

THE GAVEL.

TORONTO, JANUARY, 1870.

TO-DAY, we present to our readers the first number of THE GAVEL. The paper is not all that we desire, but trust our brethren will excuse us on this occasion. They must remember, that we are not so much accustomed to journalism as some others, and perhaps, may not consequently, have issued as first-class a journal as may have been anticipated. It may be asked by some, why we have started a second Masonic Journal in the Dominion? Our only answer to this query is, that we believe by so doing the best interests of the Fraternity in Canada will be served. We may be wrong, but though we have no reason to complain of the "*Craftsman*," but rather to thank the proprietors for their courtesy and fraternal favors; nevertheless, it must be admitted that numbers of our Masonic Brethren are anxious to have another organ in which to express their views, in case they should materially differ from those of our Hamilton contemporary.

We believe in this country there is a large enough scope for two Masonic papers. Our brethren are cultivating a taste for Masonic literature, and there is nothing that can possibly develop the great principles of our Fraternity, to a greater extent, than an independent and enlightened Masonic press.

The GAVEL will, in no instance, be the organ of any particular clique or party of the Masonic Fraternity, and consequently will not oppose those brethren, who, more particularly, devote themselves to certain branches, as it were, of the Masonic Tree. For example, many of our most enthusiastic Masons prefer the A. A. and A. S. Rite to the simple teachings of Symbolic Masonry, others again devote their attention more exclusively to the Christian Orders of Knighthood as exemplified in the ritualistic ceremonies of the Templar Degree, whilst a third party, perchance, are desirous of cultivating the Red Cross Order of Rome and Constantine.

We maintain that all these parties are perfectly justified in pursuing their respective courses, and under these circumstances, the GAVEL will not denounce any class of Brethren, who conscientiously advocate any branch of the so-called higher grades. On the other hand, we will, in no instance, admit, that because a man has received some twenty or thirty degrees, he is in any respect a better Mason, or in any particular more faithful to his Masonic obligations than the Master Mason, who refuses to seek admission in the Royal Arch Chapter, the Lodge of Perfection, or the Conclave of Rome and Constantine.