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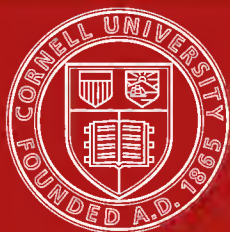


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ACTION  
OF THE  
GRAND LODGE OF MASSACHUSETTS  
*AGAINST*  
SPURIOUS RIGHTS AND DEGREES,  
AND  
IRREGULAR BODIES  
(CALLED MASONIC).



BOSTON:  
PRESS OF ROCKWELL AND CHURCHILL,  
No. 39 ARCH STREET.  
1883.



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GRAND LODGE OF MASSACHUSETTS,  
OFFICE OF THE GRAND MASTER,  
BOSTON, JUNE 29, 1883.

*To the Worshipful Masters, Wardens, and Members of the  
Lodges throughout the Jurisdiction:—*

It is deemed eminently advisable at this time to issue, for the information of the members of the Fraternity in Massachusetts, a statement of the action taken by the Grand Lodge with reference to spurious and irregular degrees.

During the past few years certain parties, assuming to act by authority, have been selling and conferring spurious, so-called “higher,” degrees in various parts of the Commonwealth. These adventurers follow the business from motives solely of private gain, and unfortunately have only been too successful in imposing upon the Brethren; reaping rich harvests from the unscrupulous traffic. A similar trade has sprung up in the irregular conferring of degrees purporting to be identical with those conferred by duly constituted Masonic Bodies recognized by the Grand Lodge. The whole business is calculated to disturb the

harmony of the Fraternity, lower its dignity, and subvert its organization.

The Grand Lodge has watched with a vigilant eye transactions so fraught with danger to the peace and prosperity of the Institution. At the Annual Communication, in 1879, Grand Master Welch called the attention of the Craft to the presence in our jurisdiction of parties who were conferring degrees which they pretended were Masonic, and for which they were receiving from the Brethren large sums of money, especially for those of the "Egyptian Rite of Memphis," so called, whose unscrupulous manager, since expelled from Masonry, was boldly advertising in the public prints for candidates for degrees which he had no legal authority to confer.

The judicious and timely remarks of Grand Master Welch upon this subject doubtless saved many a Brother from imposition, pecuniary loss, and consequent mortification; they also seemed to suppress, for a time, these irregular proceedings.

At the Quarterly Communication in March, 1882, the M.W. Grand Master stated that the same business had been renewed by other parties, who were pushing the sale of spurious degrees, turning them into a source of personal emolument,



thereby bringing discredit upon the Craft. In alluding to the irregular conferring of degrees, he also reminded the Brethren "that the illegitimate effort to confer Masonic degrees, so that persons may receive them through some by-way, speedily and for a small price, is an old artifice that has been put into practice from time to time, as often as the accessions to our ranks seemed to afford a profitable field for the venture ; that these efforts continue till all of the Craft susceptible of being inveigled by them are drawn into the snare, and then are abandoned, and the victims meanwhile are left to struggle with their anomalous position ; to encounter the distrust of their Brethren ; to engage with them, perhaps, in the most bitter, continuous and unhappy struggles for power and precedence ; the end of all which is, and must always be, mortification and enmity in place of that confidence, mutual respect, and harmony which ought ever to characterize our ancient Fraternity."

At the Quarterly Communication in June, 1882, the Grand Lodge, for the purpose of suppressing practices which threatened serious injury to Masonry, adopted an amendment of the Constitutions proposed by Past Grand Master Welch ; and at the recent Communication held June 13,

1883, Section 25 of the amendment was amended, with a view to make it more effective, so that the regulation now stands as follows:—

Part Fifth — Miscellaneous regulations:—

SECT. 24. Whereas, this Grand Lodge recognizes no degrees in Masonry except those conferred under the regulations of the GRAND LODGES of the various States and Territories of the United States and the Governments throughout the world; and whereas, it admits the following named organizations to be regular and duly constituted Masonic Bodies, namely:—

