

all kneeling. The choir then sang the ode. 'Rejoice, rejoice, fond mothers.' The sponsors then took their seats, when the master addressed them in relation to

THE DUTIES

they were taking upon themselves. After an invocation to the deity and music, the children, parents and sponsors were then conducted forward to the altar, on which water, oil and salt were placed. The master then called the lodge up, descended from his throne, and after a few words addressed to the group, lighted the incense on the altar. After a chant by the choir, the master took the children severally in his arms dipped their left hands in a basin of perfumed water, and said: "By this symbol I devote thee (in each case) to the service of virtue and truth. May our Father who is in heaven keep thee innocent and pure of heart all the days of thy life." During this ceremony the choir sang an appropriate ode. The master then took the vessel of perfumed oil, dipped the little finger of his right hand therein, and marked it with a delta on the forehead of each child, saying: "I set upon thy forehead the symbol of wisdom, power and love of God. May he protect and guide thee in right courses all the days of thy life," the choir singing meanwhile the chant. "Blessed are the undefiled in the way." The master then replaced the vessel on the altar, and stretching out his hands towards the children, invoked a blessing upon them. The children and those in charge of them were conducted to their seats, and the choir sang an appropriate ode. The God-mothers then placed them at

THE ALTAR OF OBLIGATION

the brethren present formed in a circle around them, each with his left hand on his heart and his right hand raised toward heaven. All then kneeled and repeated after the master the solemn vow to protect the children from all danger and temptation until their arrival at maturity. After rising, the master, taking the vessel of salt in his hand, repeated the Arab vow which sanctifies the enemy with whom he has tasted salt, and placing a portion of the salt on his tongue said: "With this salt I seal my vow." The kersel was then passed to each brother, who in turn repeated the vow. The children were then invested with lamb-skin aprons and each was presented with a Masonic jewel, the master saying: "In the name and under the auspices of the supreme council, I do proclaim these children consecrated to the service of truth and virtue by Masonic baptism and anointing after the ancient custom of Masonry, to be wards of the Mithras Lodge of Perfection." This was repeated in turn by the venerable grand and senior wardens. After more music, the orator delivered a brief lecture, after which two young ladies, in conformity with a law of Scottish rite, passed among the assemblage and received contributions from all who chose to give, the sum so collected to be given by the grand almoner to the most needy person or persons known to him, the source from which it comes, in pursuance of inviolable custom, not to be made known. A closing chant concluded the ceremonies.

LEGISLATION REGARDING NON-AFFILIATION.

The *status* of non-affiliated Masons is just now the topic of the hour. In order to convey as concisely as possible the desired light on this subject we publish the following resolution adopted by the Grand Lodge of North Carolina at its last session: