the answer as the roll is called. When the roll has been gone through, the clerk reads over first the names of

## RULES OF ORDER.

those who have answered in the affirmative, and then the names of those who have answered in the negative, in order that if he has made any mistake in noting the answer, or if any member has made a mistake in his answer, the mistake of either may be corrected. The names having been thus read over, and the mistakes, if any, corrected, the clerk counts the numbers on each side, and reports them to the presiding officer, who declares the result to the Assembly.

SEC. 120. In any of the modes of taking a question, in which it is first put on one side, and then on the other, it is no full question, until the negative as well as the affirmative has been put. Consequently, until the negative has been put, it is in order for any member, in the same manner as if the division had not commenced, to rise and speak, make motions for amendment, or otherwise, and thus renew the debate; and, this, whether such member was in the assembly-room or not, when the question was put and partly taken. In such a case, the question must be put over again on the affirmative, as well as the negative side; for the reason, that members who were not in the assembly-room, when the question was first put, may have since come in, and also that some of those who voted, may have since changed their



## POINT OF ORDER.

minds. When a question is taken by yeas and nays, and the negative as well as the affirmative of the question is stated, and the voting on each side begins and proceeds, at the same time, the question can not be opened and the debate renewed after the voting has commenced.

SEC. 121. If any question arises, in a point of order, as, for example, as to the right or the duty of a member to vote, during a division, the presiding officer must decide it peremptorily, subject to the revision and correction of the Assembly, after the division is over. In a case of this kind, there can be no debate, though the presiding officer may if he pleases receive the assistance of members with their advice, which they are to give sitting, in order to avoid even the appearance of a debate; but this can only be with the leave of the presiding officer, as otherwise the division might be prolonged to an inconvenient length; nor can any question be taken) for otherwise there might be division upon division without end.

## RULES OF ORDER.

### CHAPTER XI.

#### RECONSIDERATION.

SEC. 122. It is a principle of parliamentary law, upon which many of the rules and proceedings previously stated are founded, that when a question has been once put to a deliberative Assembly, and decided, whether in the affirmative or negative, that decision is the judgment of the Assembly, and can not be again brought into question.

SEC. 123. The inconvenience of this rule, which is still maintained in all its strictness in the British parliament, (though divers expedients are there resorted to, to counteract or evade it), has led to the introduction into the parliamentary practice of this country of the motion for reconsideration; which, while it recognizes and, upholds the rule in all its ancient strictness, yet allows a deliberative Assembly, for sufficient reasons, to relieve itself from the embarrassment and inconvenience, which would occasionally result from a strict enforcement of the rule in a particular case. It has now come to be a common practice in all our deliberative assemblies, and may consequently be considered as a principle of the common parlia.

## A CONSIDERATION

mentary law of this Country, to reconsider a vote already passed, whether affirmatively or negatively. SEC. 124. For this purpose, a motion is made and seconded, in the usual manner, that such a vote be reconsidered; and, if this motion prevails, the matter stands before the Assembly in precisely the same state and condition, and the same questions are to be put in relation to it, as if the vote reconsidered had never been passed. Thus, if an amendment by inserting words is moved and rejected, the same amendment cannot be moved again; but, the Assembly may reconsider the vote by which it was rejected, and then the question will recur on the amendment, precisely as if the former vote had never been passed. It is usual in legislative bodies, to regulate by a special rule the time, manner, and by whom, a motion to reconsider may be made; thus, for example, that it shall be made only on the same or a succeeding day,-by a member who voted with the majority, or at a time when there are as many members present as there were when the vote was passed; but, where there is no special rule on the subject, a motion to reconsider must be considered in the same light as any other motion, and as subject to no other rules.

SEC. 125. No motion to reconsider a proposi-

## RULES OF ORDER.

tion already decided by the Assembly, shall be heard, unless such motion is made on the same, or the succeeding day after such proposition has been acted upon; at such time as there are as many members in the, Assembly as. when the action was had; and in all cases, the motion to reconsider must be made by those who voted with the majority.

## CHAPTER XII.

### COMMITTEES.

SEC. 126. It is usual in all deliberative Assemblies, to take the preliminary (sometimes, also, the intermediate) measures, and to prepare matters to be acted upon, in the Assembly, by means of committees, composed either of members specially selected for the particular occasion, or appointed beforehand for all matters of the same nature.

