

after due trial under the code." It is now in order for some enthusiastic Episcopalian to organize a crusade against all brethren who belong to dissenting churches.

The Grand Lodge of Tennessee has joined in the movement against Cerneauism. We have no particular regard for any of the Rites that seek shelter under the broad wing of Freemasonry, as many of them have no connection with it beyond filching the name or bringing it into disrepute. We believe, however, that it is the inherent right of every man to join any lawful society he pleases, so long as he abides by its by-laws. We further believe any body of men can organize a society, and call it by what name they please, so long as they exercise a proper regard for societies of prior existence. The spirit that prompted Freemasons in the past to calmly await the outcome of the anti-Masonic craze may seize the admirers of Cerneauism, under the present apparent persecution, and like results may follow. If the opponents of the Cerneau Rite have a good case against it, they should rely upon the justness of their cause rather than on their ability to pass resolutions. When a meddling person interferes in a quarrel in which he has no direct interest, he usually receives few favours from the belligerents, and in this struggle between the Scottish Rites the Blue Lodges are intensely meddling. What will the harvest be?

DO BLANK BALLOTS COUNT?

Occasionally this question arises, and when it does opinions differ. *THE CRAFTSMAN*, in a recent issue, advanced the opinion that blank ballots should not be

counted, and it still holds that view. At an election in this district last month the casting of a blank ballot brought on a difference of opinion among the scrutineers, one of whom said that a Past Grand Master had ruled that every ballot, blank or otherwise, should be counted. As the vote on this occasion stood something like this:—Ballots cast, 42; Jones, 21; Smith, 20; blank ballot, 1; we think it is plain that such a ruling operated only against Bro. Jones, having no like injurious effect on Bro. Smith's vote. As the actual votes of the brethren stood, Bro. Jones had a clear majority, but the counting of the blank as a vote took a vote from him, and in no way affected Bro. Smith. A ballot paper is useless unless it bears evidence of the depositor's preference. The writing on it makes it valuable, just as a signature makes a cheque negotiable. A blank ballot carries the same weight in a vote as does an indifferent brother who neglects to hold out his hand when voting is taking place in the ordinary way. The indifferent ones are not counted as yeas or nays, owing to their negligence, and similar treatment should be accorded blanks deposited by brethren who are so careless of results as to refuse to mark their papers. Every member of a lodge possesses the right to vote, and he should exercise that right to the best of his judgment, a failure to do so bringing punishment on himself and not on others, the punishment being a rejection of his blank ballot. If blanks are to be counted it would take but little engineering in a small lodge to bring on a dead lock and maintain it, whereas if proper ballots were cast such a condition could not last long.

COLD-BLOODED BENEVOLENCE.

The neophyte in Freemasonry is informed that one of the principles upon which it is founded is benevolence, and in the charity charge, in language sublime and impressive, he is taught that