

THE PAST MASTER'S DEGREE.

This peculiar institution of Symbolic Masonry is doomed in Missouri. At the last session of the Grand Lodge, R. W. Brother Allen McDowell presented an amendment to the Constitution, looking to the abolishment of said Degree, as a prerequisite to presiding as Master of a Lodge. The system of Capitular Masonry having incorporated the Degree and made it a part of its Ritual, the question naturally arose, to whom does this Degree belong? Royal Arch Masonry claims and confers it, and said claim is conceded by Symbolic Masonry. It can not belong to both. Besides to confer it upon a brother because he has been elected to preside over a Lodge, and call him a *Past* master before he is installed, or has passed the chair, has always seemed very peculiar, if not worse. To this writer, the anomaly has been a source of amusement, and the folly existing, placed the thing beyond the limits of intelligent appreciation. Before sending out to the Lodges the printed form of the amendment, proposed by Brother McDowell, I addressed a circular to every Grand Lodge in the United States and the Dominion of Canada, asking what was the custom in their jurisdictions, as to requiring the Master elect to receive the degree of Past Master before presiding as Master. Answers from nearly all the Grand Lodges addressed were received. These replies show that about one-half of the Grand Lodges do not require the Degree as a qualification to serve as Masters of Lodges. Others confer the Degree but declare it useless, and repudiate it as an appendage to Symbolic Masonry. The Degree is not in high favor in some Grand jurisdictions where used. The amendment submitted by Bro. McDowell, was printed and sent to the Lodges the First of February, asking their consideration and action. Replies have come to hand from a majority of the Lodges. Enough have already voted to send the Degree to "the moles and bats." It is doomed, so far as its connection with Symbolic Masonry in Mis-

souri is concerned. Out of the hundreds of votes sent in, only twenty-five refused to approve the proposed change. Good bye, dear old anomaly. Go thou to thy rest, like one who draws the drapery of oblivion about him and lies down to a wakeless nap.

JOHN D. VINCIL.

—*The Masonic Constellation.*

TORONTO INDUSTRIAL FAIR.

An unbroken record of successes in the past is the best possible guarantee that the Toronto Industrial Exhibition of 1895, which opens on the 2nd of September, will be a display of unrivalled attractiveness. Many improvements in the buildings and grounds have been made to further the convenience of exhibitors and the public, and with the return of an era of prosperity the enterprise of the management will doubtless be rewarded by a thorough appreciation of the inducements offered. The volume of exhibits this season will be larger and more diversified than ever before, and special attractions of a brilliant and exciting character will be presented, including the novel military spectacle 'The Relief of Lucknow,' with gorgeous Oriental accessories and pyrotechnic effects on a scale of grandeur and variety hitherto unequalled. The system of cheap railway fares and special excursions from far and near enables all to visit the fair at trifling cost and everyone should take advantage of the opportunity, as it embodies all that is best worth seeing and knowing in mechanical progress and scientific invention. All entries close on the 10th of August,

The special committee on Masonic Charity in Iowa, report that in their opinion it is the best way to dispense relief through the medium of Lodges, with such assistance as may be needed from the Grand Lodge Charity fund. This was because there could be found only 17 men, 2 widows and five orphans to enter a Masonic Home. Iowa has a membership of 26,103.