SEC. 127. Committees of the first kind are usually called select, the others standing; though the former appellation belongs with equal propriety to both, in order to distinguish them from another form of committee, constituted either for a particular occasion, or for all cases of a certain kind, which is composed of all the members of

## COMMITTEES-HOW APPOINTED

the Assembly, and therefore denominated a committee of the whole.

SEC. 128. Committees are appointed to consider a particular subject, either at large or under special instructions; to obtain information in reference to a matter before the Assembly, either by personal inquiry and inspection, or by the examination of witnesses; and to digest and put into the proper form, for the adoption of the Assembly, all resolutions, votes, orders, and other papers, with which they may be charged. Committees are commonly said to be the "eyes and ears" of the Assembly; it is equally true, that, for certain purposes, they are also its "head and hands."

SEC. 129. In the manner of appointing committees, there is no difference between standing and other select committees, as to the mode of selecting the members to compose them; and, in reference to committees of the whole, as there is no selection of members, they are appointed simply by the order of the Assembly. In the appointment of select committees, the first thing, to be done is to fix upon the number. This is usually effected in the same manner that blanks are filled, namely, by members proposing, without the formality of a motion, such members as they please, which are then separately put to the question, be-

## RULES OF ORDER.

ginning with the largest and going regularly through to the smallest, until the Assembly comes to a vote. The number being settled, there are three modes of selecting the members, to-wit, by the appointment of the presiding officer,-by bal- lot,-and by the nomination and vote of the Assembly.

SEC. 130. In deliberative assemblies, whose sittings are of considerable length, as legislative bodies, it is usual to provide by a standing rule, that, unless otherwise ordered in a particular case, all committees shall be named by the presiding officer, Where this is the case, whenever a committee is ordered, and the number settled, the presiding officer at once names the members to compose it.

SEC. 131. When a committee is ordered to be appointed by ballot, the members are chosen by the Assembly, either singly or all together, as may be ordered, in the same manner that other elections are made; and, in such elections, as in other cases of the election of the officers of the Assembly, a majority of all the votes given in is necessary to a choice. When a committee is directed to be appointed by nomination and vote, the names of the members proposed are put to the question singly, and approved or rejected by the

## COMMITTEES-WHO ARE ELIGIBLE

Assembly, by a vote taken in the usual manner.

SEC. 132. In regard to the appointment of committees, so far as the selection of the members is concerned, it is a general rule in legislative bodies, when a bill is to be referred, that none who speak directly against the body of it are to be of the committee, for the reason, that he who would totally destroy will not amend; but, that, for the opposite reason, those who only take exceptions to some particulars in the bill are to be of the committee. This rule supposes the purpose of the commitment to be, not the consideration of the general merits of the bill, but the amendment of it in its particular provisions, so as to make it acceptable to the Assembly. This rule, of course, is only for the guidance of the presiding officer, and the members, in the exercise of their discretion; as the Assembly may refuse to excuse from serving, or may itself appoint, on a committee, persons who are opposed to the subject referred. It is customary, however, in all deliberative Assemblies, to constitute a committee of such persons, (the mover and seconder of a measure being of course appointed), a majority of whom, at least, are favorably inclined to the measure proposed.

SEC. 133. When a committee has been appoint-

## 88 RULES OF ORDER.

ed in reference to a particular subject, it is the duty of the secretary of the Assembly to make out a list of the members, together with a certified copy of the authority or instructions under which they are to

act, and to give the papers to the member first named on the list of the committee, if convenient, but, otherwise, to any other member of the committee.

SEC. 134. The person first named on a committee acts as its chairman, or presiding officer, so far as relates to the preliminary steps to be taken, and is usually permitted to do so, through the whole proceedings; but this is a matter of courtesy; every committee having a right to elect its own chairman, who presides over it, and makes the report of its proceedings to the Assembly. The Assembly should by its vote of appointment, or by its presiding officer, direct committees as to time and place of meeting; and also when to report; and this will be governed by the nature of the duty confided to them.

SEC. 135. A committee may, if so ordered, sit during the sitting of the Assembly; but unless-so ordered, it is not at liberty so to do. If not otherwise directed it may appoint its own time and place of sitting. If a committee be sitting, and the chairman be certified of the coming to order



## COMMITTEES-RULES GOVERNING

of the Assembly, he should at once rise and dismiss the committee.

