

other preoccupations sometimes seem to leave but little time for other duties. I am glad to be able to say also that I believe the average standard of morality to be fully as high in our jurisdiction as in any other, and that it is advancing from year to year.

The words of admonition which I have expressed are intended to aid the advance referred to, and to arrest tendencies in the opposite direction, which seem to exist in a few localities.

In conclusion, brethren, allow me to congratulate you on the present, and to encourage you in your efforts to extend the blessings of our institution. May your labors be abundantly rewarded, and may the time soon come when Masons everywhere will recognize their obligation, "to be good men and true, and strictly to obey the moral law."—*G. M. of W. Virginia.*

A FEW REFLECTIONS.

As we take up our pen once more to write, we are reminded that another year is drawing to a close; a few more weeks and it will have passed away and be numbered among the things that were. Day after day, week after week, and month after month have passed in quick succession since our New Year's greeting. Many bright anticipations have been realized, others have ended in bitter sorrow and disappointment. Some have prospered while others seemingly have labored in vain, and all have advanced one more step in their life's journey. As we glance over the pages of the past, how do we find the record as it pertains to each of us? How have we used the talent entrusted to our keeping? Has it been carefully hid away in a napkin, or has it been made to increase an hundred fold? Who shall receive the welcome plaudit, well done, good and faithful servant? These are the reflections that come flashing through the mind as we write, and happy is he who can answer them to his own good. But dropping our individuality, how is it with us as Masons?—as members of the great Masonic Brotherhood?—as Lodges? What have we done during the past year, as an Order, to establish our claims for deeds of charity and pure beneficence? How have we fulfilled our obligations to relieve a needy brother in distress; to dry the widow's tears; to succor the helpless orphan, and to cause the sun to shine where shadows had rested? How have we shown to the world that Masonry is not a sham, a mere pretence, but a living, glorious reality? If we have not done all this we have come far short of our duty. The talent entrusted to our keeping has remained hid in the ground, and we must be cast out as unworthy servants. Let us then examine ourselves closely, and earnestly strive to amend what has been done amiss.

If we have been derelict in the discharge of duty, let the few remaining days of the declining year be improved in an earnest effort to recover the lost ground so that we may begin the new year untrammelled by the past. The season of winter, of cold and suffering is upon us, and many families there are who have not the means to provide for their own, to protect their little ones from the chilling blast. There is work for all both in and out of the Lodges, and every true Mason will be ready to do his part. Remember that the reward is for those of whom it shall be said, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto me." Remember, too, that every Mason has a share in this great responsibility, and each must stand or fall upon his own merits.—*Masonic Advocate.*

GRAND COUNCIL OF TENNESSEE.

EXTRACT FROM THE GRAND MASTER'S ADDRESS.

When we met here twelve months ago, portions of our jurisdiction were just emerging from a terrible scourge that was almost unprecedented in its severity; now, I am happy to say, throughout our entire borders peace and health prevail amongst our Companions. In our Order, however—Cryptic Masonry—are manifest signs of disease which, although of a sporadic and tractable nature, might, if not properly treated, result in death to some of our Councils. But I am happy to say the remedy, if timely applied, is easy and sure. The disease to which I refer, Companions, is apathy and indifference with the officers of some of our Councils, in the meetings and work. The time fixed in the by-laws for a meeting passes without a quorum, another comes and goes the same way, an annual assembly of the State comes, and from these Councils there are no representatives nor returns; the same thing is repeated the second time, when an order is made for a revocation of their charters, and thus they die. This is not an overdrawn picture, for this is the precise history of some of the Councils of this State, and I fear is being repeated by others. Now, who is to blame?