

have existed from the earliest times. Such are the Ancient Mysteries, whose object was by their initiation to cultivate a purer worship than the popular one; such, too, the schools of the old philosophers, like Pythagoras and Plato, who, in their exoteric instructions, taught a higher doctrine than that which they communicated to their exoteric scholars. Such, too, are the modern secret societies, which have adopted an exclusive form, only that they may restrict the social enjoyment which it is their object to cultivate, or the system of benevolence for which they are organized, to the persons who are united with them by the tie of a common covenant, and the possession of a common knowledge. Such, lastly, is Freemasonry; which is a secret society only as respects its signs, a few of its legends and traditions, and its methods of inculcating its mystical philosophy, but which has to everything else, its designs, its objects, its moral and religious tenets, and the great doctrine which it teaches, is as open a society as if it met on the highways beneath the sun of day, and not within the well-guarded portals of a lodge. The great error of writers who have attacked Freemasonry on the ground of its being a secret society, is, that they confounded Freemasonry with political societies of revolutionary times, whose object was the overthrow of governments. Masonry does nothing of the kind.—*The Freemason*, N. Y.

MASONRY IN THE WRONG BED

"If we cannot exist," says an American Grand Master, "except as bolstered up in bed by Oddfellows, Grand Army of the Republic, Knights of Honor, Pythias, Workmen and Grangers, then, for one, I say let us die and be done with it." All of which means that some lodges have occupied halls with bodies not Masonic. Can it be possible that a Masonic body should belittle itself by meeting

in a room in which—well, say an Oddfellows' lodge, had met several days before? Horrible! Incredible! The ideal! Why, we find Oddfellows absolutely paying a member a stipulated amount every week, if he be sick; sitting up with him while he lives; giving his widow a stipend, if he die, and putting aside a per cent. as a "widows' and orphans' fund," to meet any demand made upon the lodge by destitute widows and orphans of their deceased members. Then look at the membership, composed of men occupying political office, ministers, merchants, bank officers, and mechanics, men whose characters have to be examined into, and approved before they can join. Masons meet in the room where such people had congregated a few days before? Preposterous! Who can say that they wiped their feet on coming in, or did not chew tobacco in that very room? Or, they might have gotten into a heated debate—Masons would not be guilty of such things as all these enumerated—never—that is, hardly ever—not oftener than they meet, at least.

Nonsense! What consummate folly! It is better to have and enjoy one's own house, but it is a luxury all cannot afford; why, then, claim such exclusiveness that the intelligence, morality, or holiness of Masonry does not justify? Are Masons more learned than other men? Are they less profane, intemperate, or licentious, than Oddfellows? Do they expend more in charity? Will Oddfellows contaminate a room so as to unfit it for subsequent use by Masons? Out upon such unworthy sentimentality.—*Masonic Home Journal*.

In Ireland, a Grand Lodge of Munster is spoken of as existing in 1721, established at Cork. Reference is also made to the founding of a Provincial Grand Lodge by the Grand Lodge of England, at Munster, in 1726. The only thing perfectly clear, however, is the formation of the present Grand Lodge of Ireland, in 1730