

tiffs and jars which occasionally arose to disturb the serenity of their relations, the brethren of the three Constitutions which occupied New Zealand conjointly before 1889 rubbed along fairly well together, while since 1889, when a so-called fourth Constitution appeared upon the scene, there has been nothing but the most complete, and at the same time, the most appalling, discord. The minor discords of former days may have been bad enough — we do not think they ever attained to such proportions as to justify such a description, but for the sake of argument we are willing to allow that they may have been so—but no one in his senses will deny that the transition has been from bad to worse, and the question which materially concerns every Mason who has at heart the true interests of the Fraternity is—How best can an end be put to a state of things which, if it continues much longer, will endanger the security of the Craft in New Zealand, and bring still more signal discredit upon the whole Masonic body? The question is a ticklish one to answer. The seceders are jubilant at the many accessions to their strength which have taken place since they set up their irregular Grand Lodge, and flouted their parent Grand Lodges of England, Ireland and Scotland, in the face of all Masonry. They have won recognition from many Grand Lodges in North America and elsewhere, but not from the oldest and most experienced either in North America or the other countries where Masonry is established. They have grudgingly restored the warrants which they had appropriated to their own use, but they have not succeeded in ridding themselves of the very grave responsibility of having brought about a state of disorder which, as we have said, is a discredit to the whole community of Masons. On the other hand, there is a strong body of lodges which still remain true to their old allegiance, and while they so remain, there is little, if any, likelihood of the present unfraternal strife between them and the seced-

ers being ended. On both sides, however, there must be many sound Masons of long experience, who may or may not have foreseen the disastrous consequences that were certain to follow upon any secession which was not acquiesced in by a substantial majority of the lodges. Such men, whether seceders or loyalists, must yearn for a restoration of the old-time relations that existed everywhere throughout the Colony, and it appears to us that if, without prejudice to the rights and privileges of any one of the present discordant element into which New Zealand Freemasonry is broken up, a conference could be arranged among the ablest and most trusted leaders of those elements, a step would be taken towards restoring the sorely-needed harmony and fraternal spirit, which prevailed only a few short years ago. Our "Ancients" and "Moderns" between 1751 and 1813 were more bitterly antagonistic to each other, and for a far longer period, than the present seceders and loyalists in New Zealand. But, after some 60 years of more or less open and declared hostility to each other, the rival Societies agreed to meet and settle their differences—which were far more important than those which presently divide the New Zealand Craft into two opposing camps—the one proviso insisted upon by each of the Societies being that the settlement should be honourable to both. If these "Ancients" and "Moderns," after 60 years of the bitterest rivalry in matters which each regarded as of vital importance to Masonry, were able to adjust their differences it ought not to be impossible for the Craft in New Zealand to resume their old relations of fraternal harmony, and establish some system of government for the whole body which shall be acceptable and, at the same time, honourable to all.

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Our boast is not in numbers. It is always possible for others to outbid us in mere numerical strength. Our boast is in moral excellency. We make