Phursday Evening, Nov. 29, 1865

The Mysteries of Freemasonry. By Wm, B. Smith, 32 deg. Raleigh, N. C.

Wm. B. Smith & Co., 1860. Some time since, it will be remembered, a N. C. 18tif. review of this book appeared in our columns, written by a prominent Museus of this city, over think ourself capable of reviewing it, and had therefore, tanded it to a missure friend for pression upon masons that one, distinthat purpose who furnished the review pub-C., by Was. B. Smith & Co., over amination of the book itself. the signature of of Macon." This last writer is quite severe upon our reviewer, and expresses surprise " that any journal should suffer a criticism containing personal abuse and ridstand our reviewer to deal in " personal about and cidente of the author." If we had so un-derstood him we never would have published his review. "Macon," for instance, conetrues into personal abuse and ridicule a pasrage which we regarded as mere badinage—a Bed. Smith hails from." was not understood imcapable of being written and hence, one by us as it is understood by "Macon." It was certainly not intended as an "injurious bapatation upon his character " as a "sly innendo as to North or South," identifying or connecting him with "the great Yankee humbugging machines, palming off books pretending to be revelations of masonry." It was. as before stated, a mere play upon the words "32 deg." and the inquiry as to what latitude "North or South," &c . was made because latitude is North and South, and not East and much so as the immortality of the soul, West Nor did we understand "Sigma" as charging Mr. Smith with revealing the "Mysteries" of the Order, as "Macon" does He did, indeed, say that "the whole book procerded upon the idea of enlightening the profane,? not that it did enlighten them. This, the "profane" if we had been led to purchase the book, alone from the attractions of the title page, and without any knowledge of the character of the author, it would have been

Mr. Smith. Certainly not that of having rerealed the "Mysteries" of the order. This unique."-that it was "emphatically the Mysteries of Wm. B. Smith 32 deg." Whatever may be said of the severity of the criticism of our reviewer, it appears to us to

have been nothing but a criticism, ridiculing. Mahommedans are all masons. Then the writer is a mason in good standing," and asks, " have not the proprietors of the Old North State submitted this book to one who is under the hone." and expresses the opinion "seriously and candidly " that we have been grossly humbagged by our reviewer. &c. &c. In reply to this we have only to say that our reviewer is a high-toned gentleman and an intimate personal friend, whom we know to be a mason in good standing-the past Master of two lodges in N. C. formerly, and not a great while since, a writer for the aforesaid Masonie Magazine, the Key Stone, and who, be studied somewhat by the profane, and but a very short time before the appearance of more perfectly, perhaps, by the initiate. wgite for it again, and furnish for it some information of is mutonic character connected with incidents of the late war. With all these evidences of his magonite rharacter before us. is it to be wondered at that we selected him to review the book.

We are exceedingly sorry that "Macon" has not written his review of our reviewer in book will find its way into every mason's when we shall no longer have to shelter sacial spirit that we could, in justice to ourself hand; and he will thereby be stimulated these blood-stained brows of ours from the and our friend, give it to the public through our to study more diligently the great and redumes. Hat as he app it's epithets to our friend personally abusive'll must be obvious to i pr describinour columns. With the concrever a few extracts from the book, remarking be led by a way that we know not, they sy between "Signar" and "Macon." we have however, that the work sets out by relaa thing to do, having said thus much ting three several incidents illustrating the will be found!" in explanation of the course which we have influence of the mysterious link of masons thought proper to pursue.

But having allowed the criticism of Mr. Smith's book to appear in our columns, we: deem it but an act of justice to that gentleman proceeds : to reproduce in our paper so much of "Macon's " article as is a review and defence of that book which will be found in another col-

A Reviewer and his Author Re-

masonry. By WM. B. SMITH, 32°. Raleigh, N. C.: Wm. B. Smith & Co. 1866. From " The Old North State."

