

QUESTIONS.

Gettysburg, December 9, 1831.

Below we give the answers of Gen. Peter B. Porter and the Hon. Judge Rochester, to an enquiry from a number of the members of the Buffalo Lodge, as to the propriety and expediency of giving up the Charter of their Lodge.

BLACK ROCK, Sept. 12th, 1831.

Gentlemen.—I have received your letter of the 10th inst., addressed to Judge Rochester and myself, requesting our opinions as to the expediency of adopting a proposition which it seems is now a subject of discussion among the members of your Lodge for surrendering its Charter.

I have not had the pleasure of seeing Judge Rochester since the receipt of your letter, but understand that he is shortly expected home. For myself, however, I have no hesitation in saying, in the present excited state of the public mind, I should deem it to be an act, not of magnanimity merely, but of patriotic duty to the cause of public peace and tranquility, to give up your Charter at once and forever.

The present state of my health does not permit me to go at large into an examination of the principles and practices of Freemasonry; but I will cheerfully submit to you, a brief account of my own Masonic knowledge and experience, as furnishing the motive to the advice I have just given.

I joined the Masonic Fraternity in early life, by becoming a member of the Ontario Lodge at Canandaigua, which at that time was the only Lodge in the State, west of the Cayuga Lake. By the partiality of my brethren, I was soon advanced to the office of Master, the duties of which I discharged for several years. The only professed object and principles of the Institution, as then explained and understood, were—1st, the dispensation of charity to worthy but unfortunate members and their families, and more especially to such as were strangers; 2d, a prompt and cheerful observance of, and obedience to the laws of the land; 3d, a rigid practice of all the moral virtues, and 4th, a uniform demonstration of respect for religion and its professors—without, however, requiring a declaration in favor of any particular creed. Simple, however, and even meritorious as were the objects of the Institution, yet, for the purpose no doubt of giving an air of importance and mystery to its proceedings, they were surrounded by a profession of useless pagentry and show; and veiled in impenetrable secrecy, by the administration of high sounding and terrific oaths, denouncing by extravagant penalties, the violations of the secrets of the Society.

I was induced to continue a member of the Lodge for several years, not only because I saw nothing in its principles or practices (unless the obligation to secrecy may be considered as such) that was injurious to the interests of society; but because it afforded one of the very few means we then enjoyed of social intercourse; as it brought together, once a month, many of our principal inhabitants, scattered over an area of eight or ten millions of acres.

It is, however, now more than twenty years since I have been a member, or (with a single exception) within the walls of any Lodge. I withdrew from the Society because I believed that all its useful functions, if not entirely superseded, were at least much more efficiently performed, by other and more recent Institutions, having the same objects in view; and because the unmeaning pomp and parade with which its operations are carried on, were uncongenial with my taste. I never advanced beyond the third degree of Masonry, and I can truly say, that during the time I was a member, I never saw the influence of the Society exerted in the advancement of any political measure. For myself, I never inquired, seldom knew, and still less cared, whether a candidate for any civil office, was a Mason or not; and such I believe has been the general sentiments of other Masons. I have never known Masons, as such, to be engaged in any unworthy, much less criminal project, until the affair of Morgan. At the time of his abduction I was absent from the State, and on my return, it was wholly impossible, among the various and contradictory rumors and conjectures that were afloat to form any satisfactory opinion in respect to the particulars of the transaction. For more than two years after the event took place, although satisfied that Morgan had been forcibly and illegally seized and bro't to this frontier, my prevailing opinion was that he was alive, and either lay concealed in some part of Canada, or had been sent to sea. But it has since been abundantly proved, that he was deliberately and foully murdered, and that too by Masons; and what renders the transaction still more alarming as regard the future credit and usefulness of the Institution—murdered by Masons actually believing that they were discharging a duty imposed on them by Masonic obligations!

If then, there are to be found among the members of any of our Lodges—and that there are, the lamentable case to which I have alluded too clearly proves, any so weak or so infatuated as to believe that their Masonic obligations require or authorize them to commit acts of such atrocity, in disregard of their civil duties and in violation of the express command of God, surely it is the duty of every Lodge to surrender its charter, and thus prevent the recurrence of similar atrocities. It would, moreover, be but a just propitiation to the wounded feelings of those—and there are doubtless many

such—who really believe that freemasonry authorizes crime.

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant, PETER B. PORTER.

To Messrs. Potter, Follet, Camp, Townsend and Barker.

Tuesday, 13th Sept. 1831.