The General Grand Royal Arch Chapter of the United States; The Grand Royal Arch Chapters of the several States and Territories of the United States, and the Royal Arch Chapters and other Bodies under their jurisdiction; The General Grand Council of Royal and Select Masters of the United States; The Grand Councils of Royal and Select Masters of the several States and Territories of the United States, and the Councils under their jurisdiction; The Grand Encampment of the United States; The Grand Commanderies of the several States and Territories of the United States, and the Commanderies under their jurisdiction; The Supreme Councils of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite for the Northern and Southern jurisdictions of the United States, of which Henry L. Palmer and Albert Pike are M.P. Sov. Grand Commanders, respectively, and the various Bodies under their jurisdiction:—

Now, therefore, it is hereby declared that any Mason who is hereafter admitted, in this jurisdiction, into any other Orders, as Masonic, whether called the Rite of Memphis or by any other name, is acting un-Masonically, and for such conduct

shall be liable to be expelled from all the rights and privileges of Masonry, and shall be ineligible to membership or office in this Grand Lodge.

SECT. 25. Any Mason in this jurisdiction who shall confer, communicate, or sell, or assist in conferring, communicating, or selling, or solicit any one to receive or apply for, any so-called Masonic degree or degrees limited to Freemasons, not hereinbefore recognized or admitted, may be expelled from all the rights and privileges of Masonry.

For the better understanding of the points involved in this legislation, the earnest attention of the Brethren is invited to the printed Proceedings of the Grand Lodge of June, 1882, and June, 1883, extracts from which are appended. The able and exhaustive reports of the committees to whom this subject was referred throw a flood of light upon the merits of the question, whether they touch upon law or policy.

It will be seen that, under the provisions of this enactment, a Brother who in any way compromises himself by connection with this forbidden traffic is guilty of un-Masonic conduct, and is liable to expulsion. The regulation was adopted after the most careful consideration, and is intended to promote the best welfare of the Fraternity. Faithfully observed, it will prove a most valuable safeguard

to the Institution, — one to which it may owe its salvation in future years. Intelligent and well-disposed Brethren will lend no countenance to any infraction of the Grand Constitutions, and they will prefer that the pure stream of Masonry should run through the regular channels, and that men should seek the degrees, not because they are cheap, but because they open the door to privileges of priceless value.

Yours fraternally,

SAMUEL C. LAWRENCE,

*Grand Master.*

Attest: —

*Soreno D. Nickerson.*

*Recording Grand Secretary.*

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[*Extracts from Proceedings of Quarterly Communication,  
March 8, 1882.*]

CAUTION AGAINST SPURIOUS RITES AND DEGREES.

The M.W. Grand Master stated that he felt it to be his duty to allude to a matter of great importance to the Craft, though not altogether new.

It would be remembered, he said, that at the

Annual Communication in 1879, Grand Master Welch called the attention of the Grand Lodge to the presence in our jurisdiction of parties who were conferring degrees which they pretended were Masonic, and for which they were receiving from the Brethren large sums of money, — especially for those of the “Egyptian Rite,” so called, whose unscrupulous manager, since expelled from Masonry, was boldly advertising in the public prints for candidates for degrees which he had no legal authority to confer.

The judicious and timely remarks of Grand Master Welch upon this subject doubtless saved many a Brother from imposition, pecuniary loss, and consequent mortification; they also seemed to suppress, for a time, these irregular proceedings.

But the M.W. Grand Master added that he had received from trustworthy sources information that the management of these rites had been illegally assumed by other parties, who were propagating them throughout the jurisdiction, pushing the sale of these *quasi*-degrees as fast as possible, and turning them into a source of personal emolument, thereby bringing discredit upon the Craft. Hundreds of the Brethren have been inveigled into taking these degrees by plausible representations,

and thousands of dollars have been transferred from their pockets to those of irresponsible adventurers. That these parties, as he had reason to know, are merely speculators, — peddlers of alleged Masonic degrees for purely private gain; that such degrees are spurious and illegitimate, and really worthless to the Brethren who buy them; and that the main and final tendency of the whole thing is to breed jealousies and contentions in the bosom of a Brotherhood now prosperous and harmonious.

He further reminded the Brethren that the illegitimate effort to give and get Masonic degrees through some by-way, speedily, and for a small price, is an old artifice that has been put into practice from time to time, as often as the accessions to our ranks seemed to afford a profitable field for the venture; that these efforts continue till all of the Craft susceptible of being inveigled by them are drawn into the snare, and then are abandoned, and the victims meanwhile are left to struggle with their anomalous position; to encounter the distrust of their Brethren; to engage with them, perhaps, in the most bitter, continuous, and unhappy struggles for power and precedence, the end of all which is, and must always be, mortification and enmity in place of that confidence, mutual

respect, and harmony, which ought ever to characterize our ancient Fraternity.