SEC. 136. Committees are but smaller Assemblies, and as such should be governed by the same rules that direct the larger bodies, so far as practicable. They can only act as committees when regularly convened, and no agreement or report is binding except so taken by vote. Full power is given a committee over the subject committed to it, except to change its title; and a majority is necessary for business.

SEC. 137. A committee, which is under no directions as to the time and place of meeting, may meet when and where it pleases, and adjourn itself from day to day, or otherwise, until it has gone through with the business committed to it; but, if it is ordered to meet at a particular time, and it fails of doing so, for any cause, the committee is closed, and can not act without being newly directed to sit.

SEC. 138. Disorderly words spoken in a committee must be written down in the same manner as in the Assembly; but the committee, as such, can do nothing more than report them to the Assembly for its animadversion; neither can a committee punish disorderly conduct of any other kind, but must report it to the Assembly.

## RULES OF ORDER.

SEC. 139. When any paper is before a committee, whether select or of the whole, it may either have originated with the committee, or have been referred to them; and, in either case, when the paper comes to be considered, the course is for it to be first read entirely through, by the clerk of the committee, if there is one, otherwise by the chairman; and then to be read through again by paragraphs, by the chairman, pausing at the end of each paragraph, and putting questions for amending, either by striking out or inserting, if proposed. This is the natural order of proceeding in considering and amending any paper, and is to be strictly adhered to in the Assembly; but the same strictness does not seem necessary in a committee.

SEC. 140. If the paper before a committee is one which has originated with the committee, questions are put on amendments proposed, but not on agreeing to the several paragraphs of which it is composed, separately, as they are gone through with; this being reserved for the close, when a question is to be put on the whole, for agreeing to the paper, as amended, or unamended.

SEC. 141. If the paper be one, which has been referred to the committee, they proceed as in the other case to put questions of amendment, if pro-

## COMMITTEES-THEIR PRIVILEGES

posed, but no final question on the whole; because all parts of the paper, having been passed upon if not adopted by the Assembly as the basis of its action, stand, of course, unless altered or struck out by a vote of the Assembly. And even if the committee are opposed to the whole paper, and are of opinion, that it can not be made good by amendments, they have no authority to reject it; they must report it back to the Assembly without amendments, (specially stating their objections, if they think proper), and there make their opposition as individual members.

SEC. 142. In the case of a paper originating with a committee, they may erase or interline it as much as they please; though, when finally agreed to, it ought to be reported in a clear draft, fairly written, without erasure or interlineation. But, in the case of a paper referred to a committee, they are not at liberty to erase, interlineation, blot, disfigure, or tear it, in any manner; but they must, in a separate paper, set down the amendments they have agreed to report, stating the words which are to be inserted or omitted, and the places where the amendments are to be made, by references to the paragraph or section, line, and word.

SEC. 143. When a committee has gone through

## RULES OF ORDER.

a paper, or agreed upon a report on the subject, which has been referred to them, it is then moved by some member, and thereupon voted, that the committee rise, and that the chairman, or some other member, make their report to the Assembly.

SEC. 144. When a committee is ready to report, the chairman, or member appointed to make such report, standing in his place, so informs the Assembly; motion may then be made to ther. receive, or to fix an hour for its reception. It is practiced, however, that the requiring of a motion to receive is dispensed with, it being taken for granted that the Assembly will receive. If objection is made, or if there be any objectionable informality perceived by the presiding officer, he should decline to receive without a motion.

SEC. 145. At the time, when, by the order of the Assembly, the report is to be received, the chairman reads it in his place, and then delivers it, together with all the papers, connected with it, to the clerk at the table; where it is again read, and then lies on the table, until the time assigned, or until it suits the convenience of the Assembly, to take it up for consideration.

SEC. 146. The report of a committee being made and received, the committee is dissolved, and can act no more without a new power; but

## COMMITTEES-THEIR REPORTS

their authority may be revived by a vote, and the same matter be recommitted to them. If a report, when offered to the Assembly, is not received, the committee is not thereby discharged, but may be ordered to sit again, and a time and place appointed accordingly.

SEC. 147. When a subject or paper has been once committed, and a report made upon it, it may be recommitted either to the same or a different committee; and if a report is recommitted, before it has been agreed to by the Assembly, what has heretofore passed in the committee is of no validity; the whole question being again before the committee, as if nothing had passed there in relation to it.