Gentlemen.—Returning home to-day Gen. Porter has submitted to me your letter of the tenth inst. and his reply. I take occasion to say, that I fully concur in the advice and opinion therein given by him.

My humble belief that freemasonry is at this time quite useless, was fully expressed in an address on behalf of the Monroe Lodges some two years ago. Subsequent reflection has convinced me that the Institution neither can or ought to be maintained any longer, because the possibility of its doing good is more than counterbalanced by the evil tendencies to which, under the circumstances of the times, it is inevitably liable.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant, W. B. ROCHESTER.

H. B. Potter, and others.

MR. CLAY'S MASONRY.

The following letter from Mr. CLAY was written in reply to an application, in writing, from a Committee of Anti-Masons of Hanover, Indiana, to know his sentiments on the subject of Masonry: ASHLAND, Oct. 9, 1831.

GENTLEMEN:—I hope you will excuse the delay in acknowledging the receipt of your letter of the 2d ult. which has arisen from an absence from home and from various engagements. Waiving the considerations that I have no knowledge of the existence of an Anti-Masonic meeting in Hanover, Indiana, other than that which is derived from your letter, nor of your appointment as a Committee to correspond with me, other than your statement, nor the satisfaction of a personal acquaintance with you, I will proceed at once to reply to your letter. Its professed objects is to ascertain my sentiments on the subject of Masonry; and the reason assigned by you for this enquiry is thus stated by yourselves:—"As we are again shortly to be called upon to choose a man to preside over the councils of our nation; as it will then be our duty and privilege to raise our humble but independent voice in favor of him whom we deem most worthy of our suffrage; and as you now stand a candidate for a high and important station, as your friends and fellow citizens, we would solicit from you a frank and candid statement of your sentiments on this subject."

I do not know a solitary provision in the Constitution of the United States which conveys the slightest authority to the General Government to interfere, one way or the other, with either Masonry or Anti-Masonry. If therefore a President of the United States or any other functionary of that Government were to employ his official power to sustain or to abolish, or to advance the interests of Masonry or Anti-Masonry, it would be an act of usurpation or tyranny.

You have not called upon me for my opinion upon any great practical measure falling within the scope of Federal power; but passing by every question of vital interest, within the sphere of its operation, you demand my sentiments upon a subject with which I humbly conceive it has nothing to do, and you place this demand on the ground of the influence which my sentiments might exert upon the exercise of an undoubted and important privilege which you possess as citizens of the United States.

A compliance, on my part, with your demand, would amount to an implied admission, that individual sentiments on the subject of Masonry, formed a proper consideration in regulating the exercise of the elective franchise in respect to offices of the Federal Government. I can make no such admission. I cannot believe that whether I am friendly or hostile to Masonry or Anti-Masonry, is at all material in the formation of any judgment, on the part of my fellow citizens, concerning my fitness for any office under the Government of the United States. That elevated office to which you allude, should, in my opinion, be filled by one who is capable, unswayed by sectarian feelings or passions, of administering its high duties impartially towards the whole people of the United States, however divided into religious, social, benevolent or literary associations.

Entertaining these views, I have constantly refused to make myself a party to the unhappy contest raging, distant from me, in other parts of the Union, between Masons and Anti-Masons. Whilst these views remain uncorrected, I must adhere to that determination. If, indeed, you gentlemen, will point to the provision in the Federal Constitution which can be legitimately made to operate upon the subject in question, I would not hesitate promptly to comply with your request. In the meantime, in declining it, I hope you will consider me as not wanting in proper respect to you or to those whom you represent, but as acting from a conviction of the impropriety of blending an alien ingredient with a question, already sufficiently complex, and also from a sense of personal independence.

I am with great respect, your obedient servant, HENRY CLAY.

Messrs. J. A. Watson, Noble Butler, J. H. Thomson.

Commenting on the above, the Lancaster Herald holds the following language, in which we agree—"This letter full bears us out in the assertion we have repeatedly made, that Mr. Clay is an ardent and devoted member of the order, and that his Masonic attachments outweigh his sense of the obligations he owes to the community. "Mr. Clay is asked by the Committee to give a frank and candid statement of his views on Masonry—as they consider a knowledge of those views important in making a selection of their candidate for the Presidency. How does Mr. C.

answer this respectful request of his fellow-citizens? Why? "I know not," says he, "a solitary provision in the Constitution of the United States which conveys the slightest authority to the general government to interfere, one way or the other with Masonry or Anti-Masonry." Such is the tone of his answer. And who, let us ask, ever supposed there was an express provision in the U. S. Constitution, authorizing the general government to interfere with Masons or Anti-Masons? Where was the necessity of Mr. Clay answering a question never put to him? Simply to evade the point at issue, and prove as severely as possible the Anti-Masonic party, in an indirect manner. But let us take Mr. C. on his own ground:

