

FREE AND ACCEPTED.

This term, as used in Masonry, means a great deal more than at first appears. While it freely invites the good and intelligent of all sections to fully inform themselves as to what Masonry is, there is a standing law of the Order which forbids that any man should be invited to apply for the degrees. Whoever applies to the Lodges must therefore do so of his own free will and accord, and in the very first step will be required to show this, in addition to the further requirements that he is free born, a free man, and worthy of the honors which Masonry confers.

No man can be accepted without first making the application under his own signature, setting forth his willingness to be governed by the laws and usages of the Order (all of which he should first read for himself), and that no undue influence has been used, or any mercenary motive prompted him to the step. Thus fortified, his qualifications must pass before the rigid scrutiny of a committee of three discreet Brethren, who are required to examine into his claims for initiation into the mysteries of our Ancient Order, and if reported on favorably, and a unanimous ballot is had, he is accepted as a proper person to wear that badge which is more ancient than the Roman Eagle, and more honorable than the Star and Garter, or any other order that can ever be conferred upon him.—*Columbia Courant.*

THE TRUE CORNER-STONE.

What is the Masons' corner-stone?
Does the mysterious temple rest
On earthly ground, from East to West,
From North to South—and this alone?

What is the Masons' corner-stone?
Is it to toil for fame and pelf?
To magnify one's petty self,
And love our friends—and this alone?

No, no, the Masons' corner-stone
A deeper, stronger, nobler base,
Which time and foes cannot displace,
Is *faith in God*—and this alone.

'Tis this which makes the Mystic Tie
Loving and true, divinely good,
One grand, united Brotherhood,
Cemented 'neath the *All-Seeing Eye*.

'Tis this which gives the sweetest time
To Masons' melodies: the gleam
To loving eyes; the brightest gem
That glitters in the Masons' crown.

'Tis this which makes the Masons' grip
A chain indissolubly strong;
That banishes all fraud and wrong,
And coldness from our fellowship.

Oh, noble corner-stone divine!
Oh, *Faith in God*, that buoys us up,
And gives in darkest hours, a hope
And make our hearts a holy shrine.

Brothers be this *your* corner-stone!
Build every hope you have in this,
Of present joy, of future bliss,
On earth, in heaven—and this alone!

HIS LODGE.—It got so, at last, that his wife began to wonder what business "the Lodge" had on hand that it should meet four of five times per week. He was out four nights a week until eleven o'clock, and he came home with redness in his eyes, and his step was unsteady as he passed down the hall. He said "the Lodge" business was mighty hard on the muscles, and the candidates were coming in by the hundreds. One night he groaned out in his sleep, and talked of "the right bower," and yelled out "spades!" and the wife wondered still more. The other evening she took a position where she could see who went up stairs into the Lodge-room. Her husband passed by and entered a place where rows of bottles adorned the shelves, and coffee and spice stand in a saucer on the counter, to purify the breath. When she went in he was one of four at a table. Each one of the four was looking at the pictures on some cards held in his hand. "So this is the Lodge, is it?" she inquired, as she stood before them. He was caught, and he resolved to make a clean breast of it. He laid his cards down, rose up and gave her his arm, and said: "I won't lie to you, Mary. This is not the Lodge-room—this is where we stop for a minute to beat the blasted enemies of our Craft out of their surplus greenbacks! When I come home to-night, Mary, I'll bring that shawl you spoke of!" The regularity with which that man now hangs around home every evening in the week is astonishing.