

remains seated. In any case he may sit while reading a communication or assigning the floor. He should not, ordinarily, participate in debate, for a partizan attitude on the part of the chairman greatly impairs his influence; but if, for exceptional reasons, such participation seems necessary, he should call some other member to the chair for the time and speak from the floor in the usual manner. He may, however, state his reasons in case of an appeal from his decision on a point of order, and may do this without leaving the chair. If, as is usual, he is a member of the assembly, he may vote like any other member, but should not do so, except when the voting is by ballot, unless his vote would change the result. Thus he may decide a question in case of a tie vote, or defeat a motion by creating a tie (see Sec. 118); but it must not be inferred from this that the chairman can in any case vote on a question twice, — by first creating a tie and then giving the casting vote. When, as in the United States Senate, he is not a member of the assembly over which he presides, he possesses no right to vote except such as may be conferred by the assembly itself or by some higher authority.

16. Power of the Chair. — The power of a prudent and competent chairman, whose impartiality and sound judgment command the full respect of the assembly, is undoubtedly very great; and this is necessary for the efficient transaction of business. Although such power may in some cases be abused, its successful exercise depends absolutely upon the good will of the assembly as a whole and the steady support of a majority; and excessive curtailment of it leads to far greater abuses. The chairman should be decisive, discreet, and absolutely impartial; within the limits of what is legitimate, he must implicitly obey the will of the majority and aid in carrying out its purposes. Without the support of a majority he soon finds himself helpless; there