

some, we fear, in which they are not only unobserved but unknown! Before the days of permanent Lodge rooms, the brethren met in the upper rooms of great taverns, and every assembly of the Craft, for work or business, was distinguished for its social features. A sumptuous repast and good cheer were always provided, and were attended with toasts and speech, song and story, good-will and brotherly greetings, never to be forgotten. Many an old tavern in "Merrie Old England" and America was rendered forever famous by these gatherings of the brotherhood, and their names will pass down through all generations of Freemasons. When shall the "Goose and Gridiron," the "Crown," the "Rummer and Grapes," the "Apple Tree" taverns of London, and others which might be named, in England, and the "Green Dragon," in Boston, and others in America, be forgotten? Not, indeed, until the history of Freemasonry ceases to be read.

Long after the establishment of permanent Lodge rooms, the old social customs were continued, and at every meeting of the Lodge refreshments were provided, each of the brethren present contributing to the "reckoning."

We could almost wish to be back to those old times, when the brethren came up from far and near to the "assembly and feast," not only to do Masonic work, but to enjoy Masonic sociability: when closing the doors against the outside world with its parties and creeds, its cares and dissensions and conventional distinctions, they met, as an eloquent writer says, "on one common level of brotherhood and equality, to celebrate true friendship and fraternal affection, and establish that mystic tie which peculiarly distinguishes the Society." Our French brethren provide in a peculiar manner for the cultivation of the social element in our Order by the institution of "Table Lodges." They have an established ritual for these Lodges. A table in the form of a horse-shoe, around which the brethren assemble, is set in the Lodge. The Master of the Lodge presides, assisted by the Wardens. A formula of toasts is arranged, the Lodge duly tyled, and temperance and good order are required. The most important table Lodges are held on the stated festival days.

And to show that others than ourselves are interested in and appreciate the social element in our Order, and are ready to assist us in being sociable, we may state that in some localities in this country the wives and daughters of the brethren, taking some trusty brother into their confidence, prepare certain very agreeable surprises for the brethren. Learning when there may be a Lodge meeting, when no interference will happen with the business of the Lodge, they get together and with a few baskets filled with refreshments, suddenly appear in the tyler's room and demand admittance to the Lodge. The Master, being informed, closes the Lodge and they are admitted, when an hour of refreshment and social pleasure is enjoyed.

Our wives and children have, indeed, a direct interest in our Masonry and its prosperity, and for this, as well as for other reasons, we heartily echo the words of the Grand Master of Minnesota:

"Ever and anon call from labor to refreshment, and throw open your doors and invite your wives, sisters and daughters to participate with you in the enjoyment of the hour."

Another wise brother says:

"Give Masonry its old sociable character, bring the Brethren together more frequently to enjoy each other's society, bury the rivalries of business, forget the scramble for money, for success, add the pleasant smiles of our loved ones, and the charm of female companionship, and Masonry will be the better for it, and we will be better Masons. 'All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy.'"

These pleasant and instructive reunions have far-reaching influences upon the old and young, and many beneficent results. They awaken and keep alive kindly and fraternal relations, improve the manners, liberalize the mind, and arouse new energies and thoughts, making this life better and happier.—Bro. WEBB, JR., in *Voice of Masonry*.

MASONIC SECRECY.

THE secrecy of Masonry is its only sybil-voice proclaiming, *Procul O, procul este profani*. It is only the secrecy of the lawyer to his client; of the minister to his penitent; of the physician to his patient; or of friend to friend. This trustworthy confidence is the glory of man; scandal dies like an echo on the shore where the tongue is bridled by truth and honor. "Where there is no tale-bearer the strife ceaseth." Wrench from the heart of a Mason the secret of his brother: and from the same heart you may blot out the image of his God, the vows made to a fond and confiding wife, or the duty he owes to his children, to country and to home. The betrayer of secrets