

"BOBBING AROUND."

Been to Charlotte, future London; business brisk. On Sunday morning, so many good preachers, and no chance to hear but one! Wanted to hear Mr. _____, the man who takes the sinner by the skin of the neck and holds him over the pit of perdition, saying, "Repent, or I'll drop you, as you deserve." A man recently heard him and said, "Well, I reckon if Mr. _____ should get a telegram informing him that the Devil was dead and hell broken up, he would die with melancholy." Now this was too bad, for in spite of his fire and brimstone, he is a good man and a very remarkable preacher.

Wanted to hear the cool, clear-headed and well-read Mr. Harding. Wanted to see his new and beautiful church. His father was a fine preacher, and his wife is the sister of a class-mate never to be forgotten. Wanted to hear that live man, the modern Whitfield, always kind, always zealous. Wanted to hear Dr. Bronson, who, at our request, had gone into some hovels of extreme poverty. Wanted to hear Mr. Carraway, who had made application for the admission of a poor and promising orphan, and so we entered a handsome and comfortable house of worship. After a hymn and a prayer, the envelope system was explained: The stewards on the first Sunday in the year supply each member or contributor with 52 envelopes. On each Sunday he puts his name on one, seals up his contribution therein, and puts it in the basket. The Treasurer keeps an account with each contributor, and sends him a quarterly report, that he may see if he has been properly credited. Thus money is raised for the ordinary expenses of the church. Occasionally extra collections are made for other objects.

Another hymn.

Now a sermon on "The Devil as a lion." The preacher explained and compared the habits of both, and pointed out the dangers to which we are exposed, and the duty of being always sober and watchful. A very good sermon.

Dined with our friend W. W. Flemming, Esq. He is obliged to be happy with such a live wife and such a likely baby. His horse and buggy helped us find a poor orphan. He also carried us to the Presbyterian Mission School. The exercises were opened by Gen. D. H. Hill. He is a notable man, hating meanness with a perfect hatred, and loving mercy with ardent affection. He wrote an algebra before the war, and peppered his problems with Yankees and nutmegs. He wrote a commentary on "The Sermon on the Mount," and seasoned it with the tenderest devotion. His pen is about as severe as his sword. He is one of the finest fighters of the Confederate war. He is one of the sharpest writers of the present age. Well, he prays for poor children, and that is more than some other good men do. We recently visited one of our towns, heard six public prayers in which no petition was offered for the children. Went thence to another town and heard four prayers, all for the grown people of the village. Not a word for the children—not a word for any outsider—not a word for any stran-

ger in the gate. We once entered a church in a strange town, and the preacher prayed that God would guide and bless any stranger or traveler who might be present. We felt included in that prayer, and we are always sorry to see children at church unless the prayer can be made to take them in. Every strong church ought to have a mission school, and plenty of mission work.

But Capt. Leggett's train is going, and at midnight we are banging at the door of Burns' Hotel in Wadesboro, and finally secure a bed. After breakfast Mr. J. M. Wright furnishes transportation to Ansonville. Dr. Kendall and Mr. Gaddy recommend the orphans, and provide for our transportation to Wadesboro on the morrow. So we look around and meet Rev. Mr. Thomas, the new man on the circuit, Rev. N. B. Cobb and Rev. J. J. McLendon, of Carolina Central Academy. The Academy buildings are very capacious, in good repair, and delightfully situated. The teachers are competent, efficient, and enthusiastic. The school merits success, and would be crowded, but for the educational apathy brooding over our land. Leaving this delightful village with sincere regret, we are homeward bound, and dine with Mr. Burns who dead-heads the entire crowd. Arriving in Charlotte we spend the night at the Central Hotel, and find that Mrs. Eccles has another orphan in waiting, and Mr. Eccles refuses compensation for the trouble we have given him. Riding on a freight and reaching Greensboro in time for supper, our land-lady knows her oysters are good, because Judge Kerr has just eaten three plates of them, and he is a judge of good eating, as well as of honest law. We breakfast with that fast friend of the orphan work, Col. Brown, of the National Hotel, Raleigh. Our next supper is eaten at the Orphan House in Oxford.

AN HONEST REPORT.

