

[NOTE.—The above important communication from Bro. Hughan appeared in the *London Freemason* of the 10th ult., and doubtless reflects to a great extent the opinion of the English Craft. Bro. Hughan counsels the English Lodges in Montreal to unite with the Grand Lodge of Quebec, so as to “preserve them from ultimate extinction.” He then adds: “and in order to continue to hold their prominent position in Montreal, they should not any longer preserve their independence.” “The contributions or fees from these Lodges are nothing like so large as they used to be.” Our limited space prevents us reviewing this able letter this month, but every Brother must see the time has arrived when it is inadvisable for these Bodies to remain in their present anomalous position. We shall refer to the matter again at an early date.—ED. CRAFTSMAN.]

Lodge Refreshments.

To the Editor of THE CRAFTSMAN.

I have read the letters of “Old Time Sociality,” in your June and September numbers, and the letter of John Kent, S.D., in your July number, with some interest and some regrets, more particularly regrets as to the manner in which the subject is handled by O. T. S.

I belong to a Lodge whose members some years ago used to boast of their lavish banquets. It became customary for the newly elected three principal officers to emphasize their installation with a banquet reeking with wines, and as the Lodge embraced many with means as well as ambition it seemed natural, under the prevailing usage, that the succeeding officers vied in sumptuousness with the retiring officers. The temporary result, of course, was that the Lodge membership was largely augmented, and principally by those who cared for such things, and not for much else they found there after gaining admittance.

Opulent officers were not always elected, though the effort was always made to keep those in who could give the best spread, and those elected who were not fairly able to bear the burden of this lavishness had either to do it and suffer at home, or endure sneers or insinuations of meanness. The Fraternity is recruited necessarily from the profane, and in Ontario, with very few exceptions, the men who would ornament any lodge shrank from seeking membership, solely on account of these excesses; and it is now only after the lapse of two or three years that our Lodge is beginning to regain the reputation all true lodges should bear.

Again, there are brethren who have been victims of drink, who have made good resolutions and are striving to stick to them. Is it not the greater charity for the majority who favor wine suppers to forbear, lest a weaker brother should be led to sin? “Old Time Sociality” would kick those weaker brethren out. Would it not, also, be the greater charity, to show his strength and help his weak brother to stand by his resolution, than to kick him out regardless of his destiny or the condition of the family left behind him?

I am strongly in favor of making Lodge meetings pleasant and attractive. The mere routine, night after night, without more, to the older members at least, becomes after a time wearisome. Hospitality and brightness at all the meetings should be the studied desire of every member. One of the tenets of our Order is to pursue our researches into the mysteries of nature and science, literature and learning. Each member can do something, if he will, to make our meetings more cheerful, and the deadness, if any there be, can be apportioned, a share to each man.

I am in favor of refreshments on the occasion of every meeting. I am not a total abstainer, and would not object to the (always) moderate use of wines upon special occasions, provid-