That the liability of loss to the Brethren, in mere money, is so great, he felt compelled, on this account alone, to give them this information as a word in season for their protection; but especially because many of the most zealous Brethren are liable to be deceived and caught by these specious pretenders, and so become unwarily the instruments of introducing into our councils discord and dissensions.

He particularly cautioned the younger Brethren to guard against being placed in a false position, and to withdraw their countenance from all pretences to the selling or giving away of so-called Masonic mysteries; for the clandestine Masonry hawked about in the market-places, however sweet it may seem in the taking, will be sure to disgust in the end. The older Brethren, remembering the unhappy state of feeling which existed eighteen years ago, from divisions in the Fraternity, will, of all things, deprecate any repetition of such an experience, and will recognize the imperative necessity of warding off this threatening attack upon the harmony and dignity of our beloved Institution.

He further stated that he did not believe that any Brother, who had lately entered into these

spurious organizations, had done so from any lack of fidelity to Masonry, or with any thought of the incongruity of the relations it would occasion; for the spirit that impelled the traffic would not be generally understood, nor its unhappy results fully realized, until the mischief had been done.

He had thus brought the matter before the Grand Lodge, feeling that it was one that deeply concerned the welfare of Masonry. He relied upon the wisdom of the Grand Lodge to take such action as is best calculated to suppress practices which aim a direct blow at the best interests of the Order.

#### PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE GRAND CONSTITUTIONS.

R.W. Charles A. Welch, Past Grand Master, stated that the subject so clearly and forcibly presented by the M.W. Grand Master had for some time engaged the thoughtful and serious consideration of many Brethren; that there could be but one opinion as to the magnitude and dangerous character of the evil complained of; that he was satisfied that prompt and energetic action on the part of the Grand Lodge was necessary for its suppression; and for that purpose he proposed an amendment to the Grand Constitutions.



R.W. Brother Welch forcibly presented the necessity for the proposed action, and the beneficial effect likely to result from it. Similar views were urged in brief and earnest remarks by W. Brother Alfred F. Chapman and the Recording Grand Secretary. Thereupon the Grand Master stated that, under the Constitutions, the proposed amendments would be referred to a committee, communicated to the Lodges, and presented for consideration and action at the Quarterly Communication in June next. The following-named Brethren were selected as the committee on this subject: —

R.W. CHARLES LEVI WOODBURY, Past Deputy Grand Master.

“ WILLIAM SEWALL GARDNER, Past Grand Master.

“ THEODORE C. BATES, Corresponding Grand Secretary.

“ LEANDER M. HANNUM, D.D.G. Master, District No. 2.

W. MERRICK N. SPEAR, Master Pacific Lodge.

“ JAMES K. ODELL, Master Amicable Lodge.

“ ALBRO A. OSGOOD, Master Joseph Webb Lodge.

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[*From Proceedings, June 14, 1882.*]

R.W. Charles Levi Woodbury, in behalf of the committee, submitted the following: —

REPORT ON PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE GRAND CONSTITUTIONS, PART V.—MISCELLANEOUS REGULATIONS.

IN GRAND LODGE, June 14, 1882.

The committee to whom was referred the proposed amendment to the Constitutions report:—

Ancient Free and Accepted Masonry, after centuries of struggle, has extended its fellowship into every country of the globe. In every State its Grand Lodge has the obligation to watch and ward for the cultivation of harmony and union among the Craft, and to protect it against wayward contention, conflicts, dissension, and envy among the members of its Lodges.

The cohesion of Freemasonry is the important object for which Grand Lodges were created, and the end for which their wisdom and prudence ought to be exercised. The Craft cannot be torn and rended by internal conflicts without the whole structure tottering towards its fall.

WHAT ARE MASONIC INSTITUTIONS?