The following letter tells its own tale, and makes its own record for 1875. Just think of a company of good men, organized for benevolent work, and doing nothing for the orphans for a whole year! If the Lord has done nothing for them, they may be right in taking care of themselves only. But if the Lord has been good to them, and if they practice the precepts of that religion which visits the fatherless, they ought to make a better record for 1876. Here is the letter:

ROLESVILLE, Dec. 27th, 1875.

Bro. J. H. Mills:—We, the undersigned committee, appointed to receive contributions for the Orphan Asylum at Oxford, beg leave to report that we have received nothing during the past Masonic year, all of which is respectfully submitted.

C. H. HORTON,
A. R. YOUNG,
J. H. SCARBORO.

A GIRL WANTED.

SMITHSBURG, N. C., Jan. 10, 1876.

Dear Sir:—Please send me a bright, smart, intelligent, industrious and kind-hearted girl, without kin, to nurse our baby and cook and wash for a small family. She will have a good blanket and sleep on the floor by the cradle. She may carry the children to Sunday School in summer, and go to preaching once a month, if convenient. We will give her two calico dresses, a hat and a pair of shoes every year, until she is eighteen years of age; and then, if she has no beaux, and does not wish to marry, we will pay her regular wages, say \$2 to \$3 a month. Please send her by return mail, and we will relieve your noble institution of one of its burdens.

Respectfully,

SARAH SMITH.

The foregoing is a fair sample of about one hundred letters which we have lately pitched into

the fire. We ought not to spend either time or money in answering any such letters. Many persons have informed us that they desired orphans, because negroes would not stay with them. Hence they prefer orphans who have no hope of escape from the servitude they inflict.

A GIRL WANTED.

BROWNVILLE, N. C., Jan. 10, 1876.

Dear Sir:—I wish to employ a healthy and industrious girl, to do ordinary house-work. I will pay her five dollars a month, and my wife will assign her a good bed and comfortable room. I send six dollars to pay her traveling expenses.

BEN. BROWN.

Now this letter tells that a girl is wanted, and what she will be expected to do. It also tells what will be done for her. There is no prospect of an everlasting correspondence. It is a short business letter. Unfortunately such letters are never received at this office, and this one is merely imaginary.

THE ORPHAN ASYLUM AT OXFORD.

We know of no institution in the State of North Carolina, or indeed in the Southern States, in which our people should take more interest than the Asylum at Oxford. While it is really a grand masonic charity, it is open to the admission of children of all denominations, sects, and conditions, and as such, at once commends itself to the people of the entire State.

Before the war, the purpose of the founders was to make it a high school or college, for the education of the children of indigent masons, exclusively. As a college, it failed, as did thousands of other educational institutions, owing to the disastrous results of the late war. After the war for several years, efforts were made to revive the interest of the masonic fraternity throughout the State, in an enterprise so commendable as the education of the children of worthy masons, but to no purpose. The Grand Lodge of the State, after years of unsuccessful effort, as a *dernier resort*, threw open its doors for the admission of all worthy orphans in the State, endowed it with one thousand dollars for the first year, depending upon contributions from the public for further support. The experience of the past two years satisfies us that the outside world (speaking from a masonic stand point) do not take sufficient interest in the noble work, to contribute sufficient to meet the expenses of the institution, in addition to what is contributed by the fraternity as a matter of duty.

But it will not do to let this grand monument of masonic charity fail. It must be sustained, and if the public will not contribute sufficient to meet its ordinary expenses, the fraternity must rise to the importance of the work and do what is necessary to sustain it. To do this the work must be undertaken by some well-devised plan, and the masons, throughout the State, must realize that the burden of the work falls upon them, and them alone. The report of suffering, of want, of actual destitution among the children, that has reached our ears during the past year, convinces us that the fraternity can no longer rely upon voluntary contributions, to support the institution. What then can be done? The school must be kept up; it must be sustained. Successful, it will be a grand and imposing monument to masonic charity; a lasting honor to the craft throughout the State. A failure, it will be a living disgrace, and show to the world that ma-

sons do not practice what they preach.