SEC. 148. The report of a committee may be made in three different forms, namely: first, it may contain merely a statement of facts, reasoning or opinion, in relation to the subject of it, without any specific conclusion; or, second, a statement of facts, reasoning, or opinion, concluding with a resolution, or series of resolutions, or some other specific proposition; or, third, it may consist merely of such resolutions, or propositions, without any introductory part.

SEC. 149. The final question on a report, what ever form it may have, is usually stated on its ac-

## RULES OF ORDER.

ceptance; and, when accepted, the whole report is adopted by the Assembly, and becomes the statement, reasoning, opinion, resolution, or other act, as the case maybe, of the Assembly; the doings of a committee, when agreed to, adopted, or accepted, becoming the acts of the Assembly, in the same manner as if done originally by the Assembly itself, without the intervention of a committee.

SEC. 150. It would be better, however, and in stricter accordance with parliamentary rules, to state the final question on a report, according to the form of it. If the report contain merely a statement of facts, reasoning, or opinion, the question should be on acceptance; if it also conclude with resolutions, or other specific propositions, of any kind, the introductory part being consequently merged in the conclusion, the question should be on agreeing to the resolutions, or on adopting the order, or other proposition, or on passing or coming to the vote, recommended by the committee; and the same should be the form of the question, when the report consists merely of resolutions, &c., without any introductory part.

## COMMITTEE OF WHOLE

### COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE.

SEC. 151. An Assembly may resolve itself into a committee of the whole by a motion and vote; in which case the presiding officer retires from the chair and some other member is called to it, either by the presiding officer, or by vote of the members; each member speaks as often as he can get the speaker's eye; the same quorum is required as in the Assembly; the presiding officer is to remain in the assembly-room, and may take part in any debate; the proceedings of the committee are not entered upon the record, but their report is when made to the Assembly. The principal differences between an Assembly and a committee of the whole, are briefly these:

1. Debate can only be stopped by a rising of the committee; the previous question not being permissible.
2. Committee of the whole can not adjourn from time to time, can only rise and report, ask for further time, or to sit again, which must be granted by vote.

## RULES OF ORDER.

3. No part of its labors may be given to another committee; but other committees often submit parts of the subject for consideration to a sub-committee of its own number.

4. Committee of the whole does not punish for breach of order, but reports to the Assembly; the same rule applies to disorderly words spoken in committee of the whole.

5. When the committee of the whole rises, the chairman reports the conclusion of their labors to the Assembly, the presiding officer having resumed the chair, and the report is received then, upon motion or by declaration from the presiding officer, or a time is fixed for its presentation and reception.

Other than the foregoing exceptions, committees of the whole are governed by the same rules as the Assembly from which it is formed. The only object seemingly served by it is the opportunity for free discussion that a conclusion by definite resolution may be speedily reached in Assembly.



## COURTS OF ELDERS

### CHAPTER XIII.

#### ELDERS' COURTS.

SEC.152. Elders' Courts are composed of two or more elders, or those holding offices equivalent thereto, appointed by the Church through proper officers, to make suitable inquiry, sit, hear evidence, and determine as to the truthfulness, or falsity of complaints, and the guilt or innocence of members of the Church against whom those complaints may be made.

SEC. 153. The First Presidency; the Twelve, High Priests, Seventies, and Elders, when traveling in missions, or in localities where no organization, branch or district has been perfected;

Presidents of Districts, and Presidents of Branches, Branches and Conferences have power to appoint elders' courts, according to the nature of the complaint, the time, and the emergency of the case. Where a branch or conference appoints a court of elders, it should be done either by vote authorizing the presiding officer to name the elders who shall compose the court, or by nomination from the members confirmed by vote. In no case, whatever, should a Branch or District president ap-

## RULES OF ORDER.

point a court to try a case in which he is to be a party, either as complainant or defendant; or in the issue of which he is directly a party in interest.

SEC. 154. Elders' courts are courts of inquiry; and when appointed, have the right to appoint the time when, and the place where, they will sit to hear the case; (provided that such time and place do not purposely injure either party to the case); due notice of which time and place shall be given to all persons who are expected to be present at the hearing of such case.

SEC. 155. Courts of Elders have the right to request the attendance of the witnesses desired by either party to the suit; and all others whom they may be informed are in possession of information deemed necessary to a proper decision in the matter to be heard.

SEC. 156. Any member of the Church failing or refusing to attend the sitting of a court of elders, either as principals or as witnesses, after due notice and request, shall be held to be guilty of a breach of Church discipline and fellowship, and shall be liable to be dealt with, the same as for any other act of unchristian-like conduct; unless good reasons for such absence shall be shown.

