

at \$5, and San Francisco Templars begged that it might be returned and a substitute be provided. The Denver drum corps were opportunely to attend receptions as a drawing card, and in every case had to pay their own way, while others profited by their presence.

—*Masonic Constellation.*

FOREIGN CORRESPONDENCE.

In the August number of *Shibboleth* Bro. Frederic Speed, of Vicksburg—a most learned and erudite Masonic scholar, a Past Grand of all the Masonic bodies of Mississippi—condemns without much reserve the foreign correspondence of the various Masonic bodies of the United States. He regards the bulk of the literature and reports as extravagant and valueless for Masonic purposes, and would save unused the white paper on which the reports are printed. Worshipful brother Speed is not the first critic of this recognized accompaniment of the proceedings of Grand Jurisdictions, but he is undoubtedly the most caustic critic who has fulminated against these reports for many years.

It is well known to the Craft at large, at home and abroad, that some of the ablest Masonic students and writers in the United States are and have been authors of the fraternal correspondence of Grand Lodges, for it is in the lodge that the best field for Masonic work exists. We recall Richard Vaux, of Pennsylvania, with gratitude for his work of other years, and we recognize the merit and studious ability of Josiah H. Drummond of Maine. These are types of a large class of brethren, the light of whose profound Masonic knowledge is not hid under a bushel. We know we have a thinker of ability in California in the person of our charming Bro. William A. Davies, who himself has as grandly honored, and who has been as graciously honored by all of the Grand bodies of this State as has Bro. Speed by the Masons of Mississippi.

As if self-conscious of the severity

of his criticism, Bro Speed tempers his article with this generous tribute to the foreign reports: a paragraph which establishes, in his best judgment, the value of this mode of communication between the Grand bodies:

"It goes without saying that some of these reports are of great value, and it is certain that they have molded Masonic opinion and been the means of settling many questions of vital importance to the Craft, and if it were possible to correlate the work of the correspondents and bring it into reasonable compass it would form an invaluable contribution to the literature of Freemasonry, but bread and butter are too dear and life is too short for anyone to take the time to hunt out the wheat from the chaff—and this applies even to the current productions of the guild of correspondents."

It may be timely to urge the elimination of the "mutual admiration" feature which has crept in and which has become a wearisome adjunct to numerous foreign compilations; but, in general, the summing up in regular annual reports, to be bound with Grand proceedings, of the doings of the Masons of the world, preserves the essentials in convenient form for the information of brethren who may, even if they do not generally, read such reports. Nor should we wholly condemn these publications, even if ninety and nine give them passing notice, for the hundredth may imbed knowledge which in his own good way on occasion is sure to be imparted to "less informed brethren." A leader among Masons is not necessarily the one who while occupying official station may be letter perfect in the ritual. Rather is it he who from a course of study and research is able to inform and instruct his brethren from time to time on Masonic subjects and propositions of present as well as past interest and historic value.

Aside from the routine of proceedings of Grand bodies, there is much that may be published which is of general interest to all Masons of all jurisdictions. As the Masonic press is in