

Ought the World Know It?

[Communicated.]

BRO. WILSON:—My attention has been attracted by this question, which appeared in a late number of your paper. It is a question which might, I think, with the utmost propriety be discussed, and if brought to the attention of the different Grand Lodges, it might prove a material benefit to the Order,—for in these latter days, in my opinion, the transactions of our Lodges are spoken of too heedlessly before the world. Masonic Law on this point, so far as my knowledge extends, is not very explicit, and as it seems to be a strong propensity with some to display their Masonic knowledge in the columns of newspapers, I would suggest that it might be advisable for the Grand Lodges to take this matter under consideration and draw a dividing line between what the world should know, and what it should not know; and let this line be drawn so plainly that the Light-dispensing brethren may know how far they may go, and no farther. I could cite you to an instance, where I think the bounds of propriety were far overstepped, but will not for the present.

It is enough to say here that the tendency is with some to go too far in this matter, and this question suggests that there should be a line drawn, a wall erected, in order that the brethren who feel disposed not to keep the world too much in the dark, as to the transactions of our Lodges, and the Symbols of the Order, may know where to stop, and it is to be hoped, should this line be drawn or this wall erected, that those who are so afraid that odium and reproach will be brought upon the Order in consequence of a failure to make known the transactions of our Lodges, will not attempt to step over this line, batter down this wall, or displace a brick in order to whisper to the world that Brother A. has been tried and expelled from the Lodge for—, or to slip through the excavation, a manuscript of poetical aspiration on some symbol of the Order. But to the Query.

1st. A man is expelled for gross unmasonic conduct. Is it in keeping with Masonic Law to allow such expulsion to be made public to the world? 2nd. Is it in violation of any of the principles of Masonry to publish an expulsion? In the editorial remarks upon this subject, the ground is taken, that not only would it not be improper to publish it, but highly proper that it should be done, in order to save Masonry from discredit. If publicity is the shield by which Masonry is to be protected I would ask the Brother Editor why has not the Institution long ago sunk into dishonor and oblivion? To admit this would be to destroy one of the principal sources of its vitality and success; it would be placing a canker-worm at its tap-root, which would destroy the life of this beautiful tree, under whose wide-spreading branches, so many feeble and weary travelers have found shelter and repose. It would be a thrust at that principle of the Institution which has enabled it to withstand the lapse of time, the ruthless hand of ignorance and the devastations of war, and has caused to be transmitted through a succession of ages, unimpaired, its most excellent tenets.

Let us by all means exercise prudence and discretion in the matter, for if you allow an inch some will take an ell; and if any of the private transactions of the Lodge are allowed to be made public you pave the way for all to be made public.

I take it for granted that had such publication been considered beneficial to, and productive of good to the Order, this method would long ago have been sanctioned and adopted by our Grand Lodge,

and that it would have taken the trouble, and undergone the expense of having them heralded from the mountain to the sea shore. As to what the Masonic Law is in regard to expulsions I am ignorant, but presume if it were not a violation for them to be published, our newspapers would sometimes have notices of them.

As to the second question I can only say, that I believe it is a violation of the principles of Masonry to publish to the world any private transaction of the Lodge, and I think if put to the test that a large majority of the Masons in the State would sustain the opinion, and I am constrained to suggest, (without the least desire to be officious,) that it might be advisable as this matter has been brought up, for the Grand Lodge (if it has not already done so) to take such action to set aside all doubts in regard to it.

OMEGA.

[Will reply next week.—Ed.]

It is true that some men will never make themselves either true or intelligent Masons. They from the beginning "go it blind," and they fail to comprehend the elevating and advancing character of the institution—consequently they never grow into a living Masonic temple.

We meet some of these men in our travels. They take no Masonic paper, read no Masonic literature, and in the general way, it may be frankly said, that the light that is in them is only darkness. Some of them have money to spend for unmasonic beverages, while others patronize every sort of a paper save a Masonic.

That such men fall behind in the spirit and intelligence and enterprise of Masonic life is not strange—for they have none of the life or light of the Mystic Tie within them. Their Masonic education is but primary, and yet, full of content, as they are of ignorance, they only have a name to live while they are dead.—*Masonic Advocate.*

I. O. O. F.

To the Past grand Representatives and Past Grand Officers of the R. W. Grand Lodges of the United States:

BROTHERS: It having been determined that an effort should be made to bring together in connection with the annual meeting of the R. W. Grand Lodge of the United States, at Philadelphia, in September next, every P. G. R. and P. G. Officer of that body known to be living, the venerated and beloved Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of the United States was requested to appoint a committee of arrangements for the occasion, and he has been pleased to designate the undersigned to act in that capacity. In the performance of a part of the duty thus assigned us, we beg leave to address you in relation to this important subject.

The objects to be accomplished by the contemplated meeting will at once readily suggest themselves to your minds. We may, however be permitted to say that the coming together of the past members of the Grand Lodge will result in reviving ancient memories, in renewing friendships formed in years gone by, and in further cementing the attachments and affectionate regards resulting from the labors and intercourse of earlier years. We hope also, to see aroused the ardor in the work of the order which marked the days of its youth, and to apply to the times in which we now live the experience gathered in our lives. We trust also, that the meeting may result in bringing into active use the slumbering forces still existing in those of our number who may have lapsed into supineness or indifference in relation to

the progress of our noble institution. It is proposed to make the occasion one of brotherly re-union, and to mark it by such ceremonies and observances as will make it one of social enjoyment, and give it an interest which may be remembered with pleasure by those who may participate therein. In addition to this, that the occasion may be made to contribute to the further good of our order, it is proposed to form an endowment association, to be composed of P. G. Representatives and P. G. Officers. It is believed that such an organization would result in keeping alive the interest in the order among those who have received its highest honors and retired from active labor in the cause of Odd Fellowship; as it certainly will serve to bind more closely the past members of the Grand lodge of the United States, and secure the continued services, for the benefit of the order, of the brothers who may from year to year, become past members of that body.

To make the meeting such a success as we desire & the occasion demands, as well as to make it creditable and useful to the order, your active co-operation is needed, and above all, your attendance on the occasion is vital and indispensable. We need not say how much the interest of the occasion will be enhanced if the attendance of every P. G. Representative and P. G. Officer can be secured.

We invite you, therefore, nay, we urge you—wherever you may be—to come up to this grand convocation and participate in its pleasures and benefits.

- Fred. D. Stuart,
- W. R. Smith,
- Erie J. Leech,
- J. W. McQuiddy,
- J. C. Smith,
- R. H. Morrison,
- R. E. McNeely,
- T. T. Smiley,
- C. M. Busbee,
- Hugh Latham,

Committee.

You will be kind enough to inform the chairman of the committee, Fred. D. Stuart, Washington, D. C., at as early a day as possible, whether you intend to be present.



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