SEC. 157. When the Elders appointed to act

## COURTS OF ELDIMS

as a court meet to try a case, or hear the matter to be submitted to them, they shall choose one of their number to act as chairman and preside during their sittings. (The one holding the highest authority, other things being equal, has the preference; but the choice is left to the court, they to decide according to rank, fitness, qualification, &c.) It is his duty to decide questions of order, the admissibility of evidence, and to keep order. The court may also appoint some one to act as clerk, who may or may not be a member of the court, whose duty it shall be to keep a record of all the proceedings had before the court, take charge of all papers and documents, presented and used in the examination of the cause heard, and return the same, with the verdict of the court when found, to the chairman of the committee at the close of the sitting.

SEC. 158. It is the duty of the court of elders to hear patiently both the accuser and accused, the counsel of either or both, should counsel be employed, and the testimony of the witnesses who may appear; and to strive by every lawful means, to give the case a fair and just trial.

SEC. 159. The functions of a court of elders being those of a commission of inquiry; it follows, that when they have heard the allegations and the

## RULES OF ORDER.

evidence, their only duty is to decide as to the truth or falsity of the matters inquired into, the guilt or innocence of the member accused, and report the result of their inquiry to the authority appointing them. The court is not to pass the final sentence of acquittal or condemnation upon the one under trial; nor, if they find the accused to be guilty, to state definitely what shall be the punishment inflicted; but they may recommend to acquit, to exercise mercy, or suggest what in their judgment would be adequate punishment for the crime committed; and upon this suggestion or recommendation, the church may act. The language of the law is, "And the elders shall lay the case before the church, and the church shall lift up the hand against them." See note (a.) on next page.

SEC. 160. It is permissible for members who are accused of offences, should they so desire, to appear by counsel, or by some other member of the church, who may conduct their defense, examine the witnesses, and do other acts the same as their principals might do; but should any member so appear by counsel, but one shall be permitted to address the court, and it shall be at the option of the accused, whether to speak for themselves or by counsel.

## COURTS OP ELDERS

SEC. 161. It is not requisite to administer an oath to witnesses testifying before a court of elders; as it is not to be supposed that a member of the church will testify falsely, either in court or out of it. Persons not members of the church are not competent witnesses to give evidence before a court of elders, as the court has no right to demand their attendance to testify; but, by consent of both parties, such persons may be permitted to give evidence, where it is known no other proof can be offered. Matters of record, and of public notoriety, should be received in evidence, without further proof than is required in courts of law; questions of the general reputation of an individual for truthfulness or virtue should be received; records of trials and conviction for crime in the civil courts, and matters of like character, duly certified to, are to be received in evidence.

Note (a.) Justice demands that we submit, that this view is strongly opposed by some excellent brethren who hold, that the court finds not only the truth or falsity of the matters of inquiry; the guilt or innocence of the party accused, but that they also, either dismiss the action; or, find-

## RULES OF ORDER.

ing the person accused to be guilty, they so find in their verdict, and pass sentence, (excommunication, or otherwise), and then report their action to the Branch or other authority appointing them, whose duty it is to sanction and Sustain that action; and that the law cited at the close of the section, does not permit a negative vote to be taken. We submit the two without argument with the statement that the church has not yet declared which interpretation is the correct one.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### RULES FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF BRANCH BUSINESS MEETINGS.

SEC. 162. It shall be understood that these meetings are held for the purpose of transacting church business, pertaining to, and affecting the Branch, of the Church of Jesus Christ, only; and that it is not proper for these meetings to discuss and decide questions of law or church government, other than those especially defining what shall be branch action in given cases.

## BRANCH GOVERNMENT

SEC. 163. The branch officers are to be THE officers who shall preside over, and have charge of, these meetings; and none others shall preside, except by vote of those present at any meeting, or by the courtesy of the officer present, whose right it may be to preside at the time.

SEC. 164. The officers of the church who will be recognized by these meetings, as having a right to preside, are:-A presiding Elder who has been regularly chosen by vote of the branch; a Priest, or Priests, also regularly chosen by vote of the branch; a Teacher, or Teachers, also regularly chosen by vote of the branch; a Deacon, or Deacons, also regularly chosen by vote of the branch; a secretary or clerk of the branch, also regularly chosen by vote of the branch.