2. The Mucleries of Freemasonry. By Wm. R. Smith, 32. Author of "Ma-sonry in Time of the War," etc. Raleigh

So much for this eccentric and strange the signature of " Signa," We stated at the feview of a musopic book, a review totally time that the book had been sent to us for re- massespresenting the author and subject. view, but that, not being a mason; we did not A total misconception of ideas; a review which he ought not to tell, and making libed. This ceres has called forth another the mapression on the profusum rulgus review of our reviewer and his author, which that in this book, they may find a key to stir up his soul into a very tempest of appears in the December angular of the Key the present of musoury. How totally un-Stone, a Masonic Maguzine, published in Ral- founded, this is, may appear from an ex-

It is no easy task to prepare a masonic essay on any subject. The writer is circumscribed always within the limits of the ritual; that he cannot pass .-In order to obviate this, writers are necesleafe of the nuthor to be inserted." Not being sarily compelled to resort to expressions. a mason we were, of course, not competent that savor much of circumlocution, and

proface world has rarely ever attempted knowing that any masonic work, written for the craft, is mystic to a great degree, mere play upon the words. "32 deg." "The in- hidden lore of masonry to understand perquity as to what latitude, North or South, feetly the masonic writings. Masonry is must attempt to come as close to scriting it as he may, so as, to be understood by the craft, and not understood by the profune. A full, free, discussion as to the origin, design, spirit and symbolism of masoury is as old as the days of Hutchinson within us? and Oliver.

There is another point of view, in which masonic literature is to be inspected. The grand body of masoury -its great symbol ism, is no secret, but it is a mystery, as the resurrection of the dead, the theory of life and death. This great symbolism, I assert is a mystery, as great a mystery, as in any other respect than our material form stormclouds, earthquakes, or any other pa-

tural phenomenon. A Lodge uncovered represents the material universe. The great teachings of we thought, and still think, was fairly to be masonry which were once secret, but now deduced from the firle of the book. As one of open, are relative to the true morals by which men should act towards each other. Among its ancient secrets were the sciences of architecture, geometry and mathematics, as applied especially to the other two. But it is a great educator; it directs with a view to learn something about "the the contemplative mason to study the great Mysteries of Free Masonry." He only said that Mr. Smith had "placed himself in this del-Book of Nature and Revelation, to survey the boundless universe, studded with "lakes jeate dilema. If he has exposed our mysteries rippling brooks, restless occans," etc., as below indestroy was some and is a singularity masteries, masteries of Nature's God, and But which horn of the dilema did he assign d vote a portion of his time, in order to that he may improve himself, and more especially since by such study and contemplation, he is ennobled and his mind puriis clearly manifest by the subsequent declara- fied, his soul elevated to higher, holier and diamonds no longer esteemed if gathered now and things to come, partakes in its tion that by "substituting the name of Win. purer thoughts, and thereby better fitted in every valley. And an institution which nature, largely of the majesty and beauty tremble before its felt but unseen pres-B. Smith, 32 deg., in the place of 'Freema- to understand the symbolism, the great has existed for ages; which boasts of a and glory of all these mysteries. It has ymbolism of masonry; and also the lesser symbolisms, and to discharge his duty as when every knave and fool could claim a mason, a man and a patriot. To these things masonry can only appeal legitimately. She cannot—she dare not—appeal to

any written book, for Jews, Christians and indeed the author's book, but treating the authors the great mysteries of brotherthor, Mr. Smith, personally with kindness and hood, stretching around the earth, and linkrespect. It so appearing to us it found a ing, mysteriously, masons of every clime place in our columns, which, otherwise, it into one band or society of brothers and would not have done. And we are sorry that friends. These are mysteries, great myswe cannot say as much for "Macon's" review teries - mysteries to the mason, mysteries of our reviewer. He says, among other things: to the prafone-The Sigma reviewer has "I say honestly, that I do doubt that the totally misceived the terms. Bro. Smuth. indeed, has pointed out, from a high stand point, those of the physical and mental world, what the studious craftsman may contemplate and should study, as "looking through Nature up to Nature's God:" and also to study the mysteries of the great brotherhood, the great order, and its great symbolism. He has done nothing with the secrets of masonry. The mason who has committed to memory the secrets of masonry, has started in the wrong direction, and needs more light. It is not the little secrets of the Order that make it mysterious, but the great symbols of the Order, and this may enough brought before the craft, and I do think that Bro. Smith has supplied a vacuum. True, a work upon another point-Scott's Analogy between Revealed and Natural Religion and Ancient Craft Masonry-filled a gap, but did not cover the precise ground which Bro. Smith does in his work, and I hope a copy of this little

