

and, if believed by the outer world, it will lower the Craft in the estimation of the public far deeper than fifty or a hundred "Divine Services" can amend.

That Rev. Bro. informs us at the close of his communication that he is desirous in assisting to elevate the tone of the members of Grand Lodge; this is in itself a very praiseworthy desire, and as such highly commendable, for no candid man will deny that in every individual as well as in every Society, even Church Communities and the Masonic fraternity not excepted, there is ample room both for moral and for intellectual improvement; but our Rev. Bro. appears to have unfortunately overlooked the grave fact that it is easier to express a desire than to carry it into effect, and also that it is easier to give a person or a body of men a bad name than to gain for him or them universal respect; the one may be done by one slanderous tongue while the other often requires superhuman efforts to accomplish; the one often requires no brain, but an inclination to exaggeration and wantonness; while the other often requires brain, earnest resolve and noble perseverance. The information by our Rev. Bro. as regards his desire, unfortunately conveys an unpleasant sting to the great majority of members of Grand Lodge whom our Rev. Bro. in the preceding paragraph of his communication brands as rioters and revelers, who do not believe in going to church on a week day, who vote down his motion in the question of Divine Service during Grand Lodge session, who disturb the midnight's rest of about ten thousand people, and who respond to the cry "go to the circus" in preference to holding an evening session or of going to church and hear our Rev. Bro. or some other one preach a sermon.

Our Rev. Brother's plan for elevating the tone of the members of Grand Lodge is by introducing Divine Service as part of the annual proceedings of Grand Lodge, and he thinks that before long it will be considered not the least profitable and pleasant part of the proceedings. This is also a matter of opinion which he has a perfect right to enjoy and to express; at the same time I claim the right to express my opinion upon that subject.

Firstly—I consider that the motion referred to did cast, though indirectly, reflections upon every one of our illustrious Grand Masters who have presided over Grand Lodge since its formation in 1856, about a quarter of a century, in as much as not one of our Grand Master's ever intimated or advised in his annual address the introduction of Divine Service as a necessary part of our Grand Lodge proceedings; while from a Grand Master, being he head of the Craft, the Craft expects such suggestions as in his wisdom will tend

to elevate the tone of the members of Grand Lodge, and generally that of the Craft, or which is otherwise of vital importance or benefit to the same. Neither did any of our numerous Past Grand Chaplain's ever before make such a suggestion or motion.

Secondly—As regards the advisability of adding Divine Service to our Grand Lodge proceedings, it should be borne in mind that in this country we have men of almost every creed belonging to the Masonic fraternity, some of whom are rather extreme in reference to church matters, and would not on any account attend Divine Service in any church except one belonging to their own creed or profession. Roman Catholics, of whom we have many excellent members among us, cannot fairly be expected to attend Divine Service in a Protestant Church; and from the many Jews who form a very respectable portion of our membership, it can neither be expected that they shall go to any Christian Church for worship; we have also a fair number of Mohammetans and probably members of other religions among us, of whom it would be simply absurd to expect from them to attend Divine Service in a Christian Church for the purpose of devotion. If, however, the object of the mover is to be attained, i.e., to impress upon the outside public that the Freemasons are not such a godless people as some parties accuse them of being, but that they go to church and attend Divine Service as other pious Christians do, then one condition is, that such Divine Services be held public and in a regular church, not in a mere lecturing hall, and that the public be allowed to attend. Knowing then that we have rather such a heterogeneous body of men as regards religious view, who, nevertheless, meet in Lodge upon the broad principles of Masonry as one homogeneous body, would it be advisable to disturb that unity by declaring that Divine Service shall form part of the Grand Lodge proceedings, and make it quasi-compulsory upon every member of Grand Lodge to attend the same? Would not such a law be an unquestionable infringement upon the guaranteed rights of every one who becomes a member of our ancient fraternity? Such a law might be introduced in a Society where all members are of one and the same creed without causing any jarring, but not so in this country. And to say that such an attendance at Divine Service need not be made compulsory, but may be left to the option of every individual member, would be a contradiction in terms, for if the holding of Divine Service is made part of Grand Lodge proceedings, the attendance to the same, for every member must of necessity be as obligatory as the attendance at Grand Lodge itself; absence from the one would render the defaulter equally