SEC. 165. It shall be the duty of the presiding officer of the meeting to preside over the same during its session; to enforce the rules of order and an observance of the same, with decorum and propriety; to secure, so far as he is able to do so, a due respect and regard for the laws governing the church, as contained in the Bible, Book of Mormon, and Doctrine and Covenants; and prevent these books from being treated lightly, jestingly, or disrespectfully.

SEC. 166. Every proposed amendment or addi-

## RULES OF ORDER.

tion to, or alteration in, these rules, shall be made out in writing, and handed to the clerk of the branch, who shall present the same to the first regular business meeting thereafter, when it may be discussed at the option of the meeting; but no vote shall be taken for its adoption or rejection, until the succeeding regular meeting. Motions to amend, defer, or lay on the table, will be in order and permissible, any time after said proposition to amend, add to, or alter, is presented, moved and seconded. If adopted, it must be by a two-thirds vote of all the members present and voting at the meeting at which such action is had.

SEC. 167. The rules of order governing the consideration of resolutions involving discussion, may be suspended by a vote of the members present, but such suspension shall be only for the time which shall expire during the consideration of the resolution pending when such motion is made.

SEC. 168. These meetings shall be held on the evening of the            in each month, commencing at seven o'clock during the months of November, December and January; and at half-past seven o'clock during the remaining portion of the year, except when the usual holidays fall upon that day, when it shall be the duty of the presiding officer



## BRANCH GOVERNMENT

of the branch to name the \_\_\_\_\_ in the month as the time of holding said meeting, giving due notice from the stand of such change of time.

SEC. 169. There being the number of \_\_\_\_\_ members on the branch record roll of names, a less number than \_\_\_\_\_ members being present shall not be a quorum for the choosing of officers of the branch, nor for the purpose of amending, adding to, or altering rules of order. For the transacting of all other business, six or more members, including a branch officer, present at any regular meeting shall constitute a quorum.

SEC. 170. It shall be considered the duty of every member of the branch to attend the business meetings of the branch, at the regular sessions thereof.

SEC. 171. The meeting shall be opened by prayer, or by singing and prayer. The order of business shall be as follows:

1. The reading, of the minutes of former meeting.
2. Reports, communications, and suggestions from the presiding officer.
3. Communications or reports from General Conference, High Council, President of Church, Secretary of Church, Bishop of Church, and

## RULES OP ORDER.

President of District, shall have precedence in their order.

4. Reports of the officers of the branch other than the presiding officer.

5. Reports of standing committees. 6. Reports of special committees.

7. Reports of delegates appointed by the district conference.

8. Reports of delegates from other branches of the church. 1

9. Reports of delegates from the branch to general or district conference.

10. Report of the secretary, or clerk of branch.

11. Report of the financial clerk of the branch.

12. Business made the special order of the meeting.

13. Unfinished business.

14. New business.

15. 'Deferred business, subject to call.

16. Business before laid on the table, subject to call.

17. Adjournment to given date, other than regular time of meeting.

18. Adjournment.

SEC. 172. The order of debate is as follows:

1. No resolution upon which discussion may arise, shall be debatable until reduced to writing,

## BRANCH GOVERNMENT

moved and seconded, and placed upon the secretary's table, and announced from the chair by the presiding officer.

2. No motion shall be discussed, or voted upon, until it is made, seconded, and announced from the chair, by the presiding officer.

3. When a resolution, or motion, is properly placed before the meeting, it may be disposed of in any one of the following ways: it may be withdrawn by the mover and the one seconding it, by consent of the meeting if request to withdraw be made before any discussion is had upon said motion, or resolution; it may be amended, but no amendment to an amendment will be considered in order; it may be deferred to a given time, or made subject to call; it may be referred to a committee, standing or special, for examination and report; it may be suspended by a substitute, but a vote upon the substitute resulting in its adoption shall be final, as to the original for which it is offered; it may be postponed indefinitely, to a given time, or subject to call; it may be laid upon the table, and it may be put upon its passage, and adopted or rejected.

4. When a resolution or motion has been discussed, and it appears that no one present has any-

## RULES OF ORDER,

thing further to urge respecting it, the presiding officer shall ascertain whether the meeting is ready to vote upon the question; if it shall appear that the meeting is ready to vote, the presiding officer shall then rise to his feet and say: "So many of you as are of the opinion that the resolution should -be adopted, [or the motion prevail, as the case may be], please signify it by saying AYE." After the affirmative vote has been taken, he shall say: "Those of you who do not favor the resolution, [or motion], please say No." In no case shall a motion be declared "Passed," or "lost," unless the "yeas" and "nays" have first been called; nor shall the secretary record the result of any vote, until it is announced by the presiding officer; and such announcement shall be made by said officer as soon as it has been ascertained, and before he resumes his seat. The presiding officer may vary the form of words given above, to suit the case, and may ask for a show of hands, or for a rising vote; but the presiding officer shall not, in the presenting of the question to be voted upon, use any terms that convey other meaning than that contained in the motion, or resolution. Any person present during the discussion of any motion, or resolution, who may be of the opinion that it has been sufficiently debated, may move "that the

## BRANCH GOVERNMENT

question be now called;" or say, "I move the previous question," or "that the vote be now taken," which, if seconded, the presiding officer shall at once put before the house; if the motion prevail, the resolution, which has been discussed shall be read, or the motion stated, and the vote be taken; nor shall the motion, "that the vote be taken," be debatable; nor shall the presiding officer put any resolution, or motion, so discussed, until it is apparent, by motion or otherwise, that the meeting is fully ready to vote.

5. Resolutions, or motions, upon which no discussion may arise, shall be put by the presiding officer, after he shall have given proper warning by asking "are you ready for the question," or by saying, "if there be no objection, the vote will be taken."

6. No one shall be permitted to occupy more than minutes in anyone speech to a motion or resolution under consideration, nor to speak more than once until all have spoken who may desire to speak; except when the rules shall be suspended, when it shall be in order for any one to speak as often, and as long as they may wish; provided, that any one may, by vote of the meeting, be given more than minutes time, not to exceed thirty minutes, in all.

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7. It shall be permissible for the president, or any member of the meeting, to call any one speaking to a question, to order, if they be indulging in personalities, using indecent language, or speaking in a rough, boisterous, or unruly manner, or when not speaking to the question. When any one is so called to order, they shall cease speaking and shall sit down, when the one calling him to order shall state to the presiding officer the point of order, but shall not be permitted to offer remarks to the subject under consideration; upon such statement the presiding officer shall at once decide, and the one called to order shall proceed, subject to such decision; time lost in settling points of order shall not be lost to the one speaking. Appeal from the ruling of the presiding officer may always be taken to the meeting, and the form of the question shall be, "shall the chair be sustained, — those favoring it say yea;" those opposed, say nay;" and the vote shall be a finality, the presiding officer being entitled to the privilege of stating the reasons for his decision, before the vote is taken.

S. All reports of committees should, when practicable, be in writing, and be filed with the clerk.

## BRANCH GOVERNMENT

9. It shall not be in order for the presiding officer to enter into the discussion of any question pending before the meeting; he may, however, state his opinion upon request of the meeting. Should he vacate the chair for the sake of engaging in the discussion, he shall be subject to the rules governing other members, and shall not again take the chair until after the vote is taken; nor should he be entitled to vote, unless the person called to the chair in his place does not wish to vote; and should he so vote, and there be a tie, the one so presiding should cast the deciding vote.

10. No one shall be entitled to be heard in any business meeting, until they shall rise to their feet and address the presiding officer, by saying "Mr. President," "Br. President," "Mr. Chairman," or "Br. Chairman;" and should more than one rise at once, the presiding officer shall designate which one is entitled to the floor.

11. It shall be deemed out of order for members to rise; move about; whisper; talk aloud; shuffle their feet noisily upon the floor; drum with their feet upon the floor, or with their hands upon the seats; change their place of sitting, unless in cases where the room is not properly warmed, when any one is upon his

## RULES OF ORDER,

feet speaking to a question; or at any time when, not necessary. All persons offending against the rule shall be subject to reprimand from the presiding officer.

12. All questions rising upon parliamentary practice shall be decided by the presiding officer, without debate; and any standard manual shall be considered as the standard of authority.

13. The clerk or secretary of the branch shall keep the record of the minutes of the meeting and shall perform all the necessary duties pertaining to his office. See note (b.)

Note (b.) This chapter on branch rules is taken from those adopted by the branch at Plano, Illinois. The blanks in sections 162,168,169, and article six of section 171, are to be filled to suit the circumstances and conditions of those branches that may adopt them.



