

the state it was in before the tinkers got hold of it.

There is probably not a Mason of thirty or forty years' standing who has paid particular attention to such matters who can not recall instance after instance where the language of the ritual has been changed deliberately by somebody, within his own recollection, with an evident intention of making it more simple, of freeing it from tautology, from what he considered vain repetitions of archaic forms. The people who attempt these supposed improvements are often quite oblivious of the fact that these old forms are the natural consequence of the antiquity of the work, that the repetitions are monuments of a style that was once common in all literary works and that their existence is a proof that they were in the ritual when it was formulated. Unfortunately we cannot give in print examples of this tendency, but we can illustrate by quotations that it is permissible to make. Take for example the monitorial work.

"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the beard, even Aaron's beard, that went down to the skirts of his garments."

Now if this were unwritten work, one of our amenders of the ritual would get at it in this way: "There is no use in the word *behold*; that adds nothing to the sense. I'll drop it out. Then what is the use of saying 'how good and how pleasant?' That is all vain repetition. I will just say, 'how pleasant it is.' That expresses the whole sense. Then what is the use of saying 'even Aaron's beard,' that may just as well be left out." And so on.

We once heard a proposition to strike out a portion of a quotation from Isaiah, "None shall slumber nor sleep," it being alleged that "nor sleep" added nothing to the sense. It was withdrawn when the origin of the expression was pointed out. Now the Masonic ritual is to some extent modeled after those passages in the Old Testament

in which we have not mere useless repetitions, but the presentation of the same thought in several alternate expressions. Taketh's from the first Psalm:

"Blessed is the man who walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful."

This is not tautology, though but for the sacredness of its origin many would call it so. A similar passage of the ritual would be condensed into one clause, and the author of the change would think he had made a great improvement.—*Masonic Home Journal*.

SHRINERS COMPLAINT.

The *Los Angeles Times* of July 2d printed the following roast on San Francisco Shriners. It seems that the article originated in Denver, Colo.:

DENVER July 1.—Denver's hospitality and San Francisco's treatment of invited Shriners may result in the next Triennial Conclave to be held at Golden Gate in 1904, being transferred to Denver, as the Masonic brethren have no desire to experience the chilly treatment accorded those who attended the Convocation of the Shrine a few weeks ago. A movement was started to-night to transfer the Templar Conclave to this city.

"The Californians were suffering from pronounced 'cold feet'" said a prominent Denver Shriner. "They had promised elaborate entertainment. We were made the victims of a series of cheap 'grafts,' and we were thankful to escape from our alleged Oasis and shift for ourselves. All the visitors were complaining, but the Los Angeles Shriners and papers took the matter up and invited us to partake of Southren hospitality. We scrambled down there, and really, it seemed like being home again."

The Shriners say no provision was made to entertain the ladies, and the first prize for the drill corps was a cheap lithograph taken from the Southren Pacific advertising department. One ticket only was given for each entertainment. The loving cup would be dear