

## "MORE LIGHT."

## Signing By-Laws.

A good Brother, the W. M. of one of our Lodges, while writing a letter at us full tilt, suddenly "paused, in mid career," to fling some questions—hard questions—that were manifestly intended to make us dodge adroitly or get hurt. Hear him:

"Since the great fire, we have had no By-Laws for our members to sign. Dispute has arisen in the Lodge about the standing of those who have not signed. What is their standing? Do they stand as expelled; suspended; non-affiliated; as a Brother under charges; as a delinquent Brother; as a Brother in the Lodge with no right to vote; can they become members of any other Lodge; have we any claim on them as members of our Lodge; or does it effect their standing? All these questions have arisen and made quite a dispute."

A Lodge that can raise so many questions about nothing, must be in a chronic "dispute."

In the last number of the *Freemason*, Grand Master Webber decided that, "The Brother asking to become a member, promises, in his application to conform to all its established laws, usages and customs; and the Lodge having considered the application and by unanimous ballot having acceded to his request the Brother becomes a member of the Lodge even if he neglects to sign the By-Laws. To which we add from our last report on Foreign Correspondence, the following: [See page 251 G. L. Proceedings of 1874.]

"The obligation of every Mason binds him to obey the By-Laws of that or any other Lodge of which he may become a member, and the mere act of signing his name cannot add to or extract from that binding force. In Michigan we require the signature to a roll of membership, because we want in the Lodge, the undoubted signature of each member, as a standard of comparison by which to judge other signatures purporting to be genuine; but whether he does or does not sign his name, is not allowed to affect, in any degree, the question whether he is or is not a member—is or is not bound to obey the By-Laws of the Lodge."

We hold a Brother by a very "slender tie," if after the pledges made in his petition, and the obligations taken in each degree, he may be raised to such a "sublime degree" as to snap his finger in our faces and tell us—"I've got Masony and 'got you,' but I haven't signed your By-Laws and until I do, you haven't got me!"

It is amazing how much time and temper have been spoiled, even by old and intelligent Masons, in arguing on this abolishment question.—*Michigan Freemason*.

The students of Yale College disgraced themselves recently by insulting and throwing stones at a procession of Odd Fellows, while passing the College building.

ANS—The obligations of Freemasonry are as unalterable as the laws of the Medes and Persians, and when once voluntarily assumed can never be abrogated or laid aside. Therefore, no good Mason can cheat, wrong or defraud his brother to the value of anything.

The Michigan Odd Fellow is after the Texas Gift swindle with a pointed stick. It has already been denounced by both the Masons and Odd Fellows of that State, and the signatures appended thereto recommending it are pronounced forgeries. No gift scheme in the name of Freemasonry or Odd Fellowship is allowable, under any circumstances.

## Motto of Masonry.

Masonry has for its motto the grandest ever written upon human banner: "We aim to unite men of every country, sect and opinion, into one band or society of friends and brothers, among whom no contention, or, rather, emulation, of who can best work and best agree." This we could not do if we required the acceptance of any particular religious creeds as a prerequisite for admission to our Order. We would then be a church. We aim to unite members of all churches. They can all meet upon the level of the Masonic floor, which they cannot do about the same religious altar. A seeker for admission into our Order is not required to sign this or that creed, or article of faith. He is required to believe in God; to declare his trust in Him, and if so, we give him our heart and hand, and welcome him to the great brotherhood, wide as the world itself. Can a Christian, Mohammedan and Jew worship God at the foot-stool of the same throne? Masons can; can kneel and clasp hands around the same altar, be their creeds and beliefs what they may. We need some common ground on which all good men can meet, and where can men of all nations, tongues and creeds meet but at the altar of Masonry? It is charged that Masonry is positively an irreligious institution. So-called religions are many. Masonry is one. Some religions have many Gods. Masons believe in one God, whom they reverence and love. Religion, so called, has caused tears to flow, has made widows and orphans, imprisoned disbelievers, tortured them at the rack and burned them at the stake, consumed cities, desolated lands and blotted out nations. Masonry has no armies, no arsenals, no magazines or implements of war and death, no flag of desolation, no watchword of hate. Masonry is the world's great peace maker. If all men were Masons, nations would learn to war no more. Masonry never consumed a city, never desolated a field or hearth-stone. It employs no racks, chains or faggots. Never burned a disbeliever at the stake; never made a widow or an orphan; never shed a drop of blood; never caused a heart to break, or a single tear to flow. Its hosts are those of peace. Its arms good deeds. Its banner is love and its watchword peace and good will on earth. It has existed for ages, come down through wars and revolutions, passed through ages of darkness, living on after nations have passed away, growing stronger with each succeeding age. Time has but strengthened the foundations of our temple, and added new glories to our copestone. Every rising sun but lends a brighter halo to its spires. It is not easy to comprehend that it will not always exist. It exists now wherever civilization is found, and even barbarous people recognize its fraternal band, and it will continue, and the golden chain will lengthen until a band of brothers will clasp hands around the world.—*Mayor Owen, of Indianapolis*.

The Mason is bound to protect a brother in all his interests, and to warn him when he discovers some threatening evil. Consequently no Mason can devise a scheme which will tend to the injury of a brother's business and interests, without incurring the severest penalties of the Order. Think well of this, brother. You should not, you must not, build up yourselves on the ruins of your brother. You must not cherish a thought for a moment, which thought, if ultimating in acts, would reduce a brother to poverty, and involve himself and family in distress;

## What the Papers Continue to Say

The Greensboro, N. C. MASONIC JOURNAL improves with age. It is an interesting paper, 8 pp. at \$2.00 a year. We wish it success.—*Masonic Tidings*.

