

SOME REASONS FOR OUR BEING A SECRET ORDER.

FREEMASONRY has been denounced and suspected, in consequence of its being a secret Order. Secrecy in all things where secrecy is maintained is not only consistent with innocence, but is also imperatively enforced by necessity, as well as demanded by every consideration of policy. The direct benefits flowing from Masonry are of course intended for, and should be participated in, only by its members—by those who have been regularly initiated into its mysteries, and contribute to its support. They are secured by a knowledge of a universal language, which is used as a test of Brotherhood. This universal language (universal to Masons) is, under no circumstances, communicated to the world at large. The words and signs of it are secret; for to communicate them would at once destroy their utility. And, strange as it may seem to the uninitiated, our society professes to have no secrets beyond this. There is little, very little, in the Lodge to gratify the eye of the inquisitive. We do not tempt them with offers to unfold some mighty mystery; we can impart to them no superhuman wisdom; we possess not the elixir of life, nor the philosopher's stone, nor the spells of the Tarshun; we cannot and do not profess to be bound by any ties but such as are consistent with our duty towards ourselves and families, our neighbours, our country, and our God.

About the general nature of Lodge transactions, every one here can know as much as any of its members; but, for fear of any apprehension on this subject, we would briefly state, that nowhere are order and decorum more strictly enforced than in our Lodges; our business there is charity and brotherly communion, the admission of candidates, and the transactions of such other matters as necessarily pertain to every association. Now, all this is of such a character that it may, with great propriety, be kept to ourselves. We are Brothers—members of a large family—met for the purpose of transacting our own business, with which the world has no concern; and why should the world be permitted to witness its disposition? Does a needy Brother receive assistance, it is not for us to vaunt it; and it might not be agreeable to him to proclaim his wants before strangers, or to have the fact of his being relieved published; and it would certainly be impolitic and uncharitable, by publicity, to trammel the discussion of character; and how could the announcement of the rejection of candidates for our confidence, be otherwise than prejudicial to us, by exciting enmity and disaffection in the world. We seek not collision with the world, made up of a thousand creeds; our objects are few, and their pursuit is quiet and secret; and we have, as Masons, naught in common with the mass of mankind. We do not meddle with politics, nor the extension of a creed by proselytism; we seek only to cultivate the social virtues among ourselves, to benefit each other by deeds of love, and indirectly to benefit the world by our own improvement.—*New York Masonic Reporter.*

WHAT IS A CLANDESTINE LODGE?

A so called Clandestine Lodge is composed of a body of recreant Master Masons, working without warrant or authority. Any body of Masons that assembles for the performance of any Masonic act without proper authority, is a clandestine, and the man made therein a clandestine Mason. And even upon this point, it is necessary that a just discrimination should be made. A Clandestine Mason may be made in a regularly chartered Lodge, and a Mason good and true may be raised to the Master's degree in a Clandestine Lodge. Should a candidate who has been rejected in a Lodge visit some other city than that in which he was rejected, and surreptitiously obtain admission to the degrees of Masonry, he is an imposter, and has clandestinely climbed up some other way, when the proper entrance, appropriately guarded, was in view. Such imposter is not to be received into any Lodge, nor to be allowed to visit even the Lodge in which he was raised. The position of such is that of a Masonic leper; and he cannot be allowed association with

the congregations of the faithful until his leprosy is healed, which must be done by his Brethren, after due consideration and trial. On the other hand, a proper Master Mason may be introduced into the Order in a Clandestine Lodge. The candidate may be deceived in relation to the character and standing of the so-called Lodge into which he was introduced. His application for the degrees may have been made in good faith, and his intentions may have been pure and proper. When a Master Mason who has received the degrees in this way learns how he has been deceived, it is his duty to renounce at once the clandestine body by which the deceit has been practised upon him, and to apply to the Grand Master to be healed of his irregularity, and admitted into the fellowship of the faithful. And in consideration of such application, the G. Master is in duty bound to satisfy himself perfectly upon every point before he admits the administration of the remedy.—*Rev. J. N. McJilton.*

