

## THE MASONIC JOURNAL

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E. A. WILSON, Editor &amp; Proprietor.

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Office on South Elm Street, first door north of the Patriot Office.

Our Foreman, Mr. J. H. FETZER, is authorized to receive and receipt for Subscriptions in our absence.

The next number of the *Masonic Review* closes its 47th volume, and brother Moore has been its editor for 30 of these years. His ambition is to complete the 50th volume.

The Presiding officer of a Lodge, Chapter or Council who will so far forget himself and his position as to forget the time of Regular Meeting deserves to be gently reminded of the delinquency by the brethren.

THANKSGIVING.—The President has appointed the 25th inst. as a day of thanks giving and prayer. This is right, and meets our candid endorsement, and we hope all our people will religiously observe it. Notwithstanding the adversities and calamities that have fallen on many sections of our country we have much as a people to be thankful for, and as a Christian Nation it surely becomes us to acknowledge with reverence and humility our gratitude to God for His abundant mercies to us for another year that is past.

We notice that many of the newspapers, which otherwise give evidence of thrift, are resorting to the doubtful plan of clubbing with foreign trashy papers, offering extravagant premiums of sewing machines, parlour organs, pianos, &c., as a means of increasing their circulation. This, we think, instead of benefitting injures them, while it gives an amount of valuable gratuitous advertising without a commensurate return. If you think your papers are not worth the money, brethren, honestly say so and put down your price, and leave these trashy concerns to take care of themselves.

The Grand Master of Florida, Bro. Albert J. Russell, requests all the Grand Masters of the Grand Lodges in the United States to meet in convention at Jacksonville, Florida, on the 15th of December next, for the purpose of considering the necessity of a greater uniformity of work and means to strengthen the moral power of the Order in the Union, as well as in the world.

This we regard as a very commendable move on the part of Bro. Russell, and we sincerely hope there will be a general meeting of those invited, and that the desired good will be accomplished.

## Social Meetings.

"All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy."

The true mission of Freemasonry is work—"good work, true work, square work;" a work of Charity, seasoned with faith in the plans and hope for the results, but while these stern duties to the brethren and their needy families remain paramount why not lighten the labors by an occasional Social Meeting at which all the families of the Lodge can assemble? These seasons of Refreshment have a wholesome influence upon the brethren, and besides, induce kindly feelings toward the Order that otherwise might not obtain.

Such meetings are also susceptible of intellectual improvement, by the introduction of short addresses pertinent to the occasion and the parties interested. They also serve to give the necessary stimulus for the enthusiastic and ambitious, and, to a great extent, block the way against those hated innovations that creep in by way of variety.

A little innocent social recreation occasionally judiciously mixed in with our stern red tape labors of the regular Lodge meetings, will lighten those labors and refresh the weary traveler.

## Among our Exchanges.

How delightful the privilege of again mingling in the midst of our old and familiar friends, whose visits to us were so regular before our removal here. Their cheery faces are again warmly greeted in the Office and the household, and with them come many new visitors who have also been regularly domiciled, and have already endeared themselves to us. They are, indeed, friends, who, jealous of our prosperity, have reached forth kind, strong hands to our aid, and with cheering words have bidden us success. Thanks! Thanks! May we be mutual friends and visitors for many long years.

## The Ancient Landmarks.

It is painful to note the fearful departures that are constantly being made from the ancient Landmarks of our Order Masonry is universal; having extended beyond the bounds of our modern civilization and taken within its fold many even of the nomadic tribes of the East, and its symbolic language which is so fluently spoken by this "Universal brotherhood" should have its exact counterpart in every language and tongue in which it is spoken. Yet here in our own country we have a "Work" as various and numerous, almost, as the Grand Lodges themselves, and this also frequently varied in proportion to the number of Lecturers in the field.

Why is this, and whither are we drifting? Can't any one see the great disadvantage under which we labor by these innovations—these departures from our Ancient Landmarks?

Nay, brethren, we want no "New York work," no "Pennsylvania work," no "Stephenson work" none of these; but the *Pure Work of Masonry*, as established by the "Ancient Landmarks," and that only.

We think the Grand Master of Florida is right in his desire to bring about a uniformity of work in all the States of the Union, and we hope he will persevere until the desired end is attained.

And this affliction is not applicable to Blue Masonry alone, but to Chapter, Council and Commandery also, and the sooner the evil is remedied in all the departments of the Order the better it will be for all. Get together and decide whether half means all or all means some, rather than be drifting along in the use

of uncertain, and undefinable language that is liable to be changed with the next appointment of Grand Lectures.

THANKS—To a brother whom we suppose to be Hon. T. S. Parvin, P. G. M., for a late paper containing the opening exercises of the Grand Chapter of Iowa, and the address of G. H. P., Robert F. Bower, at Keokuk, Iowa, Oct. 21st. This address is full and shows much work performed. Three new Chapters have been formed. The following are the officers for the present year:

G H P—H. S. Winslow, Newton.  
D G H P—Fred Getchell, Des Moines.  
G K—A. T. Brooks, Mt. Pleasant.  
G S—A. D. Wetherell, Knoxville.  
G T—W. W. McKnight, Winterset.  
G S—Wm. B. Langridge, Muscatine,  
Appointed Officers—G C of H—A. R. Dewey, Washington.