Who has ever heard of a provision in the Constitution of the U. S. authorizing the General Government to interfere in any way with Democracy or Federalism? No one, and yet who will venture to assert that Mr. C. would not hesitate a moment to avow himself a Federalist or Democrat, and give his reasons on the relative merits of the principles of the two parties? No one—he would proclaim them from the house-tops, and be governed if President, accordingly. It is only in this indirect manner that the President can support or advance any principle. But for a President to advance the cause of Equal Rights, to maintain the "Supremacy of the Laws," to withhold offices from those disqualified by their attachment to a Foreign Government, would in the estimation of Mr. Clay, be an "act of usurpation and tyranny." Mr. Clay's affected ignorance of the political character of Masonry, is not the least disingenuous feature in his communication. After having exerted himself to establish a NATIONAL LODGE, to control the operations of Government, he has become conscience stricken, and pretends that Masonry has nothing to do with politics!

He wraps himself up in the mantle of Masonic secrecy and dignity, and boldly denies the right of the people to know his sentiments on an Institution which has trampled on the Laws and usurped the Government—which has performed an act after act of "usurpation and tyranny," and of which he is known to be a member. He presents himself as a candidate for the first office in the country, and when asked to declare whether or not he considered himself the subject of a Government alien to that of the Union, he boldly says in effect, that I conceive to be none of your business! The efforts of a portion of the people to re-establish the "supremacy of the laws," he deprecates as an "unhappy contest," hoping no doubt that its progress will be retarded and the ancient fraternity reinstated in their former power. And for his part, he hesitates not to say, in effect, that he will continue as heretofore within the pale of the Lodge.

We are glad that the Letter of Mr. Clay has made its appearance. It shows his Masonic attachments at once, and Jackson himself is not, we believe, a more bigoted and devoted advocate of the Institution.

Various Matters.

Productions of corn and potatoes raised on the farm of Robert Pollock, in Erie county, Pennsylvania, the present fall, to wit:—410 bushels of ears of corn from two acres of ground; and 600 bushels of potatoes on the same farm, on two acres of ground—400 bushels of which were dug by two men in five hours. They are certified from men of undoubted veracity.

Consumption of Fuel in New York.—During the last year the consumption of Wood was 205,079 loads of oak, 40,244 of hickory and 52,283 of pine, making a total of 279,606 loads, at an aggregate cost of \$493,085 86. Add to this 26,005 tons of anthracite coal, 11,875 chaldrons Virginia, and 12,593 of charcoal, at a cost of \$321,642 34, and the amount is increased to \$814,728 20. The quantity of Liverpool and some other kinds of coal consumed we have not the means of knowing. But if we include the whole, with the cost of carting &c. the expense of fuel for the city of New York cannot be less than a million of dollars per annum.

A young man named Roby has been indicted before the Supreme Court, Boston, for the murder of his betrothed last Spring in Belknap street. According to a Boston paper, it is a modern affair of Othello and Desdemona, but far less deliberate than the Moor's—the paroxysm of jealousy being as sudden as it was violent.

An Inheritance.—The Paris Constitutionnel of the 5th of October contains a letter addressed to the Editor by Mr. George Sullivan, of Boston, which states that in the year 1821, a Frenchman, Louis Milleret by name, arrived there and was introduced to Messrs. George and William Sullivan, by Bishop Cheverus, then Catholic Bishop at Boston. That Milleret placed in their hands some papers establishing his right to a certain inheritance, from which they have already received Twelve Thousand Dollars, and would be able to recover a further sum of like amount, were Milleret present, but that they are ignorant of his place of abode. Mr. S. has transmitted to the Editor of the Constitutionnel, One Thousand Dollars, to defray the expense of giving Mr. Milleret notice of the above circumstance by advertisement, and paying his travelling expenses to this country.

SMALL POX.—We deem it an act of justice to our fellow citizens, says the Baltimore Chronicle, to apprise them that there are several cases of the Small Pox in the city at present; and we would also suggest to them the propriety of taking steps to have such of the members of their families as have not already had the Kind Pox, immediately vaccinated.