The institution is not to-day what it ought to be. It languishes amid what may be called, general prosperity throughout the State. There is some financial depression, but nothing sufficient to let this grand, noble enterprise, fail. The question naturally arises, what can be done. We answer, the very first step is for the fraternity throughout the State to resolve that the institution shall be sustained. We have been taught that "where there is a will there is a way," and it is as true in this as in other instances. According to the report of the Secretary of the Grand Lodge, there are something over eleven thousand masons in the State. Let the Grand Lodge of the State, at its annual communication in Raleigh, week after next, levy a compulsory tax of fifty cents on each member, through the Lodges, for the support of the Asylum, and let this sum be set apart strictly for its support. This sum, with what can be spared from the Treasury of the Grand Lodge, according to the new assessment, will be ample to pay off the current expenses for the next year. Let this tax be levied annually, and we will hear no further cries of distress and destitution among the orphans at Oxford. What mason will object to paying the paltry sum of fifty cents to support the maintenance of a home for his children after his death, in case he should be overtaken by adversity. He is above want to-day. He may think that he will never be reduced so as to need charity for his children, but that is a greater reason why he should help to aid and support the children of his less fortunate brethren. We are informed that at this time there are, at the institution two grand-children of a former Governor of North Carolina, who, when Governor, was in such affluent circumstances as to be able to present the State with his salary. Few of those living to-day can hope to be in such prosperous circumstances, and it teaches that no one knows at what moment he may be overtaken by adversity.

Let us suppose that the Grand Lodge levy the *per capita* tax of fifty cents as mentioned above, which will meet the current expenses of the institution, there is yet a higher, a noble duty to be performed, and that is to endow the institution with a sum which will place it at once on high financial ground. The fees in the blue lodges are now twenty dollars. Let the Grand Lodge raise the fees five dollars for each degree, and let the additional five dollars be set apart for the endowment fund of the institution. As long as contributions are optional and voluntary, they will be made by a *devoted few* in every lodge. Let it be made compulsory, and each member will be made to contribute *pro rata*.

Experience has taught every working mason that at least one-half of the number of masons raised annually, become drones in the hive of industry, in the matter of paying dues; to bear their proportional part of the necessary expenses, and in attending to lodge duties.

If we may then judge the future by the past, the masons to be made hereafter, will be of the same character as those already raised. Is it not better then to make them contribute to an object so worthy while it is in the power

of the craft to make them do so, which can be accomplished easier by this method than by any we know of. If the mason so made is a worthy man, he will rejoice and remember with pride, that he has contributed fifteen dollars to such a worthy and noble object, as the maintenance of this asylum. If on the other hand he is unworthy, so far as these matters are concerned, the craft will have the satisfaction of knowing that he was made to contribute, *volens volens*. Let us look at the results in this item alone. The official reports for the year 1874 show, that there were fifteen hundred and seventy-four degrees conferred, under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of North Carolina. A tax of five dollars on each degree would have given the asylum, under this plan seven thousand eight hundred and seventy dollars, a sum almost sufficient to support it.

Again, the Grand Lodge meets annually under the present arrangement. It is known to every intelligent mason that the constitution and the landmarks are unchangeable, and most of the by-laws that are now in existence, have been in force many years. Let these communications be held triennially and the amount now spent by each delegate in getting to Raleigh and back home, be added to the endowment fund. There are about three hundred delegates in attendance at each communication of the Grand Lodge, and each one spends, on an average, not less than twenty dollars. This is six thousand dollars per annum, which could be added to the endowment fund of the institution, and which, in a few years, would place it in high ground. To show this matter in its full light, there is an incidental loss of between five to six thousand dollars annually to the masons of this State, as follows: The delegates to the Grand Lodge, are generally among the most intelligent men in the State, without flattery to that body. They are men whose services are valuable. Let us suppose that delegates lose six days in attendance, three dollars per day would be a small compensation for their time. Here we have three hundred men for six days, at three dollars per day, making eighteen hundred days, five thousand four hundred dollars, lost from the earnings of the fraternity annually. Besides this, such contributions as are now made by individuals, could still be made, and instead of enabling the institution to drag every dollar received would be just so much which might be set apart with the endowment fund.

We are indebted to S. Wittkosky, Esq., of this city, for some of these ideas, and we take this occasion to say that they are practical and feasible. We ask our brethren of the State press to bring this matter prominently before their readers within the next two weeks, in order that the Grand Lodge, which assembles on the 6th proximo, may act understandingly, on a matter which is of the greatest importance to the craft and the thousands of helpless, indigent orphans (made so by no fault of theirs) who are scattered over the State. This matter is eliciting much attention by the fraternity throughout the State, and is one of the most important measures which will be called up at its next session. Let the delegates be prepared to vote intelligently, and in a manner which will reflect credit upon the fraternity as a body.—Charlotte Observer.