

relative to perpetual jurisdiction, reported: * * 'We are of the opinion that perpetual jurisdiction over an applicant for the degrees in Masonry is, in many respects, a wise provision, and is one of the safeguards necessary to the general good of the Order.' "

It is strange how Masons will adhere to their local regulations, and fancy in so doing their jurisprudence is the general law of the Craft.

ATHEISM IN MASONRY.

The Grand Lodge of Indiana has been called upon to settle a question which, in our innocence, we believed was an axiom that could not be disputed. As, however, the *Corner-Stone*, of New York, has seen fit to declare the Indiana decision "a rank injustice," we deem it right to allude to the same. The case is this: a Mason was accused by his lodge of being an atheist, and as proof was furnished to satisfy the commission before whom he was tried, that such was the case, he was very properly expelled.

The defendant appealed to the Grand Lodge, and was represented by his attorney, who took exception on the ground that the accused was not an atheist at the time of his initiation—that at that period he had conscientiously fulfilled all the requirements, and was in fact entitled subsequently to adopt any views he might see fit, and that consequently a man who has become a pronounced atheist after admission into Masonry, cannot be expelled for that reason. The committee say: "We believe that one who is a pronounced atheist

cannot be sustained in Masonry, not that it would be in itself a crime, but it would be against all Masonic usage, incongruous with Masonic sincerity and solemnity, and in violation of the fixed and long established principles of Masonry."

We heartily concur in and endorse this verdict. It is impossible for us, who are seeking light from the Fountain Head of Truth, to waver in our decision upon such a point. How can an atheist participate in our ceremonies, founded, as they are, upon a symbolism derived from the teachings of the Judean Exponent of the Moral Law, and based upon traditions taken from the Sacred Book? Our whole ceremony to him is a farce, and our lectures a burlesque. It would be a crime upon the part of the loyal Mason to sit in a lodge with one whom he knew to be an atheist, because by so doing he is permitting rotten timber to form a part of the scaffolding of the Temple of the Most High God.

If a Mason becomes an atheist conscientiously, he must at the same time perceive that it is his duty to resign his membership, and ask to be released from ties that no longer possess either charm or fancy for him. He must be a hypocrite and a knave if he, subsequent to his change of opinions, venture to assist in an initiation or dare to participate in the sacred symbolism of the resurrection. We hold then that the Grand Lodge of Indiana was perfectly right in endorsing the action of the subordinate body.

Our New York contemporary, however, is not satisfied and declares that

"It is strikingly apparent that Masonic decisions are rarely based upon