BROOK-CORN WHISKEY.—The efforts of the friends of temperance appear to be met at every progressive step with ascending ef-

forts at counteracting their benevolent intentions; scarcely one source of iniquity is exposed and its practice abandoned, before another rises, Phoenix like, from its ashes, and perpetuates and strengthens the evil which had previously been abandoned. The distillation of Cider Brandy has been a crying evil in this region, but the scarcity of apples and the force of public opinion, has reduced the quantity made, and the amount drunk until, apparently, the worst and most brutalizing species of intemperance has subsided. But a new source of obtaining stimulating liquid has just been found out, through the inventive genius of some queer yankee, and the land will yet be flooded with Broom Corn Seed Whiskey: the seed of Broom Corn this year yields abundantly, and it is used as a substitute for Oats for Horses, and also for manufacturing Whiskey: we are told it can be had in abundance for thirty cents per bushel, the very best, and that one bushel of seed yields ten quarts of pure Whiskey! The distillation has already begun, and the cultivation of Broom Corn may yet prove a curse to the soil and a ruinous scourge to those who raise it.—Northampton Courier.

A SCREAMER!—Italian papers state that an organised being has been found in Africa which seems to form a link in the chain between the animal and vegetable kingdoms. This singular being has the form of a spotted serpent. It creeps along the ground and in lieu of a head, it has a flower formed like a small bell which contains a slimy liquid. Flies and other insects attracted by the sweet taste of this liquid, enter the flower and are retained there by its glutinous nature. The flower then closes and remains closed until the prisoners are crushed and transformed into chyle. The indigestible parts, such as the head and the wings are rejected by two inferior openings with spiral windings. The skin of this serpent-plant resembles leaves, the flesh is white and tender. The inhabitants of the country eat it and consider it a great delicacy!—N. Y. Enquirer.

A Lucky Hod Carrier.—A black fellow arrayed in tatters, and those tatters liberally sprinkled with mortar, the symbol of his profession, presented the ticket combination numbers 43 49 56 which came up a prize of \$20,000 in the New York Lottery, which drew on Wednesday last, at the counter of Mr. Robert T. Bicknell, Lottery and Exchange Broker, in Chesnut street, yesterday morning, and immediately received for the same the due amount in cash. We understand the lucky ticket was obtained of Mr. Francis, immediately in the rear of the Arcade. The lucky holder appeared perfectly satisfied with his bargain, but evinced less excitement on the occasion than might have been expected.—Philad. Inquirer.

CRIME AND ITS CONSEQUENCES.—A young man attempted to commit suicide by cutting his throat with a pen-knife, at Mr. Pritner's hotel, in Cherry street above Sixth, on Thursday morning last. The circumstances of the case, as far as we could learn them, were these. The young man, named George W. Brauman, had been entrusted with a sum of money, which he was to carry to Worcester from a neighboring town in Massachusetts. Instead of discharging the trust, he absconded and came south. He arrived in this city on Wednesday evening; early on Thursday morning he went down to the Warf to take passage for Baltimore: the steamboat had left a few minutes before his arrival. On returning, he met, in Second street, the gentleman whom he had defrauded of the money, with a sheriff, who had accompanied him from Massachusetts. They went with him to the hotel in Cherry street and the miserable young man promised to restore the money to its owner; for which purpose they both went into the chamber where the servant had conveyed the trunk, which Brauman unlocked, and seizing a pen-knife, cut his throat. The gentleman threw his arms around him to prevent further mischief, and called for help. The young man was conveyed to the Hospital, where, it is believed, he may recover—and that is the result of his crime—perhaps his first crime.—U. S. Gazette.

From Niles' Register. OLD TIMES.—When George Washington, the father of his country, was installed President of the United States in 1789, he was clothed in American cloth. When John Hancock and Samuel Adams, the "rebels" excluded from the royal mercy and grace, were installed governor and lieutenant governor of Massachusetts, at the cradle of the revolution, in 1789, they were both dressed in homespun. When James Madison, the father of the constitution, took his oath of office as President of the United States, in 1809, he was also clothed in the products of American labor. And it was just about this time that John Randolph discarded the use of home-made goods, because it was thought "patriotic" to prefer them.

The last named, it is stated, attended to make his late speech to his "dear constituents," in a British built coach, drawn by four horses.

The buttons on the coat of John Hancock were of silver, and of American manufacture—the device, a shepherd shearing his sheep—the motto, "you gain more by our lips than by our teeth."

