

Purification by Water.

Masonic Baptism, a common phrase for purification by water, has been a practice since the time of the inception of the Ancient Accepted Rite, as one of its important and essential ceremonies; it is incumbent upon its initiates and continually practiced when advancing in the grades. It is exercised also, when the service of Louveteau or adoption by a Lodge of Perfection is performed. In the city of New York at the present day there are young gentlemen and ladies who have in their earlier years been baptised by the proper officers of the Ancient Accepted Rite, and are Wards of the Lodges.

The ceremonies are unique, impressive and beautiful, are used over the world, and have but lately been performed by Ill. Bro. Albert Pike, G. Com. of the Supreme Council of the Southern Jurisdiction of the U. S., in Washington, D. C. Of late years it has not been practiced in this section of the Union, notwithstanding the many applications, out of deference to the wishes of some of the more delicate minded of the members of the Supreme Council. The one point of purification is by simply dipping the child's hand into the Laver, interfering in no wise with the form of baptism of any religious denomination.

As to an initiate, the following language is used:

"In all ages of the world the initiate has been purified by water, and Christianity borrowed a ceremony older than itself by scores of centuries. It was practiced by the Hindoos and Chaldeans, by the Egyptians and Etruscans, by the Hebrews centuries before Christ, by the Essenes and the Druids, the Chasidim and the Assadeans, in the Rites of Eleusis and the mysteries of Isis and Mithras. From the earliest times it was used in Persia, and practiced by the followers of Zoroaster. The Etruscans baptised with fire, air and water; and we, an Order older than many existing religions do not take the ceremony of baptism from any one as a religious rite, but from mysteries and ceremonials that were grey with age when Christianity was born. It belongs to us as one of its symbols. Sectarian reference to this ceremony should be Masonically contemned.

God, who counts by souls, not stations
Loves and pities you and me;
For to Him all vain distinctions
Are as pebbles on the sea."

—Hebrew Leader.

A Good Heart.

There was a great master among the Jews who bade his scholars consider and tell him wherein a man should always keep. One came and said that there was nothing better than a good eye, which is in their language a liberal and contented disposition. Another said a good companion is the best thing in the world. A third said a good neighbor was the best thing he could desire; and a fourth preferred a man that could foresee things to come—that is, a wise person. But at last came in one Eleazer, and he said a good heart was better than them all.

"True," said the master, "thou hast comprehended in two words all that the rest have said; for he that hath a good heart will be both contented and a good neighbor, and easily see what is fit to be done by him."

Let every man, then, seriously labor to find in himself a sincerity and uprightness of heart at all times; and that will save him abundance of other labor.

No subordinate lodge in Massachusetts has the power to suspend or expel a member from the rights of Masonry.

Calling Off.

We hear of a number of lodges that have deemed it proper to dispense with meetings during the months of July and August, reopening the first regular meeting in September. That a large number of Lodges will adopt this plan we feel warranted in asserting, and there may be strong arguments in favor of such action. With but very rare exceptions, lodges meeting the entire year will find the attendance remarkably meagre during the hot months, for even if brethren are unable to leave the city, they will seek some cooler spot than a warm lodge-room, and the thermometer among the nineties. We think it would be better were all the lodges to close during the warm weather, then, in the fall the interest would be increased, more work would be done, and success greater. Of course there are exceptions to all rules, some lodges from amount of work on hand being obliged to hold communications all summer, otherwise there would be disappointments to brethren anxious to get through the degrees as speedily as possible. There are not many lodges so pressed 'tis true, but there are some, nevertheless. If a lodge receives fees for conferring degrees, virtually promising that applicants shall get through at an early date, it cannot very well stultify itself and shut up shop with perhaps only one-third of a promise fulfilled. But, when a lodge has no work ahead, and attendance small, and a seeming apathy among its members, we think the worst thing it possibly can do is to continue its labors during the summer. Call off until fall, and then begin anew with renewed health and vigor, and show results far more satisfactory than if the other course had been adopted. We will cheerfully make a note of any lodge deciding not to meet during the next two months if we are notified.—*N. Y. Square.*

Masonic Charity.

The following decision by the Grand Master of Michigan correctly settles in our opinion an oft mooted question:

Ques.—A Lodge voted to give a certain sum of money to a charitable organization, not connected with Masonry, to dispose of it in its discretion. Had the Lodge the right to do so?

Ans.—The question asked touches the right of a Lodge to donate its funds to general charities. It involves many considerations, and the answer can only be properly understood by noting the difference between the rights and duties of a Lodge in this particular, and the rights and duties of the individual Mason. The individual Mason is taught to be charitable toward all mankind, and to give in charity to such an extent as his ability will permit; and for such objects as shall commend themselves to his judgement as worthy. A Lodge, however, is circumstanced so differently that it cannot act upon this principle to the same extent as the individual Brother. It is an organization composed of a number of members and organized for a specific purpose. Its membership is made up of Brethren holding different views in regard to who is most needy among the destitute, and what particular charity is most commendable. This being so, its financial sustenance is necessarily limited to a narrow compass. The funds held by it are set apart to certain purposes, and its charities must, from the very nature of the case, be confined to such particular objects as the great body of organized Masons agree upon. By common usage the charities of a Lodge, as such, are limited to the relief of worthy, distressed Brethren, their widows and orphans. Beyond this it should not go, but should leave

all other general charities to the humane consideration of the individual Mason. A disposition of the funds of a Lodge, in aid of general charities other than those above mentioned, would, in my opinion, not only lead to much discord among the Brethren, but would also divert them from the purposes for which they are solemnly pledged. It is, therefore, held that a Lodge, as such, should confine its charitable bequests to the relief of worthy, distressed Brethren, their widows and orphans.—*Philadelphia Chronicle.*

A NEW CRUSADE.—We are informed that a movement is on foot in England to form a corps of "Red Cross Knights" to proceed to Constantinople, Turkey, and establish a protectorate over the lives and property of the foreign Christians resident there. In view of the fanaticism of the Mohomedan population of the eastern cities, and the uncertain tenure of life and property in event of an uprising, the object is a very praiseworthy one. It is not intended that this body shall take the field against the infidels except in extreme cases, but it will afford asylums for the oppressed in case of necessity. All Templars are eligible, and the corps will be governed by strict military discipline, and officered by experts in the use of arms. Should we be able to glean more information relative to this "new crusade" we will lay it before our readers.—*N. Y. Square.*

Grand Master Maynard of Michigan has made this ruling: That the right to object to a visit appertains to a Brother only while he is actually in the Lodge. A member cannot make and file an objection with the Secretary, and thus prevent a visiting Brother's admission to the Lodge in his absence, when all the Brethren present are willing to receive the visitor. The Grand Master also declares his purpose to refuse all requests for Masonic processions upon "other than strictly Masonic occasions." The Fourth of July, though *Centennial*, he does not regard as such an occasion.



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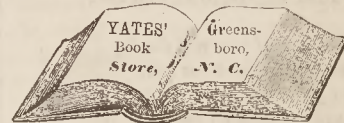
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