The gravest part of this duty of maintaining the cohesion of Freemasonry devolves upon the Grand Lodge. In this view it inquires what are Masonic Institutions other than the Grand Lodges? They are understood to be regular and duly constituted organizations for the practice of Masonic mysteries, built upon the basis of the Ancient Free and Accepted Masonry, admitting none to initiation who are not already initiated into Masonry under the auspices of a regular Grand Lodge, who are eligible to membership only whilst they retain their Masonic character in such Grand Lodges, and who forfeit it when

expelled from such Grand Lodges. The Grand Lodge does not charter them, regulate their ritual, or prescribe their legislation. So far as they are a Chapter, an Encampment, or a Council, they are independent Bodies. Because they are independent the Grand Lodge must consider whether the allegiance they ask from the Fraternity will be injurious to that due to itself as the sovereign representative of the Fraternity.

The Grand Lodge acts upon such independent Bodies as one nation acts on another, by treaties of fraternity and peace, or by declaring non-intercourse, or by absolute embargo; but on the members of these Bodies within its jurisdiction it acts directly with all the power of the whole of Free and Accepted Masonry of the jurisdiction.

It is only by the tacit or direct consent of the Grand Lodge that such independent Bodies are permitted to seek for initiates or to make proselytes among the Lodges of its jurisdiction, or that any Mason in its allegiance is permitted to enter or remain in the ranks of such a Body. When that is cut off such a Body must die.

When the conduct of such an independent institution disturbs ancient landmarks, or interferes with the policy of the Grand Lodge in a way that jeopardizes the peace, harmony, or interests of her Masonic Fraternity, it is clearly the duty of the Grand Lodge to protect her landmarks and Fraternity adequately to the injury menaced, even by denouncing any further recognition of the Body, and by expelling all of her Masons who remain in the offending Body, should such a course be thought necessary.

It is an old and sound doctrine that there is no Mason within the boundary of the State who is not within the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge, and amenable to it for his conduct.

Your committee are a little emphatic on this, that it may be seen that Masonic intercourse and recognition for more than one or two generations have been, and now are, extended by the Grand Lodge to the Chapters, Encampments, and Councils declared by the amendment to be regular, and in our Lodge-rooms their members receive all the privileges of visiting Brethren in good standing. We have often accepted the escort on public occasions of some of these Bodies, have provided accommodations for all of them, and in every way exchanged the courtesies and associations usual between independent Bodies related in a similar manner.

#### MULTIPLICITY OF DEGREES.

It is a serious question whether the multiplicity of self-constituted and secondary degrees that cling to Freemasonry has not already become a grievance in many ways, requiring the regulating hand of the Grand Lodge.

It is claimed by many that this multiplicity distracts the attention of the Brethren, prevents the concentration of their zeal on the practice of Blue Masonry, and impairs the progress of the works of humanity and charity by which Freemasonry strives to perform its social duties; that it takes up too much time to be members of many of the Bodies conferring them; that often the point sought to be illustrated is not of sufficient consequence to justify an organization for the purpose; that money paid for such degrees is wasted by the payer, and of no practical benefit to Freemasonry or to himself.

The force due to these suggestions exerts its energy on the toleration of further additions to the number of these derived and secondary organized rites.

The settled habits of our Fraternity, derived from our wise predecessors, have long encouraged the illustration of certain of its mysteries by organizations now thoroughly incorporated into the system of Masonry, each moving in harmony and unison in its own orbit around the Grand Lodge, regularly as planets move around a central sun.

The recognition in the proposed amendment of the regular and duly constituted character of the Chapter, Commandery, Council, and Scottish Rite, appears just.

The two evils now beginning to afflict Freemasonry are not of their making. One is this hawking of degrees in pseudo Bodies, with new rituals, professing to be Masonic. Second, efforts to establish rivals to Masonic Bodies already in existence, and to wage within our membership a contest with the older and well-established Bodies for recruits to fill their ranks.

The former of these evils is too often set on foot for personal ends, by some restless person, and not unfrequently whose entire object is a mere hawking around of pretended degrees to raise money for personal ends, — a bogus operation to plunder the unwary among the Craft.

In the rituals of the legitimate and ancient Bodies, all of true Masonry that can be taught by ritual is already included. Should it be urged that “new rituals” imply new lights in Masonry, the reply is obvious, that as guardians of the ancient landmarks, the Grand Lodge ought to have exercised some judgment on such pretences before they are advertised and inculcated among the Craft as proper objects for Masonic culture or to spend time and money upon.