This is a first class eight page weekly, published in the interests of the order, and should be in the hands of every Mason in the State. Terms \$2 per annum. Address E. A. Wilson, Greensboro, N. C.—*Shelby Aurora*.

We have received the fifth number of this excellent paper, and find it all that it promised to be—a live, neat, chaste literary family and Masonic newspaper, and commend it most cordially to all our readers.—*Kendsville News*.

We have received the fifth number of this publication which is in full keeping with the former excellent numbers. It is worthy of all praise and support, and we cordially commend it. It is published at Greensboro, N. C., by Rev. E. A. Wilson.—*Koanoke News*.

We are in the receipt of the MASONIC JOURNAL, a new candidate for public favor, published in Greensboro, N. C. Besides a well digested selection of news and general reading matter, a large portion of the paper is devoted to Masonic matters. It is deserving of success.—*Philadelphia Evening Chronicle*.

THE MASONIC JOURNAL is the title of a new Masonic journal designed expressly for the Masonic fraternity, just started at Greensboro, by E. A. Wilson, late of Kinston, N. C. The paper is an excellent one and we commend it to every mason in the State. It is ably conducted and elegantly printed. Encourage it.—*Milton Chronicle*.

We have received several numbers of this valuable journal published at Greensboro, N. C. by Rev. E. A. Wilson. It's an eight page, thirty-two column paper, beautifully gotten up, and not only every brother of the "Mystic Tie," but every one who wants a good family paper, should subscribe at once. Subscription price \$2 per annum.—*Ansonian*.

We have received several copies of the MASONIC JOURNAL, published at Greensboro, N. C. which is full to the brim with excellent Masonic and family literature. It is always a welcome visitor to our sanctum and deserves a liberal support from every Mason in the Southern States. Send for a specimen copy and subscribe for it.—*Dalton (Ga.) Enterprise*.

We have received the first number of the MASONIC JOURNAL, a weekly newspaper published at Greensboro, N. C. Its publisher pledges himself to spare neither labor nor expense to make the JOURNAL a highly instructive and popular family and Masonic visitor. The first number most certainly has a good supply of Masonic food. We wish the enterprise an abundant success.—*Freemasons Repository*.

THE MASONIC JOURNAL is the title of a Masonic and family weekly issued at Greensboro, N. C. No. 7 has just been received by us, and we welcome the new comer for several reasons. It is happily made up, printed in good type on clear paper and will evidently be welcomed to the household; it is sprightly and full of news and readable matter. We are pleased to have it among our exchanges and will look for it with pleasure.—*Hebrew Leader (N. Y.)*

The first number of the MASONIC JOURNAL of Greensboro, N. C., comes to us a bright eight page folio paper, filled with excellent family reading as well as Masonic matter. It is published weekly at \$2. We take it up lovingly, feeling that it is like a tender babe born into a bleak world. It may have friends who will love it, toil for it and make life a blessing to it, but we sadly fear that the friends who come gaily to the christening will forget it as time flies on and leave it to pick its infant way through dust and mud and finally to die and become an untimely literary angel.

Nevertheless we send it our blessing, and best wishes, and we trust the craftsmen of North Carolina will remember that it is they who are to see that it is fostered and protected.—*Masonic Token*.

The MASONIC JOURNAL, published at Greensboro, N. C., comes regularly to our office freighted with much good matter. We have always had more than ordinary fraternal attachment to the house-

hold of the faithful in that State, and we are glad to learn of their prosperity. We ask for the MASONIC JOURNAL a hearty support. The fruit of any tree properly cared for and supported will increase in quantity and improve in quality. Sectarian bigotry or the misguided zeal of its adherents can do us no harm; they are too narrow between their eyes.—*Masonic (N. Y.) Chronicle*.

## Charity Funds.

Some Masons object to the accumulation of charity funds, and even advocate expending the principal of those accumulated by their thoughtful predecessors. A little consideration will show that nearly all the earnings of mankind are consumed at once, and that the actual savings transmitted from one generation to another are but a small portion of the earnings. These accumulations are and always will be in the hands of the few—they always will be because selfishness is implanted in the human race for its own preservation, precisely as the sense of pain is given us that we may protect our bodies. The theory of Freemasonry is equality; that the richer shall assist the poorer. Community of goods cannot be the remedy for the lazy will frustrate the scheme by trying to live at the expense of the industrious. Taxation meets the case partially, but the one thing which receives the approbation of all is the accumulation of wealth for purely charitable purposes. It is thus taken from the rich and given to the poor for a perpetual possession. Public parks, libraries, schools, hospitals, insane asylums, and homes for the orphans and aged, are the wealth of the people, because they afford the poor these advantages and that relief which was enjoyed only by the rich in former times.

It is also evident that direct accumulation is small. It is the rolling up of interests that makes colossal fortunes. If George Peabody had given away his money as fast as he earned it, he might have given \$3,000 a year for fifty years, now his bequests will give away \$300,000 every year for ever. Where interest changes into usury and then into robbery, is a question too difficult to decide; we only know that usury was practiced in the earliest days, for 3,500 years ago we find recorded an ordinance against it. We cannot prevent it by laws, because it will only change its form. If the capitalist cannot let his money be well invested in trade or agriculture, and get usury from that, Jacob's bargain with Laban was rank usury. Let us then avail ourselves of it to benefit the poor. A Lodge may be only in its childhood a hundred years hence, yet \$1,000 invested now and allowed to accumulate will then be \$100,000. It may be used improperly in the future, but a generation which is unselfish enough to save may safely trust its successors to preserve. The future public may be jealous of the accumulation of great sums by private societies, but even then they will be preserved for God's poor in some shape, and become perennial fountains of charity flowing on forever.—*Token*.

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