MASONIC LITERATURE.—“The literature of the Order is one of the most interesting themes that can attract the notice of intelligent Masons. Masonry is a science; and as such it should be presented to the view of its votaries, as well as to that of the world. A few years has brought a wonderful change in the literary history of Masonry. The addresses of Grand Masters, and the reports of the Committees of Correspondence, are enriched with the record of intelligent acts and sentiments and discussions upon nearly all the points that arise which are of importance and value to the craft. It is worthy of remark that these reports are written, and the discussion conducted in a spirit of fraternal regard, that can be found in no other merely human institution. Even the wrongs that are committed, and there must be such in some of the many and large assemblies of men as compose the various Grand Lodges and Lodges of the numerous jurisdictions of this and other countries, are brought to notice, and debated in the kindest manner; and, although reproofs often appear, they are gentle and forbearing, and the brethren give and receive them with a view to such improvement as they desire to effect. From the literature that thus presents itself in the various operations of the workmen, and which contains an immense amount of Masonic research, the brethren are conducted onward in the search for light until the volumes that contain the history of the past are procured and read, and the landmarks that direct the labors of olden times reviewed with interest and pleasure.

ITEMS.

A physician at Bath told the celebrated Foote, that he meant to publish a book of poems, but had “so many irons in the fire” he did not know well what to do. “Then take my advice Doctor,” said Foote, and “put your poems where your irons are.”

Excuses are the pick-pockets of time. The sun does not wait for his hot water or his boots, but gets up at once.

A lady living in Oregon, in writing to a friend, says, the cattle live to such an age in that region, that their owners have to fasten long poles to the end of their horns, for the wrinkles to run out on.

The trees are so tall in California that it takes two men and a boy to look to the top of them; one looks till he gets tired, and another commences where he left off.

Lady Blessington defines arithmetic to be a science differently studied by fathers and sons, the former confining themselves to addition the latter to subtraction.

At a Sunday School examination some time ago, a little girl being asked “what is the outward and visible sign or form in Baptism?” Innocently replied “Please, sir, the baby.”—*Baltimore Sun.*

What flower most resembles a bull's mouth.
Ans. A Cows-lip.

Within the points of the “Compasses” are indeed contained, the cardinal principles of Masonry. Happy is the man who walks through life guided by prudence, restrained by temperance, upheld by fortitude, and ennobled by justice.

What kind of a man do the ladies like best? Why, a husband-man, of course.

True eloquence consists in saying all that is necessary, and nothing more.

The surface of the earth reminds the Freemason that his activity should be universal, that hills or mountains in his way should not be able to turn him from the straight path of duty, but that in the midst of the greatest dangers and difficulties, he should proceed steadily, though cautiously, on his way to light and truth.—*Gadick.*

The man who has planted his feet upon the immutable square of morality, and whose body is erect in the proud consciousness of virtue, is indeed worthy of the dominion which has been given him over the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air. And the mason remembering that “God made man upright,” should constantly endeavour to preserve that upright posture of his body and mind.—*Mackey.*

The sound of the Master's gavel reminds each brother of the sacred numbers, a thing which ought to induce us readily and cheerfully to acknowledge and obey his commands. He who wishes to gain admittance amongst us must remember the saying: “knock and it shall be opened to you.” It is only then we can enter properly.—*Gadick.*

A resurrection from the grave and a future immortality were the great lessons which it was the design of the ancient mysteries to inculcate. In like manner, by a symbolic ceremony of great impressiveness, the same sublime truths are made to constitute the end and aim of freemasonry in the third degree, or as it has been called by Hutchieson, “the master's order.”—*Review.*

A person, not remarkable for his piety, remarked in controversy, that his opponent had aimed a death-blow at religion. A wag who overheard him, replied, “the man is a good marksman who can hit yours.”

“They say that every age has its ruling vice. I think impatience must be that of the present. We live in such a hurry that we have not time to be sorry.”

“There is a law among the Arabs which permits a man to divorce any of the four wives allowed him, who does not make good bread. Fortunately for many of the fashionables of the present day, there is no such law in this country.”