

THE RIGHT OF OPINION.

It is not given to all to see and understand alike. An old maxim says: "Many men of many minds." It has always been so, and always will be. There is as much difference in minds as there is in bodies. No two are exactly alike. The Great Creator built us that way, and His works can not be changed. Even making men Masons does not wipe out this difference.

Editors are constructed upon this same principle. No two of them agree in all things. In fact, to disagree oftentimes seems best to serve their purpose. Ordinarily men do as they please about expressing an opinion. Editors are expected to give theirs on all sorts of subjects for the benefit of others. They have different ways of doing this. Some timidly, so as to leave the reader in doubt, through fear of displeasing. Others have very pronounced views and freely express them. We like to see a man have the "courage of his convictions" and stand by them. This quality in an editor gives tone and force to his writings, and causes others to think and investigate.

Masonry affords a large field for differences of opinion. Masonic laws, usages, traditions and rituals are each fruitful in this diversity. Masonic landmarks are said to be general and immovable. Every Mason is solemnly pledged to observe and not remove them, but even these have been subjected to the whims of Grand Lodges. The Grand Lodge of England changed "free born" to "free man," and that of France no longer puts its "trust in God." A proper course to steer, in these modern times, thus becomes much a matter of opinion. The way one has been taught generally seems to him the best. Instructors impress upon the minds of their pupils that their way is right, consequently any other must be wrong. "When doctors disagree who shall decide?"

The thought uppermost in our mind when we wrote "The Right of Opinion," at the head of this article, was,

first, as the editor of a Masonic journal do we enjoy this right, and, second, if our opinions are honestly expressed and consistently supported by every act of our life, what right has a contemporary to impugn our motives, and say that "There is a cat under the meal, or an 'undue sympathy' which *may* develop into the over act." Such an insinuation is a slander which no true Mason would utter against a brother. The one who wrote it often prates of Masonic charity and brotherly love. He should make them tenets of his practice as well as of his profession as a Mason. We commend for his special benefit a careful reading of the first five verses of the seventh chapter of the "Gospel according to St. Matthew."

Opinions are formed by the best information we have. They may be correct or erroneous. The right to enjoy one's own opinion, when honestly formed under the best light he can obtain, is the privilege of every man. A Masonic editor is no exception to this rule, but he has no license to censure or misjudge a brother editor because of difference of opinion. When inclined to do so he should regard it as a premonition that the time has come when his talent can be employed to better purpose in some other line of business.

—*Masonic Advocate*.

BRO. NAPOLEON BUONAPARTE.

He was born in 1769, was First Consul of France in 1795, and Emperor of the French in 1804. The date and place of his initiation are undecided; but according to Besuchet, it was in Malta, 1798. As Emperor he did not specially recognize Masonry, but tacitly tolerated it, by designating his brother Joseph as its future head; and Marshal Prince Cambaceres to be Deputy Grand Master, holding the latter directly responsible to him for the good behavior of the brethren. Regiments which had distinguished themselves were allowed to hold military Lodges, as a mark of consideration. Masonry followed the French arms round the