

EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT.

DECAY OF MASONIC JOURNALISM.

JUDGING from the discontinuance of so many journals and magazines published in the interest of the Craft, it would appear that Masonic journalism has been on the decline for some time past. That Masons, as a body, are less inclined to seek for knowledge through the medium of journals devoted to Masonic lore, we will not even pretend to say, for their intelligence forbids the thought that they are not of an enquiring turn of mind, therefore they must be anxious to become proficient in the history and literature of the Order. It is clear, nevertheless, that there is a vast deal of indifference manifested on the subject of Masonic journalism, and that Masons do not support purely Masonic periodicals as they ought to do. Within the space of a few months some of the best Masonic journals in the United States have ceased to exist, and the only one that was published in Scotland some time since quietly withdrew from the arena. The cause of the fatality is justly traced to a want of the proper support requisite to carry on such publications, and it is anything but creditable to the Masonic body that magazines of such marked ability as the *National Freemason*, and the *St. Louis Freemason* should have been permitted to stop. Since then the *Masonic Tidings* has followed, and it is to be feared that others will go after the same fashion.

It seems strange that notwithstanding the enthusiasm manifested, and the increasing growth of Freemasonry, there should be so little interest taken in keeping up journals wholly devoted to the diffusion of Masonic intelligence. To obtain promises of support is easy enough, but a long list of delinquent subscribers tells too plainly that publishers of Masonic papers have much to contend against. It probably never enters the minds of those who have pledged their support, that printers have to be paid, and that, too, with promptitude, no matter how dilatory or indifferent subscribers may be. A contemporary says it has been suggested that Masonic publishers, as grocers sometimes do, should publish a "black list." We cannot think the plan would answer, for a subscriber who does not pay up, would care very little about being published as a defaulter. There is dishonesty at the bottom of a good deal of this non-paying system. Of course, many neglect, and when a reminder comes they do not hesitate to pay; but then look at the cost of looking after delinquent subscribers, who, instead of requiring to be "dunned," should promptly come to time, for if a paper or magazine is not worth paying for, it is not worth having. Those who duly appreciate the value of papers they subscribe for, will always be prompt in paying. It is rather too much to find fault when payment is demanded years after having subscribed. There can be no question that payment in advance is by far the best plan for publishers, but there is a difficulty in carrying it out in some instances. Until, however, the system of paying in advance becomes general there will be no elysium for publishers. It were well if the Masonic fraternity would carefully consider the need there is of giving all the support they possibly can for the sustenance of Masonic journals. It is in their power to keep up all those that are yet to the fore, and they should use their best efforts to that end. It is anything but encouraging to the cause to see them dwindling down, and should they continue to fall away, it will be anything but well for Freemasonry. The *New York Square* speaks