

Correspondence.

We do not hold ourselves responsible for the opinions of our Correspondents.

UNAFFILIATION.

To the Editor of THE CRAFTSMAN.

R. W. SIR AND BROTHER,—In the April number of THE CRAFTSMAN I noticed with pleasure an able article from the pen of "Max," on unaffiliation. The ideas advanced by him made such an impression on my mind, that I cannot resist the temptation of replying—not in a spirit of condemnation, but in one of commendation. I admire the tone of his communication, and the stand which he has taken, but I do not hesitate to say that *he did not go half far enough*.

The subject of unaffiliation, or as we "Yanks" use it, *non-affiliation*, is one that has perplexed the Craft for years, and I do not know that it is any nearer a satisfactory solution than it was in 1840 or thereabouts.

The question, as to what means can best be employed to check this growing evil, is one that has been one of perplexity to the best Masonic talent. Our Grand Officers refer to it continually, yet devise no means to stop it, and I see no other course to pursue than for the Masonic press and its "quill drivers" to agitate it until a remedy is suggested and acted upon.

"Max" must not entertain the idea that non-affiliation is confined to his jurisdiction alone; we in the United States have this disease fearfully; in fact, some jurisdictions have it so bad that the *sick ones* nearly out-number the *well ones*. It is a huge stumbling block in our path; it is destroying the very vitality of our existence. If this increasing non-affiliation is the *effect*, let us stop a moment and see if we can find the *cause*; cause and effect go together.

My friend "Max" attributes one of the causes to poor material, which is correct. If one were to erect a building, he would not use poor material

for the foundation, knowing full well that if the foundation gave out the whole structure would fall. Just so with Masonry. We, as Masons of this age, are erecting a huge temple; its canopy is the whole heavens; its length, breadth, height and depth is unlimited. Then, if we use poor material in the foundation, we endanger the whole fabric. If such is the case, then why use poor material? There is plenty that is good and true, and which will pass the inspection of the Grand Overseer of all.

An experience of nearly twenty years in Masonry has taught me that a good Mason cannot be made out of one who has none of the true principles of Masonry imbedded in him, any more than a man of culture and refinement can be made out of a blockhead. Therefore, if he who disregards the principles which Masonry teaches, or is impure in his moral character, is very apt in after life to forget what he has been taught, and in the end turns out to be a non-affiliate, or, what is about as bad, an useless drone.

If the mental qualifications of the candidate are below par, as soon as the new wears off—and it very soon does,—he is very apt to find the ceremonies of the lodge room monotonous, unless he is assisting in conferring the Fourth, or eating, degree. His dull brain tires of hearing the same work; "the fun of the thing" is all gone; he can not, or at least does not, appreciate those grand moral lessons which are inculcated in every portion of our work, both exoteric and esoteric; consequently his visits to his lodge grow less and less, until they cease altogether, and another name is added to the non-affiliates.

Another point: If the moral qualifications of the candidate tend towards a gratification of the baser passions of his nature, we may teach and preach forever, and unless he listens to what Masonry teaches, he is powerless to work a reformation in him. Simply joining a lodge does