Heretofore this Grand Lodge has frequently driven off bogus, clandestine, and expelled Masons; has recognized or refused

intercourse with Bodies claiming to be Masonic, and has forbidden association with or visiting such Bodies ; acting not only on considerations founded upon the regularity and legality of such Bodies, but on others drawn from its views of the best Masonic interests of its own members, or from the conduct of the Body in question. How much insidious mischief and matter of evil tendency has been nipped in the bud by timely action !

Nothing can be more derogatory to the generous and unselfish character of Freemasonry than the hawking of degrees for personal gain.

Our honored and respected Grand Master, at the last Quarterly Communication, expressed his views on the hawking of one of these “ new lights ” in this and neighboring jurisdictions : —

“ Hundreds of Brethren have been inveigled into taking these degrees, by plausible representations, and thousands of dollars have been transferred from their pockets to those of irresponsible adventurers. That these parties, as he had reason to know, were speculators, — peddlers of Masonic degrees for purely private gain ; that such degrees are spurious and illegitimate, and really worthless to the Brethren who buy them ; and that the main and final tendency of the whole thing is to breed jealousies and contentions in the bosom of a Brotherhood now prosperous and harmonious.”

Grand Master Welch, in 1879, also warned the Brethren against unscrupulous parties who were attempting to spread illegitimate degrees in this jurisdiction ; but a warning is not always equally effective with an order of the Grand Lodge, on those whose hearts are not single in the good of the Rite, and further inaction by the Grand Lodge will prove injurious to the real interests of Freemasonry. Brethren zealous and inexperienced, without knowledge of the real

character of that which they are invited to partake in, often only too late realize they have been led astray.

Counterfeit organizations, claiming to be the legitimate and well-known Bodies whose names they usurp, have lately sprung up and been pressed by adroit schemers on Blue Lodge Masons with large appeals to the cheapness of the degrees they offer.

Counterfeits are never cheap to the honest taker. The unwary do not recognize that this cheapness is because the parties offering the degree know it to be bogus, and that it will not enable the receiver to gain admittance into the great and respectable Masonic Fraternity it falsely purports to represent. Nor do they, till through a bitter experience, learn that the very receiving of such a degree renders them suspect and impure to the genuine Order throughout the world.

Ought the Grand Lodge to permit its Lodges to be profaned by the play of schemes like these?

The longer the players can act with impunity the bolder will become their play, and the more numerous will be their victims.

At present we have heard of two such counterfeits ; but impunity and success will inspire schemers to establish rival Bodies to all the Rites recognized by the Masonic Fraternity, and pour into every Asylum and Chapter seeds of schism and division to promote their deluding arts, and spread in these organizations, as well as in our Lodge-rooms, faction and rivalry, until discord, broil, and hatred, shall replace peace and harmony among the Craftsmen. Masonic legislation in every country of the world has determined that the interest of all legitimate Masonic Bodies is to preserve the peace and the forums of the jurisdiction of each from invasion or rivalry. In the harmony thus created lies the

strength of Masonry. During all of the past century the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts has been the foremost in pressing these noble principles of reciprocal good-will and of Masonic obligation to our neighbors.

Your committee report that in their consideration there is a Masonic duty on this Grand Lodge as representatives of all the Masons of Massachusetts :—

1. To protect the Bodies of the Rite recognized as regular and duly constituted from injury or invasion fomented in or proceeding from this jurisdiction, and for this purpose to protect our Lodges from becoming forums whence schism, rivalry, or invasion of the well-defined spheres of such Masonic organizations shall be propagated or recruited.

2. To prevent our Lodges from being disturbed or distracted by the agitation within them of unfriendly designs against regular Masonic institutions existing in recognized friendly relations to this Grand Lodge.

3. To protect the Lodges from the entry of causes of discord and contention in their midst, and to protect the Craftsmen against impostors and imposition attempted in the name and disguise of Masonry.

4. To discourage and repress un-Masonic conduct towards Brother Masons, and to preserve the just and upright righteousness of the Freemasonry practised in Massachusetts.