## CHURCH RECORDS

### CHAPTER-XV.

#### CHURCH RECORDS.

SEC. 173. It has been thought advisable to give in this volume some instructions on the subject of preparing reports of branches in a proper manner for the use of the General Church Recorder, so that there may be a uniformity of method in reporting' and that branch officers may be able to furnish him with all that is necessary to make and keep a perfect record of the whole Church, which is in accordance with the commandment and in keeping with the rules of the Church. The law relating to this subject reads as follows:

"It shall be the duty of the several churches composing the Church of Christ to send one or more of their teachers to attend the several conferences, hold by the elders of the Church, with a list of the names of the several members uniting themselves with the Church since the last conference, or send by the hand of sonic priest, so that a regular list of all the names of the whole Church may be kept in a book, by one of the elders, whoever the other elders shall appoint from time to time, and also if any have been expelled from the

## RULES OF ORDER.

Church, so that their names may be blotted out of the general Church record of names."-D. & C. 17:25.

From this explicit order we see that it is necessary for all the branches of the Church to make out and send from time to time, or from conference to conference, full and correct reports there of; and furthermore, that this law is made obligatory and is of binding force upon each and every one of said branches, to the intent that a record of all of them may be kept in regular order.

For, according to the passage quoted, the object of thus reporting, the whole object of it is, the placing in the possession of the Church Recorder, as quickly as possible, accurate and systematic reports from all parts of the Church; said reports being made out for that purpose and that purpose alone, the sending of them to conference being only a preliminary movement for the purpose of ensuring their transmission to the appointed recording officer of the Church.

It is distinctly written that, "It shall be the duty of the several churches," to conform to this regulation. And, to make certain that this important matter shall be carried out, a further regulation requires the providing a sure transit of these valuable documents to their destination, and

## CHURCH RECORDS

this by means of certain officers who shall see that they are regularly conveyed to the various conferences. It is plainly a duty to get them there, and it is intended, doubtless, that if these cannot go in person they shall send the reports.

SEC. 174. After these have done their duty it devolves upon the presidents and clerks of districts, or conferences, to faithfully transmit to the General Recorder the reports which have come into their hands through this careful provision of the law.

These reports shall contain the names of all those added to the Church, or lost from it, during the interval occurring since the last report. The necessity of this is seen from the fact that without these the reports are of no value to the Recorder.

With the names of those uniting, there should always be sent the date and place of birth; date, place and by whom baptized; by whom confirmed; and, also, if holding any office in the Church, the name thereof and time, place and by whom ordained. This fall record of items should also be given with the names of, those received by letter, or by vote, the same as with those baptized in the branch; because, wherever members are reported

## RULES OF ORDER.

from, there is where the items of their citizenship in the Kingdom of God will be looked for.

These facts are just as essential for the branch and General Records in one case as in the other, for the branch authorities need them; and also the Church Recorder is often called upon for information of this kind, but, from the custom of recording their names only, as they move from branch to branch, he finds that much labor in searching has after all proved in vain, even when he knows the names of the various branches of which the person has been a member.

This neglect to be properly recorded has placed many names without items upon the Church Record, and, in time, the party forgets them themselves, and, wishing to know them, writes to the Recorder only to find that they cannot be obtained from the record of any branch they have lived in. Hence it is an error to suppose that the names only of those received by letter are needed.

Elders administering baptism should give a Certificate of the fact to each one, those in branches as well as to scattered ones, and then the parties could always be in possession of the items.

The names of branches to which, or from

## CHURCH RECORDS

which, members remove, should be given, as it is often important to know the various places where they have been.

The first name of each member should be written in full, to distinguish men from women, and for other reasons. The middle initial, if any, should also be given, because first names are sometimes alike in the same branch, or in various parts of the Church.

Changes in name by marriage should be reported.

The record of children blessed should be kept on branch records, but are not required on the General Church Record.

The names and items of all those ordained from time to time in the branches, and of those received as previously ordained in other branches, should be reported in regular order.

The dates of removals by letter, expulsions and death should be given with the names or those thus lost to the Church.

Branch clerks should see that the names reported agree in number with the statistics in the report, in all cases.

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Printed at Herald Office, Plano, Kendall Co., Illinois.

This paper was made possible through the cooperation of Ron Romig, Archivist for the Community of Christ Temple Library who made these materials available for use. Robert Giertz and Ronald Vermeland did the scanning and text editing for this project. Page numbers from the original "Rules of Order and Debate" are preserved in the text for easy reference.