

Our Fraternity is not for show; it does its noble work of beneficence without any parade, and it has no occasion to seek the "*popularis aura*." We hope, however, that his picture of a Masonic procession is a little overdrawn, otherwise we would strongly advocate total prohibition in that quarter, until the brethren were able to make a respectable appearance and reflect some credit on the Craft.

"Our opinion is, that frequent public installations do not promote the interests of Masonry. There is too much public parade. The more a secret Order keeps itself out of the popular gaze, the more awe it will inspire. When the High Priest entered within the Holy of Holies profound reverence was inspired in the minds of the people of Israel, because he went only once a year, and because a veil shut the divine Shekinah from the vulgar gaze. Frequent processions and public installations have the effect to make common our Institution. Then, a false idea is conveyed by these public installations. The ceremony, none too impressive when well rendered, is generally read in an indifferent manner, and before it is through with degenerates into a first-class bore, creating the impression that the Masonic Ritual, as practiced in secret, is of like character, and producing a repulsion rather than an attraction to our Order.

"On an occasion lately, although a splendid elocutionist was present, and would gladly have rendered the installation service with artistic effect, a conceited *frater* mouthed the ceremony, chewed the words, and spit them out in such a manner as to make every person present wish that he was free from the persecution. Nothing is such a torture to the nerves of a person of culture as to hear a rude and conceited boor tax a bad voice to slander rhetoric, and exhibit by his self-complacent expression and infinite composure, that he is thoroughly filled with the idea that he is scoring high on 'the bead-roll of fame.'

"A Masonic procession is, generally speaking, a farce. No more motley parade was ever seen than a Masonic turn-out in a country town. Every variety of dress, of hats, of regalia, and no regularity of distance or step, here and there an umbrella, the Tyler with an old half-moon sword, faded ribbons on the rods, an ill-shaped and stained banner—a hundred sad-looking men blundering along—thus, is the spectacle as we have often seen it. Add two or three fiddles, a flute and a big bass drum, a bevy of saucy boys and negroes flanking the line, with here and there a mangy dog running the gauntlet of the legs of the files, and the picture is complete. Now, when Masons turn out to lay the corner-stone of a *Masonic* edifice, or to bury a brother, there is no impropriety in the march, even though it lack the imposing elements of a street parade, but when the purpose is to make a show, it degenerates into a miserable caricature, only equaled in its ridiculousness by a battalion of boys marching to make battle with the geese in a neighboring barn-yard.

"We don't say that a public installation may not be made impressive, but if so, the officers must study their parts, and give them dramatic effect, and but few are willing to take the time to memorize the ceremony."