mysteries of the universe. Having premised thus much of the spirit shall be made right, and when we shall and design of the work, I call attention to shall be made straight, and when we shall upon three great types of human kind .-Then, treating the influence which mysterious symbolism has on man, the anthor veil-itself, becomes a mystery. Perhaps,

By discarding the language of symhols, which, through the imagination speaks by the infinite and charming skill of nato the soul, we lose the most efficient and powerful means of imparting religious and ty which is beyond.

moral instruction. Mere words never make "Lamartine says a lasting impression on the heart, nor do The Legislature of Vermont has passed they atir up profound emotions, unless they terial creation, it is that which is most a bill making habitual drunkenness for a are accompanied by some significant acts, veiled, which is most beautiful. The mysnerted of two years, a sufficient cause for gestures or attitudes, on the part of the teries of the heart and of nature are the

which we denominate the reason, the sp it, whose appropriate instrument of utter-ance is speech, is not the source of activity, nor is the noblest element in man. It observes, determines and judges; but its judgments are generally partial, negative and selfish; never does it elevate the soul nor fill it with a divine enthusiasm; it creates no heroes, nor has it ever accomplishfatigue; and the soul's language is not verman lives but feels, at times, that language in its happiest combinations, is all too weak to express those burning thoughts which the soul intimately, is always in its truest state associated with a ritual, the more imposing, sublime, and beautiful, the better Again, on page 11, speaking of the mys-

tery of the nature of man, he says:
"Who can deny the very nature of war It has been truly said that the chief re why the church of Rome has continu maintain so powerful an empire over

poetical, which always must and will command the reverence of sensitive and imaginative beings."

In chapter II., in treating on masonry as to the profane. Not only is this so, but and what it is, he uses the answer given the craftsman even, must be expert in the to Henry VI: "The skill of nature and the understanding of the mighty " As to the nature of man and of masonry,

"Do you ask me what has nature to do with masoury ! "What is nature !

"Is it not all that we see around us, above us, beneath and all that we feel

"Of all the works of nature of Creation-which we see about us, man is, as workmen, may bear the Chief Overseer, we are left to divine through our own powers of thought and inspiration.

"In examining the nature of man and principles should be universal, that all men hand, speak of a mystery. Everything-should be charitable, friendly and faithful even the breath we breathe, the words we But, when she looks around and observes the fraud and vice which everywhere pro-If all men were masons, the end of the institution would be defeated. The respon- ry. sibility which is attached to each member as being bound to promote the cause of with the dust and glory of ages and censtand would sink into insignificance. That he ven, connecting man with the great manly pride which dilates the heart of a mason would be converted into disgust. Gold by such artistic means of inductive science would be less precious if it were less rare; and sublime alegoric blending of things Soloman, a St. John, and a Washington, in it something of them all! its privileges would fall into ineffable con- comprehensive systematizing of all these tempt."

pages 18 ond 19 :

'A fool cannot be a wise man; a great spiritual, of things past and things to other means of arousing him. come,-that all men will ever gaze upon so much of radiant goodness and glory, as

even the dim light of masonry.

"Man, in this incomprehensible nature of things, is, himself, an inexplicable mystery. Upon the same theory, precisely, ture: of masonry, are the great mysteries of the Order. These are the true secrets. These are the secrets which we study-which all true masons study-and try to lears, and try to impart to our fellow-men. But the the flesh, while an unseen Friendly Hand, dullness of human sagacity, the infinite reaching out of the clouds, lends us over weakness of human sight and the clumsiness of that immortal part within us while fettered by these earthly structures of human life, combine to throw a shadow over all the bright and eternal principles of masonry. We see them only 'as through a glass darkly,' and the very laws and objects and science and philosophy which we study, become greater mysteries to us, than we can possibly be to those who know not what we study.

