

LOUISIANA.

An earnest appeal properly attested by the Grand Master of Louisiana, praying for a contribution in aid of a fund then being raised for the relief of many brethren who were suffering from an inundation in the State of Louisiana, was forwarded to me by our Grand Secretary on the 27th of May last. Feeling that "he gives twice who gives quickly," I was desirous that a contribution should at once be forwarded, but it was considered prudent to await the meeting of Grand Lodge before taking any action in the matter. I am unable to say whether the opportunity of assisting our distressed brethren is still open to us or not; but if, upon enquiry, we find that we are still in time to alleviate distress and suffering by a contribution, I am quite sure that an appeal to your sympathy and benevolence will not be made in vain.

In connection with the Grand Lodge of Louisiana, and the interruption of our friendly relations with that Grand Body, arising, I believe, from a misapprehension on their part as to our action in regard to the Orient of France, I may here state that my directions a letter was addressed to the Grand Representative of the Grand Orient on the 25th of November last, requesting him to communicate to the Grand Orient our views on the point at issue, and to express the hope that the Grand Orient would reconsider her action, and withdraw the recognition which she had accorded to an antagonistic body within the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Louisiana. No reply to this communication has as yet been received, but I sincerely hope that the G. O. will, on mature consideration, withdraw her recognition and recede from the unfriendly position she has assumed towards the Grand Lodge of Louisiana.

CORRESPONDENCE.

My Masonic correspondence during the past year has been unusually large, and while I am happy to believe that all letters addressed to me have been promptly replied to, I feel it a duty, in the interests of future Grand Masters, to suggest that, except in special cases, much time would be saved by a closer adherence to the requirements of that section of the constitution which enacts that—"The Grand Master shall not be applied to officially on any business concerning masons or masonry, but through the Grand Secretary, the Deputy G. M., the District Deputy G. M.'s, or the Board of General Purposes." The reason for this clause is sufficiently obvious. Many of the matters written about are connected with affairs that have extended over long periods; the documents connected with which are on file in the archives of the office of the Grand Secretary, therefore when the application is made through the proper official, all the information required is submitted at the same time, and the Grand Master is thus enabled to give an intelligent decision upon the questions submitted, without having to refer to the Grand Secretary for further information.

FUNERALS.

The question as to the propriety of permitting other Societies to take part in Masonic funerals, has been prominently brought under my notice during the past year. My views on the subject (which are strongly opposed to the practice) were expressed in a letter addressed by me to the Secretary of a lodge in reply to one from him, requesting information on the subject, this letter was subsequently published in the *CRAFTSMAN*, and I now introduce the matter to you, in the hope that a formal decision of Grand Lodge will be given on the subject; I have always felt in the same way as to the impropriety of our lodge-rooms being used jointly with other societies, or indeed, used for any purpose outside of Masonry, and would recommend that an expression of the views of Grand Lodge be also given upon this point.

ON SUSPENSION.

In the course of the discharge of my official duties during the past year, an appeal was made to me by a Brother Mason against an order of his lodge made some months previously, suspending him indefinitely for a Masonic offence of which he had been found guilty. After much careful consideration of the whole matter, I concurred in the judgment pronounced by the lodge, but as I considered that the brother referred to had already been sufficiently punished, I declared the suspension removed, and ordered that the brother be restored to his former standing in his lodge. The point to which I at present desire to direct your especial attention is as to the propriety of Grand Lodge (I raise no question as to her authority) ordering that a brother who had been indefinitely suspended shall be restored to his former standing in his lodge.

In ordering as I did, that the brother referred to should be restored to full fellowship with his lodge, I acted in direct opposition to my own former rulings, and also to my present convictions on the point; but I felt bound to carry out the decision of the Grand Lodge, as expressed in a report of the Board of General Purposes, which report was received and adopted at the annual communication in 1870—(see printed proceed-