

more or less degree the preserver of Masonic history and choice Masonic literature, so the reports of fraternal correspondents are the purveyors of Masonic thought and action of the passing years. Most Worshipful Bro. Speed has himself written much, and has written well; and what he writes is largely preserved to the Craft by the fraternal press, for printers types do lay up many treasures in the archives for use by future historians of Freemasonry. Likewise, the reports of the foreign correspondents are preservative of much that is of value to be written; and this method of treasuring should not be harshly condemned because of the crudity, or frailty, or egotism, or contention of some of the individual correspondents. No doubt the blue pencil of the trained editor might greatly abridge to good purpose the voluminosity of the reports, but the essence of information is in them nevertheless. There may be too much form, but there is also substance, and the Mason who truly seeks knowledge in our present Masonic world will find much of it, very much of it, in the reports of the committees on foreign or fraternal correspondence of the various Masonic Grand Jurisdictions of the United States.—*The Trestle Board.*

DEADHEADING MINISTERS.

The Grand Lodge of South Carolina has adopted a constitutional amendment authorizing lodges to confer the degrees upon "ministers of God" without payment of fees, to relieve them of annual dues, and to exempt the lodges from the payment of Grand Lodge dues upon the same class of members. While we yield to no one in respect and regard for our brethren of the cloth and of their holy office, and accord them full measure of commendation for the splendid work they have carried on and still carry on under the banner of the Cross; while we recognize that the results of their labor and sacrifice are manifest the world over, we insist that class legislation of this character is

unwise, undignified and contrary to that spirit of equality that prevades Masonry, and is and has ever been one of its noblest attributes. It is urged that "in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred a minister reflects the highest type of character in a community in which he lives, and it is such material as this which will advance and promote the interests of Masonry more than any one factor." All of which is very true, provided the clergyman is attracted to Freemasonry by its own intrinsic merits and worth, and knocks at our outer door unprivileged and on a level with every other petitioner. If he does not from without our gates behold sufficient of the beauty and nobility of Masonry as reflected in its works and in the lives and characters of its members to induce him to come freely and voluntarily, without having the degrees, in the vernacular of the street, thrown at his head, we certainly do not want him. We are proud of the fact that many of God's ministers belong to our fraternity and realize that by their membership they "advance and promote the interests of Masonry," but had their support, their influence been purchased by a presentation of the degrees it would hardly redound to the honor of Masonry.

We have understood that to solicit one to become a member of the fraternity violates a fundamental rule of the Order, irrespective of the "race, color or previous condition of servitude" of the applicant, and to go fishing for candidates with free degrees and no dues for bait violates the spirit, if not the letter, of this law. It is a cheap method of advertising unworthy of Masonry, and it degrades both the Order and the gentlemen of the cloth whom it seeks to draw within the fold. No, brethren. Every petitioner, whatever his position in life, however exalted or humble his calling and vocation, must approach our altar of his own free will, without solicitation, certainly without financial inducement, and on a level with each and every one who, like him, seeks admission to the noblest fraternity of all the ages.—*Masonic Tidings.*