"These principles, themselves, are not secrets; that is to say, they are clear and glare of the great sun, whose brightness beautiful symbolism of the Order, and the and glory will not let us look upon it, we

And again, beginning on page 21:
"But now, while this shadowy veil of humanity hangs over us, the shadow—the in our weakness, it is necessary that we encounter this latier mystery to be drawn. ture, to the grandeur of the sublime Beau-

"Lamartine says: 'In the beauty of form, or of moral character, or of the material creation, it is that which is most veiled, which is most beautiful. The mysteries of the heart and of nature are the teries of the heart and of nature are the science and Truth, as we esteem it, itself; speaker, or are wrought up in a highly delight of the intollect, the soul of the that is is say, there is no secret in our man—the word was lost; or the word that

u shadow over whatever he has made most delicate and mo t divine, to heighten our aspirations after it by its secresy, and so to soften its lustre from our gaze, as he has placed lide over our eyes to temper the impression of light upon them, and night over the stars to incite us to follow and seek at the stars to incite us the stars to incite us the stars to incite us the stars ed any great thing, for humanity! It is scapes. The more we long to penetrate the soul which acts, which makes men them, the more they try to wind, bury and brave to face danger; and strong to endure hide themselves. Mist is to mountains what illusion is to love-it elevates them. bal, but not symbalic and ritual. Not a Mystery hovers over everything here below, and solemnizes all things to the eyes and heart.

na neart.

So, the placid lake, like the calm happiness of a resigned will, speaks to us of a mystery; the little rippling brook and ty and Self-Discipline.
the blue running river, which, like human The Law of God is life and human sorrow, go on and on, forever and forever, speak of a mystery; the ever and forever, speak of a mystery; the restless ocean, like human angush, rising and surging in billowy grandeur and resistless tide, speaks of a mystery; the balmy breeze of a fresh May morning famour checks and touches our lips with a kias and touches our lips with a kias and phystery; the whirlwind crashing its line way in pitiless fury through for the line way in pitiless fury through the line way the line way in pitiless fury through the line way the line way

ing a worship, sublime, symbolical and lightnings flashing vivid glimpses of eternity through the broken chasms of black clouds, speak of a mystery; the thunder olling through arching domes of the trembling heavens, speaks of a mystery; moun-tains towering away up in the blue vista of hanging clouds, and fretted with the glistening snows and ice of endless winter. speaks of a mystery; the sighing pines of the lowlands, bending their boughs in measured cadence with the requiems which the winds sing in their branches, speak of a mystery: the great sun, which gives us heat and light, the myriad of twinkling stars in the etherial vault above, sucak of a mystery ; the unnumbered planets, stand ing will, floating lazily or dancing, eddying round and round, through the boundwe have been informed by the Great Buil-der of the Universe himself, the greatest of tery; the little fair haired babe, uttering them all. We are told that in His own from the cradle of its mother's arms the image created He man. That is all we first intelligible parts of language, speaks know. Whatever the relation, we, the of a mystery; the grown up man, whispering in the midst of his strength and power and majesty, the jargon of a name which he knows not, and if he knew, would fear to pronounce, speaks of a mystery; and the little coffin by the open grave, the nature of masonry an unknown writer filled with a waxen figure, upon which has said: 'Why, let us ask, are not all time has set no seal, and the pale rose-bad, men virtuous? Masonry desires that her clasped for the overmore, in its small, thin speak, the power of sight with which we behold the flowers of the fields, hearing. vail, she rigutly invites the good and vir- tasting, smelling, feeling, and the physical tuous alone to partake of her mysteries. strength with which the reader is enabled to turn these pages-speak of a myste-

> "The foundation and spirit of masonry, Source of the beginning and the ending,

" Masonry is, in brief, an attempt at a awful mysteries - an elementary school for Asserting that these truths can never their study-while the mysteries themdwindle into nothing, he continues, on selves are but the skill of nature, demonst:ated for the purpose of teaching man his source of being, his existence and his principle can never 'fall into ineffable con- returning. And if nature, after applying empt!' Alas! we cannot reasonably to man, to all his senses and understand hope, it seems, -in accordance with that ing, this skill of hers, fails to impress him tafinite law of things material and things with what he must learn she possesses still

"Her skill is sufficient. If the lesson will not be learned before, it must be taught in death."

