

LODGE DUES.

Previous to the year 1717 it was the practice in England for the Masons to assemble at any convenient place for consultation or work, and by immemorial usage they were accustomed at such assemblies to practice the rites of Masonry, and to receive into the Fraternity Brothers and fellows. In their conduct they were regulated solely by the ancient charges. The Master of the Lodge was elected "pro tempore," and his authority terminated with the dissolution of the assembly. The Fellow Crafts at that time constituted the body of Fraternity, and the principal object of all assemblies appears to have been for the settlement of difficulties between Craftsmen and to "make Masons." Doubtless a great incentive to attendance upon these occasional assemblies was the banquet provided at the close of the assembly at the expense of the newly-made Masons, in lieu of a fixed fee, as generally practiced at the present time.

There being at that time no permanent Lodge organization, there was no necessity of the members of the Fraternity contributing to the formation of a permanent fund for charitable or other purposes. Each Mason, when appealed to for assistance by a needy Brother, contributed to his relief such amount as his ability would permit, or the occasion seemed to require.

Accordingly, the old Constitutions contain no regulations for the payment of dues; but when the Grand Lodge was formed, the Craft voluntarily surrendered their inherent right of assembly, vesting the same in the newly-formed body, which immediately granted warrants of Constitution authorizing the formation of Lodges to be permanently located at the places designated therein.

With the organization of a permanent Lodge arose the necessity for providing a fund for its maintenance; and as all the members were equally

interested in its support it appeared but just that all should be equally assessed for that purpose; and thus arose the system of Lodge dues, which at the present time is universally prevalent.—*London Freemason.*

EDITORIAL NOTES.

It is said that the latest statistics give the number of Masonic Lodges in the world 138,032, with a membership of 14,160,542.

A LODGE IN A ROMAN CATHOLIC CHAPEL.—The *Keystone* says "Bro. James H. Neilson, of Dublin, has a certified copy of the entry in the minutes of Lodge No. 60, of Ennis, Ireland, of the Lodge having, on St. John's Day, June 24, 1800, attended the Roman Catholic Chapel of Ennis, and heard a sermon from the Rev. Dr. McDonagh, the parish priest, who afterwards dined with the brethren of the Lodge. This is quite unique."

The *Masonic Chronicle* speaks from experience, as well as to the point, in the following:—"There is not a Masonic publication in existence, which is not worth double the price asked for it, and yet we venture to say, that none of them produce more than a very small surplus of lucre at the end of each year. This is not as it should be; every brother ought to subscribe to at least one paper, and thus assist their fratres in disseminating light."

BRO. T. B. WHYTEHEAD will please accept our thanks for a very handsome card having in the upper left hand corner a representation of an English Past Master's Jewel, handsomely embossed in gold, with blue hangings, the whole being a complete representation of what it purports to be. The card bears the legend, "Hearty Good Wishes for You and Yours." We heartily reciprocate the kindly sentiment, and fully appreciate the thoughtfulness of Bro. Whytehead in favoring us with a copy of his card.