

TO OUR READERS.

Having been introduced by R. W. Bro. J. J. MASON to the readers of the CRAFTSMAN, we desire to express to him our thanks for the friendly words he has spoken on our behalf, and to extend a fraternal greeting to our brethren of the Mystic tie.

We are aware that in undertaking the management and publication of the CRAFTSMAN, we have laid upon ourselves no light burden; but we enter upon the work with the hope that we will receive a generous support from the members of our fraternity. Brother MASON in his parting words has referred to the difficulty—nay, the almost impossibility—of establishing a Masonic Magazine on a permanent basis. That the history of Masonic journalism has proved this, cannot be denied; and while many magazines and other periodical publications, in the interests of Masonry, have been launched upon the world of literature, few have been long lived. This is owing either to some defect in the publication itself, or to the apathy and indifference of Freemasons. Many able articles have lately appeared in some of our Masonic exchanges, enquiring into the cause of the failure of so many Masonic papers and magazines; and the question is very pertinently asked, “Are Masons a reading people?” And if we are to judge by the facts to which we have referred, we cannot but come to a negative conclusion. Bro. Rounseville, in the *Voice of Masonry*, thus delivers himself on the subject:—

“That Masonic publications are not well sustained, and consequently, not generally read by those to whose interest they are especially devoted, is a fact that will not be disputed, even by those on whom the blame for this condition falls. It is amusing, though humiliating, to pass in review the reasons which are given for this dereliction. One class put it on the ground that they have not time to read a monthly magazine, and claim that to pay for one would be money thrown away. And yet these Masons have families, some of the members of which would be glad of the opportunity to peruse it, and if allowed the privilege, would repair and repay the outlay by warm sympathy with the peculiar objects of Masonry. If the Mason at the head of the family be so overworked as not to have a quarter of an hour each day which he can devote to reading, and that space would amply serve to go through in a month with any Masonic magazine with which we are acquainted, yet it is hardly reasonable to suppose that the whole family will be so industrious. But we must be excused if we doubt whether the head of the family has not fifteen minutes per day which might be devoted, without harm to his business or damage to his income, to the cultivation of his mind. We know a Mason who is too busy to read a magazine, who spends more than the coveted quarter of an hour diurnally in the more necessary avocation of lighting his pipe. There is a possibility, let it be supposed, that a man can be so overwhelmed with work that he cannot find time to read a monthly magazine, but the probabilities are against it ‘by a large majority.’ ”

We heartily endorse the sentiments above expressed; and add to this our humble opinion, that, if Masons would take more trouble to acquaint themselves with the principles of the Order, and would manifest a greater interest in the doings and sayings of their brethren throughout the world, it would tend very materially to strengthen the tie which unites Masons, no matter on what part of the earth's surface they may be dwelling, in one bond of friendship and brotherly love; and as a further consequence the gloom