And again on page 26 we have the following inimitable sketch of the skill of na-

"This wondrous skill of nature is the corner-stone and the capstone of masonry. It is the hiddin vault that lies beneath us and the living arch that bends above us. It places upon our eyes the hoodwink of the rough and rugged way of time, beneath that mighty arch of the firmament, down through the cold damp darkness of that vault, the depth whereof no human plummet can ever sound, out into the glories and the everliving presence of the etern-al Temple, where there is need for no more

In chapter III., treating of the understanding of the mighty, and what it is, he curtain around you. Did you rise to a answers by saying "It is Truth" Speak- splendid scene of intellectual brightness? well defined somewhere! And some day, ing of the answer as to what truth is, he So, if you are obedient to the precepts of uses the tollowing :

"St. John the Evangelist, tells us tion morn, when the clouds of error and (xviii, 37th; and 38th;) 'Pilate therefore imperfection are separated from your mind, said unto him. Art thou a king then! and you behold, with unveiled sye, the Having premised thus much of the spirit shall be made straight, and when we shall cause came I into the world, that I should "The means of recogn t on among ma Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a glaries of Heaven and the everlasting bear witness to the Truth .-

· Pilate saith unto him, What is Truth, And when he had this, he went

"These things being so, and masonry being adopted or accepted as a comprehensive system of moral philosophy -- a migroscopic science through which we strain they cannot explain themselves and which human vision for a glimpse of that Myste-ry which mortal eyes can never clearly be-any more than skill of nature interpreted hold, we own it to ourselves as masons, to masonry as an Order, and to the world, to examine carefully and set forth boldly,

ourselves, that we do, in these revelations ite, "I AM or conclusions, find as much of Truth as TRUTH! is opened to mortal knowledge—as much perhaps as its feeble strength is capable of

"1st. No atheist can be made a mason:

rectly upon the moral character of mason-

ry, which may be summed up as follows:

'Masonry is a system of teaching, symbolically, Piety, Morality, Science, Chart-The Law of God is the rule and limit

of Freemasonry. Masonic qualifications regard the mental, moral and physical nature of man. Personal worth and merit are the bails

of official worth and merit. 4th. Our duty to each other are summed

from the threatened tortures of the Crusa- the book. ders. They carried so terror in their brawny arms to hush the masonic teachings of a Pythagoras, or a Thales - and of Judea, the deserts of India, and the ticed, the best men of those lands are a-valley of the Nile, were cheered by its mong its members—in Russia, Prussia, have been proud to wear its mystic em- and this of itself should be a sufficient seman language. It numbers to-day within by any one who has the interest of masonits secret pale, it is said, more males than ry at heart. all the religious organisations on the face of the earth. The Jew, before the altar on the sacred mount-the Parsec, in las adoration of the Sun-the Mussalman, bowing to the East in prayer—the Greek, before the shrine of his divinity—the Christian, in devout faith at the foot of the cross, all alike, know and understand its mystic language and all alike, do reverence to the Truth which they find therein. "If now, all these tenets, and doctrines and influences, impressing themselves upon all men and all ages of the world-these sundry workings' of the understanding of the mighty-have nothing of Truth in them, there is no Truth this side of the grave. There may not be much. I do not believe there is; but if there be mry. I am not afraid to declare that Masonry has in it more of this Ineffable Substance than any other moral institution ever de---- Ir m me miderstanding of the wiscat

and the wisdom of ages, concentrated into a simple science-so simple that even the blind may read, and yet so full of awful grandeur that the profoundest student, as he buries himself in its mysteries, will

Again, speaking of mysteries, he uses the following:

"This undeniable skill of nature, which, being read as we humbly and reverently try to read it -- with the understanding of the mighty-and which we call masonry, possesses secondary, inherent mechanical mysteries, that are beautiful even in their everlasting sameness and simplicity. These minor, internal mysteries are doubtless, in a limited proportion, to the profane what the real mysteries are to the initiate These may, perhaps, be called its 'sundry workings.'—The real mysteries make their impression upon the inner life-the heart; these make their impression upon the outer life-the world.

