

The extract was mainly to inform the Brethren that it was proposed and carried by a majority of about two-thirds of the members present at the Grand Lodge, that as the Grand Lodge acknowledged no higher Degree or Order of Masonry than that of St. John's, consisting of Apprentice, Fellow Craft and Master, and that as the Grand Lodge had ever by her standing laws strictly prohibited all Masonic communication with any such pretended higher Orders or Degrees, it would object to any such communication being either received or read; and accordingly it was moved that the communication question be rejected without reading.

So far did intolerance drag the Grand Lodge that the letter was not even read, although signed by two Past Grand Masters of that Body—"Noblemen well acquainted with the principles of Masonry, and anxious for the diffusion of the true Light." The Grand Chapter addressed a statement of the facts to all the Lodges, and in a dignified manner asserted its rights and privileges. From that day to this the Grand Lodge of Scotland has refused to recognize the Grand Chapter, but has long ceased to interfere in any way with the latter body. The difficulties are now only curious as a matter of history, and as a beacon light to warn Grand Lodges doing more than to legislate for their own Lodges and members.—*Bro. Wm. James Hughan, P. M.*

CAUSES OF NON-AFFILIATION.

OUR readers will have noticed the somewhat earnest debate going on in these columns—if that may be called debate where the argument is all on one side—touching the status of non-affiliated Masons. The public Masonic mind appears, however, to have been so much engrossed with the radical prohibition involved in Section 42, and the direct ensuing violation of the great principles of the institution, that but little or no heed has been given to the causes which for years past have been leading to the really serious evil of non-affiliation. It may be remarked that the disease which has been, and is, afflicting the body politic of Masonry is not peculiar to that organization, but is seen in greater or less activity in every possible association, not excepting the different sections of the Church, and generally is due in each or all to the same moving causes. In our Fraternity there are yearly admitted many men who make all the required declarations in, let us believe, the utmost good faith; they have conceived a favorable opinion of the Craft, and they mean, if admitted, to conform to its useful rules and regulations. and, by their after-life, demonstrate their worthiness to belong to and represent it. But, alas! they have not the gift of continuance. Their prime motor, curiosity, having been gratified—having seen the inside of the machinery, and, as they genererally imagine, found out all about it, their zeal becomes less and less energetic, until, at last, some new bent is given to their desire to find a mystery to solve, or a means of passing their leisure hours not heretofore tried, and they go off on a new tangent, never, probably, to get back to the harness, too easily acquired to have been other than a loose fit, and cast off at will without regret. Others, again, come into the society in obedience to an innate desire for fellowship with men of approved standing, to earn and retain whose friendship they are willing to do their share of the work and bear their part of the burden of expense required to keep the wheels in motion. They devote themselves with commendable assiduity to the acquirement of the ritual and a knowledge of the ceremonies, and, as far as these things go, are bright Masons. More than this: they are prompt and assiduous in their attention to meetings—regular, special, and committee—and on occasion put their hands in their pockets without the color of a grimace, or a question whether the applicant is affiliate or not, so long as it is understood that he is in want. Every reader can pick out from among his acquaintances a number of brethren such as are here described, for they abound in our lodges; yet from these very men the ranks of non-affiliates are more largely recruited than from any other source. And why? Let us consider. A writer in the *Boston News*, in an article entitled "A Hint to the Church," after referring to the marvelous growth of Freemasonry and other associations of a similar nature, says:

"The sentiment which underlies and sustains all these fraternal orders, is natural, excellent and ought to be fostered and systematically satisfied. To our mind the Church, generally speaking, is at this time failing here in her duty. Is it not too largely the fact that the Church as such does not come up to the demands of social courtesy, to say nothing of warm and active brotherhood? Do church members feel that their fellow church member has a valid claim upon them for any social attention in virtue of being a fellow church member? Is it not rather the case that church members often occupy adjoining slips in the sanctuary, or sit side by side in the prayer room, and do not even speak to each other from the year's beginning to its end. Are not brotherhood and sisterhood, in their real practical existence, almost unknown in our churches? We are well enough aware that there are exceptions, noble and beautiful exceptions, to this unchristian way of living, but the rule is undoubtedly to our showing.