

but we do know that an indirect application of the gag will not have a depressing effect upon the *Journal's* subscription list, as freedom of thought, speech and action, when not conflicting with recognized law, is prized by the Craft, and any attempt to remove that freedom will be resented.

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The *Victorian Freemason*, published at Melbourne, Australia, referring to the union of the various Masonic bodies in new South Wales, says:—

“The Grand Lodge of Victoria is now the only Masonic body in Australia which is not recognised by the Grand Lodge of England, and we sincerely trust that immediate steps will be taken to have this remedied; then the chain of unity and brotherly love will be complete. To those who advocate a Grand Lodge for New Zealand we would only say that things are very well as they are, and besides, there are difficulties in the way of such a scheme which are unsurmountable. We are quite safe in saying that unity of purpose in this direction would never be obtained among the adherents of no fewer than two Provincial and eight District Grand Lodges.”

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The conduct of certain brethren connected with a lodge in our western suburbs has developed into a public scandal. What was at one time a rivalry between two lodges is now—on the part of one of them—a bitter fight, in which Freemasonry is being degraded. Brethren are accused, in the most cowardly manner, either by insinuation or implication, of mean and crooked transactions, and even the characters of candidates are not held sacred, but are publicly discussed. The trouble

has been intensified and the bitterness increased by the introduction into cold print of injudicious comments. One especially displeasing feature in connection with the disgraceful proceedings is the part played by brethren of exalted rank. The addition of titles and degrees, in this instance, has evidently been such a strain on the brethren as to unsettle their mental faculties. In other matters their reasoning is clear enough, but when the rival lodge is mentioned, or some of its members spoken of, malice, envy and bitterness subjugate common sense. A perusal of P. G. M. Robertson's address ought to do our western suburban brethren some good. In it there is food for thought, and it only requires thought on the part of our western brethren to bring about a better condition of affairs.

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We learn from the *Sydney, New South Wales, Freemason*, that at a meeting of the Grand Lodge of New South Wales, held on June 6th, the report of a joint committee, consisting of delegates from the English, Scotch, and New South Wales Constitutions, recommending the formation of a united Grand Lodge, was adopted. From the articles of agreement we find that there are under the English Constitution, 80 lodges; under the Scotch, 55, and under New South Wales, 51. The union was to take effect on June 24th, fifteen days later than the date of the paper received, and the new body to be called, “The United Grand Lodge of New South Wales.” Provision is made for lodges retaining, if they wish, their present warrants, but before they can do so they must obtain the consent of their Grand Master. The Grand Master of the United Grand