"The darkness which is supposed to en-velope neophytes in our anti-chambers might be considered emblematical of the darkness of the human nature. Or, as has been fitly said, we might consider it as inested with a pure and dignified reference. because it is attached to a system of truth. Darkness places before the mind a series of the most awful and impressive images. t points to the shadow of death and the becurity of the grive, as the forerunners of a more brilliant and never fading light. which follows at the resurrection of the just. Figure to yourself the beauty and strict propriety of this reference, you who have been raised to the third degree of masun, nor moon, nor stars, and where adoring worlds join in the refrain, "The Lord is good, His mercy endureth forever!" the shades of that darkness? So, shall you be enveloped in the darkness of the you be enveloped in the darkness of the grave, when death has drawn his sable masonry, shall you rejoice on the resurrec

> sons constitute, probably, one of the greatest mysteries of the workings of the Order. Do these who look upon these things as a mystery, ever think or conjecture by what means spirits recognise and greet each other? Is there not something of a congenial ty drawing them together, which

by the understanding of the mighty ! "Hero, it would seem, was an oppor

"I AM," says the voice of the Infin-

ite, "I AM THAT I AM"-I AM THE

"The hand is a messenger from the beart to the external world, and it performs grasping. Let us see, then how much of this Truth there is in masonry :

Speaking of the fundamental doctrines of masonry, he mentions them thus: in the language of Montaigre, what it does: Wills the hand me demand, we promise, And he assigns the reasons why.

"2nd. The Holy Bible is the Great cate, recken, confess, repent, express fear, shame, doubt-we instruct, command, in-Light of Masonry.

"3rd. In a careful dissection of the Anvite, encourage swear, tostify, accuse, conelent Landmarks, we find, out of the seveldenn, acquit, recommend, insult, desplay, enteen therein contained, five bearing didely, distain, flatter, applicad, bless, access ridicule, reconcile, exalt, regale, gladden, complain, afflict, discomfit, discharge, us-tonish, exclaim, indicate silence, and what not, with a variety and multiplication that

keeps pace with the tongue.

"And so, to recapitulate, the emistical workings of the made, and the sublime teachings and inspirations of the other side of masoury are all, but one untiring and endless search after Truth-the beginning of the life that never dies. Tuesn is the Mystery of Freemasonry and of all things."
From these extracts the mader, whether

up in five Points.

5th. The mystery of the antiquity of the order:

"Inc antiquity of the order, has extent has been made by Sigma; and if a mason desire to know the higher and more beautiquity of its language. It has lived in every civilised country and tiful teachings of the symbolism of masonclime.-History bears honorable record of ry, let him read the book; and to the proits advancement and march old tearried fane, who desire to know that masonry is its shining lights to bigoted Egypt in the intellectual and not confined to mumbled darkest days of its idolatry, -it shrank not secrects, of words, signs, &c., let him read

the plains of Chaldea, and the mountains that is: In every country where it is pracpresence and culivened by its song. Kings, France, South America and other great princes and potentates of the earth have masonic states. Even in America, the scheld with awe its hieroglyphic light, and names of Pike and Macley head the list, blems. It exists everywhere there is hu- curity, I think, against any attacl upon it

In conclusion, I have only to add, that if Sigmu's article be really written by a mason, I here enter my protest against any sech style of criticism, either among profancs or initiatives.

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N. C. Railroad Meeting. A MEETING OF THE STOCKHOLDERS OF the North Carolina Railroad Company will be held in Raleigh on the 12th day of December next, for the purpose of considering the By-Laws and regulations proposed by the committee, and also such amendments to the cluster, as may be suggested. A punctual attendance, either in person or by proxy is earnestly requested. WEBB.

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