

to Robert Aiken, of Ayr, Scotland,—to whom he inscribed his famous "Cotter's Saturday Night,"—in this Epistle, which is full of wisdom of thought and beauty of language, the immortal Burns wrote:—

"The fear o' hell's a hangman's whip,
To hold the wretch in order;
But where ye feel your honor grip,
Let that aye be your border:
Its slightest touches, instant pause—
Debar all side pretences;
And resolutely keep its laws,
Uncaring consequences."

There was another writer of epistles who gave sage advice, from which we may, by analogy, learn something of advantage to the Craft. St. Paul, writing to the Romans, said, "Honor widows that are widows indeed." So we should honor Freemasons that are Freemasons indeed. Not every man who is made a Mason is a Mason. There are some Masons who are libels on Masonry, as there are some men who are libels on humanity. Every unworthy applicant is not struck by a black ball. Would that it were so. Would that in the lodge below, as in the lodge above, naught might enter that defileth; would that the unworthy might never pass beyond the initial stage; would that he might never be raised to the sublime privileges of the Master Mason.

We once heard a brother inveigh against the alleged injustice done in some instances by the black ball to applicants. He spoke of the rights of an applicant. Rights of an applicant! An applicant has no rights. He may not justly complain that his petition was not approved. Freemasonry is a royal Craft, consisting only of the elect few. It is not open to all comers. It is only for those who have attained a certain high standard, mentally, morally and physically, and who are, in the opinion of their judges, suitable to be built into the Temple of Masonry without marring the strength and beauty of the edifice. No man has a right to be made a Mason, any more than any man had a right to the priesthood under the Mosaic

economy. Are we not told by the First Great Light, with reference to this priesthood, "No man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron." So no man taketh Masonry unto himself—is made a Mason, unless he is called by the brethren who are Masons, to come and be one of them. We are a peculiar people, jealous of the honor of the Craft, expecting not many initiates, seeking none, but only anxious that all who are accepted should be of such a character and disposition as to maintain, by their example, their ancient and honorable fame of Freemasonry for Wisdom, Strength and Beauty. Would you test an applicant? Inquire whether he is in the highest sense of the term an honorable man; for only honorable men will do credit to the fraternity, and be likely to be guided by that lofty precept of the First Great Light in Masonry—"in honor preferring one another."—*Keystone.*

THE WHIRLIGIG OF TIME.

Among some highly-prized documents in our collection, we recently came across a copy of the Constitution of the Grand Lodge of the State of New York, as revised by Elias Hick, in 1819, and published by him in 1820, with the sanction of the Grand Lodge, and on a careful examination, were not a little amused to note the changes in the law brought about by the chances and changes of time, some of which we propose to note.

The form of the Constitution is totally different from that of the present day, being divided into chapters and sections, the subjects being so mingled, and without order as to their relations to each other, that it must have required an expert to find the direction of the law upon any given point.

The first chapter opens with a mixture of the ancient charges promulgated by Dermott, and moral