

In our travels over land we have had pretty fair opportunities of seeing how much of this spirit some Masons had, and we are masonically proud to say that it has been only here and there, at long distances, that we have found "a black sheep" in any of our folds, and we will here add, that in most instances we have learned that these but seldom attend any of the Lodge meetings. In short, we found them to be only poor, miserable backsliders. To merely take the degrees, as all know, makes no man a Mason, for as we have written before, he is only a Masonic automaton. He lacks living light, social energy, and the high integrity of fraternal power. The outside world thinks that the masonic jewel which some men wear is evidence of masonic character, and so it may be so far as the name is concerned; but the truly initiated Masons are apt to look a little farther for their knowledge of a masonic brother than the mere show of his emblems.

But let us inquire, before we close this article, whether the multiplication of our Lodges or the increase of our membership had necessarily anything to do with the dying away of this grand old spirit of Masonry.

We know, it is true, that the higher virtues are usually found only among the few, that the multitude is apt to run in the ways of evil. But then it should be remembered that Masons are always selected, or at least should be, and that they are not of degenerated mould, for if they are, or were, they are unfit applicants for initiation into any Lodge. As a class, then, Masons are men of good report, and therefore it should be expected that they will vindicate in their spirit and conduct, that they have some if not all of the grand old endowments. Then let all our Lodges look to it, and see that all proper efforts are made to keep alive the old spirit of the Craft—let them hold Masonic socials and have reunions, and row and then have a good moral and social lecture, and the old spirit will doubtless remain as our eternal inheritance.—*Masonic Advocate*.

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An Old Scottish Custom.—In accordance with a custom inaugurated by Mother Kilwinning towards the end of the 17th century, and followed in after years by other lodges, Glasgow Kilwinning began at a very early stage of its existence to grant commissions to make Masons. The following is a copy of a letter of authority to work in Edinburgh. "Dearly beloved brother: Your letter to us of the 30th of last Aprile, praying for power to receive and admit Masons and members of Glasgow Kilwinning, being read at our monthly meeting of May, it was unanimously resolved to comply with your request. In consequence of which resolution you are vested with power, privilege and authority from us, as we doe hereby give you full power, privilege, and authority to receive and admitt all such of a worthy and honest character as shall apply to you to be received and admitted members of Glasgow Kilwinning; and this we authorise you to doe, though at a distance from our lodge. Provided always and wt this restriction, that no brother or brethren shall be admitted or received under the name of Glasgow Kilwinning till he or they shall pay the sum of twenty-seven shillings and sixpence sterling, as the ordinar and usual charge stipulated and appointed by our rules and regulations as the expense to be paid by every brother who shall be admitted. At same time, you are required pointedly and exactly to make remittance of such sums of money as you shall receive for the admission of a member or members, and that per first post or other opportunity after such admission or admissions, and you are at the same time to send the name and designation of ev'ry new brother, with the date of his admission, so as he may be inrolled in our books. As we are well convinced of your abilities, we think it noways necessary to putt you in mind of charges and instructions to be given the young intrants. Wee therefore only add that we wish you, as a dear brother, all spiritual and temporal blessings in Chryst Jesus our Lord. Amen. These presents, retaining a power at our pleasure to revoke and repeal them, are given at our Lodge of Glasgow Kilwinning, and sign'd and seal'd with our seals, the 23rd of July, in the year of our Lord, 1741, and of Masonry 5741 Sic. Subr., George Murdoch, Glasgow Kilwinning, William Clark, S. W.; Jno. Hamilton, p J.W. To our worthy and well beloved brother John Cumming."—*D. Murray Lyon*.

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AMONG the societies of ancient times resembling (and probably an offshoot of) Freemasonry, Cæsar describes one called Soldurios (Com. III, 22) in these words: "This is their condition of life, that they may enjoy all advantages of life together with those to whose friendship they have devoted themselves. That if anything happens to them through violence, either they may bear the same calamity together, or may commit suicide. For it has not been found in the memory of man one who would regret to die when his friend was killed to whom he had devoted himself," etc. This description recalls the stories of David and Jonathan, Damon and Pythias, and others of antiquity.