G P S—A. W. Daughety, Dubuque.  
G R A C—M. R. Gurney, Monticello.  
G M 3d. Veil—S. L. Bayless, Keokuk.  
G M 2d. Veil—H. C. McNeil, Sioux City.

G M 1st. Veil—Jerome Burbank, Waverly.

G C—Downing Baugh, McGregor.  
G G—Theodore Schreiner, Mt. Pleasant.

The paper also contains the able and eloquent address of Companion T. S. Parvin, P. G. M., from which we shall take occasion to make copious extracts in subsequent issues.

The Grand Commandery was in session at the same time, at the conclusion of which the grandest banquet ever known in the State was given in its honor by Damascus Commandery of Keokuk.

## Are You a Mason?

We are sometimes asked this question on the streets and by persons comparatively strangers to us; and our habit is not to answer it in Masonic form. The other day a young man whom we did not personally know, asked us this question, and, as usual, we gave an answer in a form quite unmasonic. He, knowing our relations to the fraternity, said:—"You ought not to answer in that way, you ought to say," etc. This young man had just been passed to the degree of Fellow Craft.

This simple matter is mentioned here for the purpose of cautioning the young craftsman against any and all display of his Masonic knowledge, unless in Masonic company, and then only absolutely for Masonic purposes.

No Mason is at liberty, much less may he be required, to use Masonic language, and turn Masonic phrases, and give Masonic signs, because some one, even though he be a Mason, should question, or seek to test him, with no other object in view than to display his own proficiency. If a stranger comes to you, and proposes to make a communication to you Masonically, or wishes to impart some Masonic matter of which he is informed, and which he desires for special purposes to communicate to you and to no other; or if he be in distress, and comes to you with a Masonic sign, and appeals to you as a Mason for relief, you may then ask him—"Are you a Mason?" and you have a right to expect a Masonic answer. He has given you the right to ask him the question, and he is bound in duty and honor and obligation to answer it. But all display of Masonic knowledge, and all desultory use of symbolic signs or language are out of order, and injurious to the craft.

Be careful—In admitting visitors to the lodges who are unknown not only as Masons, but as men, it is not possible for us to be too careful. I may know a man

well and favorably, but I cannot know him to be a Mason without "strict trial, due examination, or lawful information." And if this be necessary in the case of a man of whom I may, in other relations, have a favorable knowledge, how much more necessary that I should be cautious concerning one of whom I have no knowledge, personal or otherwise, but who comes to me, and claims that he is a Mason, and asks of me Masonic recognition and favor.

And if this caution is necessary on the part of an individual Mason, it is all the more necessary on the part of a Lodge. If an individual Mason should be imposed upon by the unworthy, the imposition may end there; the next Mason may sift and detect the unworthy. But if a lodge is imposed upon, though that cannot last long, yet it extends to a large number of brethren, and the impostor or unworthy person receives a sort of official Masonic endorsement.

Be careful then: let your committees of examination be kind but firm; brethren, who understand the trick of the tongue, and the cunningness of the hand, and who will not be afraid to say, if they have the least doubt—"we are not satisfied"—*The Masonic Review*.

## A Lodge Room in the Eighteenth Century.

The appointment and arrangement of a Masonic Lodge-room in the eighteenth century were very different to our present practice. A long table was extended from one end of the room to the other, covered with a green cloth, on which were placed duplicates of the ornaments, furniture, and jewels, intermixed with Masonic glasses for refreshment. At one end of this table was placed the Master's pedestal, and at the other that of the Senior Warden, while about the middle of the table, in the south, the Junior Warden was placed, and the brethren sat around, as at a common ordinary. When there was a candidate to be initiated, the candidate was paraded outside the whole; and on such occasions, after he had been safely deposited at the North-East angle of the lodge, a very short explanation of the design of Freemasonry, or a brief portion of the lecture, was considered sufficient before the lodge was called from labor to refreshment. The song, the toast, the sentiment, went merrily round, and it was not until the brethren were tolerably satiated that the lodge resumed, and the routine business was transacted before closing.—*Tidings*.

The history of Freemasonry is coextensive with the achievements of Christian civilization. Its mottoes may be read upon the escutcheon of all the civilized nations, in every part of the earth. Wherever the existence of Almighty God is acknowledged, and where man is willing to do justice to man, there Freemasonry builds her temples, and there she erects the blessed altars of her faith.

## Social Aspect of Masonry.

Masonry commences the work of elevating and improving man just where it ought to be commenced, in his social nature, where he is more susceptible. Perhaps no chord of his heart is more easily touched and moved than that which is connected with his social sympathies. To make him feel that he is not alone, that he does not stand removed from his fellows in gloomy isolation, with his "hand against every man and every man's hand against him;" but to assure him that, amid the struggles and trials of life, eyes of affection look upon him, and generous hearts sympathize with him, and helping hands are outstretched to aid him; *this is where Masonry begins her work.*—*Ex.*