

province of the other without detriment to both. When they do, let us observe the confusion that ensues in our Order.

As a matter of business one mason accommodates another, and without taking legitimate precaution to protect himself; expects to hold his brother to his word and bond of faith by private means well known to both. The contract to pay is not fulfilled, and the money-lender insists on the bond. There is no way of executing it but by riding the poor brother to death with the whip of charges and specifications and the spur of masonic obligations. There is neither business nor masonry in this usage, yet it is often applied and pursued to the extreme penalty—masonic death. Who is more to blame, the prosecuting witness or the victim? The former has nothing to substantiate his claim in the courts, and under the laws made and provided for the adjustment of such business, and he therefore appeals to the Lodge as a sort of collecting engine, or a private, patent money-press, which he uses to correct his own mistakes, and possibly to enrich himself. If the flesh-and-blood bond be satisfied by the payment of a certain amount of money all is well; the debtor is a good mason; if not, the helpless bankrupt is cast beyond the pale of the Brotherhood. The case represented may be an extreme one. It is, nevertheless, given as an illustration of what too often happens in Lodges, and for the purpose of warning masons against such gross inconsistencies. Money is the hinge upon which such a trial turns, and the money consideration decides it. A trial in a Lodge of masons should be founded in and conducted upon masonic principles, and the only case in which a money consideration can legitimately appear in a masonic trial is in debts and dues, taking the attitude of wronging and defrauding the Lodge itself. This has nothing to do with business. Refusing to pay dues is a violation of a compact which the Lodge makes with every member, upon which rests many of his privileges as a mason, and the very existence of the Lodge itself as an instrument for the accomplishment of good. Such cases are especially provided for by our masonic laws.

No mason is excusable for violating his word, or betraying a trust reposed in him by a brother, or any other person. He should be held strictly accountable for his acts according to our moral standard, and not by the world's money-gauge. On the other hand, masons cannot be too careful not to expose a brother to the danger of forfeiting his word by seeming to do him a favor in a time of need and imposing conditions which he may be unable to perform, thus inflicting upon him irreparable injury and disgrace. Leave collecting debts to agents, constables and courts. Let business be strictly business, and masonry remain purely masonry, and do not mingle the incongruous elements of the two, to make one subserve the purposes of the other. Grant business accommodations only at their par value and dispense masonic charity freely. Pursue this straightforward course, and the lodges will be spared an infinitude of trouble in conducting trials of a character that should never come before them.—*Gouley's Freemason.*

THOUGHTS FOR TEMPLARS.

Sir John D. Vincil, G. C. of Missouri, thus addresses the *Fraters* of that State:

“How fares the Order in Missouri? ‘What of the night’ may be questions with which you should challenge your official ‘Watchmen,’