Who, having the option before him, would prefer to subject the strength of his Lodge to the rending force of faction and discord, rather than relieve it by prudent measures of such strains? Every member living in this State of the regular Bodies threatened belongs to some one of our Lodges. The schismatic, rival, or bogus schemers depend on obtaining recruits from our Lodges for strength and means ; here they carry on their secret



work, and hence the distraction falls mainly on our own Lodges ; here friendships are in danger ; here the collisions will take place, the rage be engendered, Brother be set against Brother, and the harmony of Masonry be crushed by broil, hatred, and faction. This is no imaginary picture. The many among us who recollect the strain brought on the Lodges many years ago in consequence of a division in one of the regular Masonic Bodies, very happily long since healed, will not neglect the warnings of our honored Grand Masters against tolerating the persistent effort to create within our Lodges rival and hostile camps.

The good name and safety of Masonry demands that the Grand Lodge, for its own sake, shall stop these unseemly and un-Masonic proceedings, which clearly militate against its own peace and harmony.

The policy of the ancient landmarks excluded discussions on politics and theology from Lodges, in order to promote the fraternal spirit on which the cohesion of Freemasonry has since rested. Until it can be shown that the fraternal spirit has ceased to be desirable, this Grand Lodge must maintain its conservative character, and with a firm and vigorous hand suppress conduct that threatens its cohesion.

Your committee, therefore, report as their conclusion that there is no doubt of the constitutional power of this Grand Lodge to control the intercourse of the Freemasons living within its jurisdiction, with any professed Masonic Body, either within or without the jurisdiction ; nor is there a doubt of the authority of this Grand Lodge in its discretion to recognize, or refuse recognition to, or even to declare clandestine or illegal, any organization that may claim to be Masonic in its character. These powers have been too often exercised within historical periods to be doubtful now.

Your committee have carefully considered the proposed amendment to the Constitutions, and in their opinion it is adequate to curb the evils against which it is directed. Doubtless the intention of the mover was that the prohibition in it should regulate the future action of Masons, after its passage, and not their past; the committee have therefore changed it by adding the adverb "hereafter" to make this distinct.

The Masonic Bodies, of which the amendment reaffirms the regular and duly constituted Masonic character, are widely known in the Fraternity as having long and loyally coöperated with this Grand Lodge in useful Masonic work.

Doubtless there are some other Masonic degrees in use, to a small extent, not so well known among the Fraternity, which are not liable to the imputations of fraud or intrusion on the field of other degrees. Should the Grand Lodge adopt the pending amendment it will then, more properly than now, be in the power of such Bodies to have their claim for recognition presented to, considered, and determined by the Grand Lodge. Your committee has not prejudged or prejudiced them.

Your committee report the amendment in the same draft in which it was referred, with the exception that in Section 24, after the words "it is hereby declared that any Mason who is" the word "hereafter" ought to be inserted.

Respectfully submitted,

CHARLES LEVI WOODBURY,  
WILLIAM S. GARDNER,  
THEODORE C. BATES,  
LEANDER M. HANNUM,  
MERRICK N. SPEAR,  
JAMES K. ODELL,  
ALBRO A. OSGOOD,

*Committee.*

Upon motion of W. John L. Stevenson the report was accepted.

The question being upon the adoption of the amendment as proposed by the committee, W. Alfred F. Chapman, Proxy for Zetland Lodge, of Boston, addressed the Grand Lodge in opposition to the amendment.

Past Grand Master Welch then spoke substantially as follows : —

**MOST WORSHIPFUL GRAND MASTER :** — I am very happy that a gentleman of the ability of the Brother who has just spoken in opposition to the amendment, has had an opportunity of speaking in favor of this Rite of Memphis, or the two rites now peddled about this State; because I think it is proper that they should be well presented before you. If his argument has failed in any respect, it has failed not from want of ability in the speaker, but from the nature of the cause he has supported.

Let me call the attention of the Brethren to the first section of this amendment, and let us see how far, just in one respect, the remarks of our Brother are well founded. The first part of the first section says in effect that this Grand Lodge recognizes no degrees in Masonry except those that are conferred under the authority of the Grand Lodges of the United States and the other governments of the world. That nobody can disagree with. It then goes on to say that it “admits the following to be regular and duly organized Masonic Bodies.” Of course it became necessary to designate these Bodies in some definite and distinct terms. When he