An accident of a peculiar distressing character occurred at Waukegan's netauerie, exhibiting the fair on Wednesday morning. A man who was employed in cleaning the cage in which the lion Wallace was confined, imprudently putting him on the head several times, which the ani-

mal appeared to take in good part, and in return licked the hand that caressed him. At length the lion suddenly caught the man's arm in his teeth, and in his attempting to withdraw it, the flesh and muscles were dreadfully lacerated; and ere he could extricate it the animal actually bit off and swallowed the unfortunate keeper's hand! He was immediately taken to the infirmary, where it was found necessary to amputate his arm, which was skillfully performed by Mr. Danel, and it is hoped the man's life will be saved.—Buffalo Journal.

Chimneys on Fire.—The prefect of police of Paris has directed that a quantity of flour of sulphur should be continually kept at the watch house of the firemen in that metropolis, and at the places of residence of the Police Offices. Flour of sulphur, as has been demonstrated in theory and as experience has shewn, will effectually put out a fire in the chimney. It is only necessary to burn a small quantity on the hearth of the fire place, the chimney of which is on fire. The sulphur combining with the oxygen of the air, fills the chimney with sulphuric acid gas, which stops almost immediately the combustion of carbon, the basis of soot. At the first view it appears strange that by increasing one fire, another is extinguished, but the means alluded to are as powerful as simple. It is almost superfluous to observe that flour of sulphur can only be successfully used to put out a fire in a chimney and that in case of other fires, it would not only be useless but dangerous.

Robbery and Elopement.—A woman named Flor, was brought up, charged with robbing her husband of \$160. It was stated, that when apprehended, she was preparing to run away with a man named Jones. The amiable wife was held to bail, and the husband commenced a civil action for damages against the paramour.—New York Gazette.

Female Heroism.—In the late attack upon Wilna, fourteen female warriors distinguished themselves in the Polish ranks.—One of them was unfortunate enough to receive three wounds from a spear; in the midst of a hearty commiseration which her sufferings excited amongst her companions in arms, she exclaimed, "These wounds do not pain me. How happy should I die, did I but know that Wilna is our own!" The next moment she was a lifeless corpse.

ANTI-MASONRY IN VIRGINIA.

The Editor of the Richmond Whig has declared his intention to open his columns, to a certain extent, to the controversy with freemasonry. We are glad to see this.—Although he has, hitherto, felt "the profoundest indifference" to the whole subject, yet, we predict that he will not long continue in such a neutral state; that his heart will warm, by pretty rapid degrees, in relation to the controversy; that his principles and feelings will, at no very remote period, constrain him to quit even the position of Prussian inactivity, which he has now assumed, and urge him to a positive and earnest support of Anti-masonry.

We say this on the presumption that he will persevere in his present determination. If he shall do so; if he shall examine, for himself, while he furnishes his readers with the opportunity to examine, this subject, in its great and wide bearings, facts, which, notwithstanding they have been long perfectly ascertained and published, he is yet ignorant of, will come before his eyes, and give direction to his thoughts, and mix with his sentiments, and stir the best impulses of his soul, which will show him that Antimasonry involves his, and every man's most essential civil rights, the real sovereignty of the laws, and the equal, impartial, uncorrupt administration of all our governments, local and general.—N. Y. Whig.

EXECUTION.—Pursuant to sentence, Diddell Holt was hung at Buffalo, N. Y. on the 21st ult. for the murder of his wife. He exhibited great contrition, and ascribed the uncommon fit of passion in which the act was committed to an intemperate course of life. He denied any previous malice, up to the moment when the fatal blow was given with a hammer, which he held in his hand for another purpose: but he admitted that he did mean that blow should be mortal, in consequence of the words of strong provocation used by his wife, which he declined mentioning. He stated that remorse instantaneously followed the commission of the act. On the trial, he pleaded guilty; and devoted his time during his imprisonment to preparations for futurity. It is stated that 8000 spectators surrounded the gallows—that seats and stands were let, and booths erected for the sale of ardent spirits—and that much inebriety and confusion prevailed in consequence. The propriety of private executions has another illustration in this shameful exhibition.

Cotton Crop in the United States.—The growth of Cotton, a staple altogether of the Southern States, and of which he said *en passant*, the culture is protected by a duty on foreign cottons of 3 cents per lb., has been so rapidly progressive for some years past, as almost to exceed belief. When Mr. Jay made his treaty with England in 1794, cotton was not even mentioned in it as an article of American production. In the course of thirty years that is in 1824, the growth of cotton was five hundred and sixty thousand bales. In the present year the crop is 1,038,847 bales!—worth, at an average of 300 lbs. to the bale, and eight cents per lb., twenty-five millions of dollars. Of this quantity the port of New Orleans alone exported, four hundred and twenty-six thousand four hundred and eighty-five bales.