

AFTER-DINNER SPEECHES.

One hears so frequently, of the comparative valuelessness of Masonic after-dinner speeches, that we take great pleasure in transferring to our columns, from *The (London) Freemason*, the following instructive remarks of Bro. G. W. Speth, Secretary of the Lodge of Unity," No. 183, E. R., in response to the toast of his health, at the recent inauspicious-meeting banquet of that famous lodge, and we request our readers carefully to peruse the same. Bro. Speth is also the noted Secretary of the Correspondence circle of Quatuor Coronati Lodge, London.

The Secretary, Bro. Speth, said: "W. M. and brethren, I have to thank you for the cordiality of your expressions which I feel deeply. Nothing about Masonry is more remarkable than its many-sidedness. All its members who are worthy of the name of brother are devoted to it, but for very divergent reasons. It appeals to them each differently. Many are attracted by the pleasures of sociality, the firm friendships formed, the broadly tolerant basis which permits so many men of strongly marked and opposite opinions in religion, politics and national sentiment, to rally round our board and hail each one the other by the sacred name of brother. For these members the pleasures of social intercourse are the chief attraction. And I am a very long way indeed from implying that their view is a low one, I even question whether it is not the highest and best, as it certainly is the oldest and original view. It is just this admixture of creeds and classes which has given rise to the other attractions (especially Charity) of which I am about to speak. Let it not be forgotten that our charities, noble and excellent in every way, are not the original purpose of Masonry, are not, even now, its *raison d'être*, they are the accident and result of our Institution, and henceforth indissolubly bound up with it, but the Craft existed first and gave birth to the Charities, not the Charities to the Craft. Therefore let no man deprecate the brother for whom the chief attraction lies in the pleasures of social intercourse. A second class is devoted to the beautiful exemplification of our ritual, and finds its prime motive power in a desire to see our ancient and quaint ceremonies properly carried

out. These brethren are simply invaluable to us, and failing their efforts we should soon lay ourselves open to the charge of wasting our time on ridiculous puerilities. That the class is well represented in our lodge need not be pointed out. A third section of brothers throw themselves heart and soul into the cause of our noble Charities. For them, the support of the aged and infirm, wearied by the battle of life, the equipment and preparation of the young and tender for the same inevitable contest, constitute the charm of our Order. Every hour stolen from their daily avocations is devoted to succouring the poor and needy, the young and the old; great is their reward now, how much greater hereafter. And the curious fact is that these three classes comprehend and appreciate each other, and each, while specially devoted to its own line of Masonic labor, participates in a minor degree in the pursuits and predilections of the other two. And finally, we have a fourth class, which sympathises with the other three, but to whom the great attraction is the study of the History, Antiquities and Symbolism of the Order. Here, I confess, lies my field of labor. But my heart is divided. One portion pursues the science of Masonry, the other is devoted to the Lodge of Unity, its interests, prosperity and success. It is my mother lodge, it was my father's mother lodge before me, I am a Lewis of the lodge, in it I am at home, here I have made friends in the past, some alas, dead; here I continue to acquire new friends every day, and whatever claims any other lodge may have upon me, to Unity, 183, will always be due my best services. W. M., so long as it shall please you and your successors to require my services as Secretary, so long shall they be ungrudgingly rendered."

NEOPHYTES in American Masonry are inclined to imagine the York Rite to be universal, whereas it is almost exclusively confined to the English-speaking nations. In Germany are practiced three different rites, of which the system of Fessler has nine degrees, that of the Three Globes at Berlin ten, and the Eclectic but three. In the Scandinavian countries is the Swedish rite of twelve degrees; in France the French or Modern rite of seven degrees, while in all the other countries of Europe and of South America the Scottish rite is in use.