came to the Supreme Councils, the Brother who drew this amendment described them simply by naming the presiding officers of those organizations. If the gentleman himself had been at the head of one of them his name would have been mentioned, even if he had been the worst fellow in the world, — which I would by no means intimate. The simplest and easiest way to distinguish them was to name the presiding officer. There is the Supreme Council, which is presided over by Bro. Palmer, and that is designated; and there is the Supreme Council presided over by Bro. Albert Pike, and that is designated. Their territories are separate and distinct. They may each “travel twenty thousand miles,” for aught I know, in the exercise of their duties; as the Most Worshipful Grand Master of this State has done during the last year, although not at the expense of this Grand Lodge. Nevertheless the object of putting in these names was simply to designate the Supreme Councils intended to be referred to. I did not mean, as the drawer of this resolution, to say a word in favor of Bro. Albert Pike; but I thought, if his name was used, there could be no mistake as to the Body described; certainly that was proper, and no one, I think, can find fault with it.

For myself, Most Worshipful, I take but little interest in these *upper* organizations. I presented this amendment for the good of this Grand Lodge. I care no more about the *upper* associations than I am bound in duty to care, because I happen to be a member of them. But I really think the whole virtue of Masonry exists in this branch of the Institution, and a great part of its social pleasure is to be found in the Commandery.

Now, then, the simple question is, — dismissing Bro. Pike

as having no connection with it, — the simple question is, Does any necessity exist for passing this law ; and if there is a necessity for it, is it proper ?

The Brother himself has referred to the year 1862. There are members present who are older in Masonry than I am, who can tell you that great trouble arose in this Grand Lodge from the difficulties he has referred to. I wish to guard against a repetition of those difficulties, which I wish had never existed. My great object is to prevent any dissensions which may arise in the higher Bodies, as they are called, coming down into this Grand Lodge, as they did in 1862. You will find that whenever a difficulty arises there, and rival Bodies are organized, the difficulty will ascend, or descend, — whichever we may call it, — and torment the Grand Lodge. I look upon this Grand Lodge as the head of Masonry in this Commonwealth, and the Grand Master as the head of the Grand Lodge. Whatever you determine in this matter will settle the question as to these degrees. Discord will cease. The men who are hawking and peddling them, whether for money or any other purpose, will give it up as a bad job, and we shall retain the good-will and happiness and comfort which we now enjoy. But if we do not interfere we shall surely have trouble here. That is the reason why I ask you to recognize certain Bodies, and no others. You have recognized and do recognize them. This very Temple is used by them. You allow certain Chapters, Councils, and Commanderies to meet in this Temple. It is perfectly proper, as the report has said much better than I can, for the Grand Lodge, as the head of Masonry in Massachusetts, to say what shall be and what shall not be the character of its Masons.

I should care nothing about the Rite of Memphis, or who took its degrees and paid their money to an individual, if I

were not afraid that good members of this Grand Lodge might be taken in. I know one member, whom I esteem very highly, who has been taken in. It is because I want to prevent that, and keep this Grand Lodge pure, that I presented this resolution. Many of the difficulties we have encountered in Masonry have come from such proceedings. There always will be bad Masons, ambitious men, mercenary men, who will get up degrees and peddle them about. This Grand Lodge and the three degrees have never brought any discredit upon Masonry. It is these outside Bodies which have done it. If they quarrel, let us exclude the quarrel from our borders, and let us say that these people may quarrel as much as they please, but, having given our sanction to certain organizations, we will not give it to any others.

My Brother talks about 101 degrees. It is just that that makes us ridiculous. The trouble is, people wonder about these *upper degrees*, — these 90 or 101 degrees, — and that brings us into discredit. The three degrees, which are the true degrees in Masonry, never brought us into discredit, and never will, if you keep the lines pure.

R.W. Brother Welch here called for the reading of some of the letters which had been received by the Recording Grand Secretary in relation to the proposed amendment.

The Grand Secretary said: —

Most Worshipful Grand Master: Soon after this amendment was presented I began to receive letters from different quarters, inquiring about it, — its scope and object, — and ex-

pressing opinions in regard to its value. One of the first received was from Brother Euoch T. Carson, of Cincinnati, who is well known to the Brethren as a most diligent and devoted Masonic student, who possesses one of the most valuable Masonic libraries in existence, and who has given much attention to what are called the "higher degrees." He says: —

LETTER OF BROTHER E. T. CARSON.

I thank you for calling my attention to the proposed amendment to the Constitutions of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts in relation to spurious Masonic systems, grades, etc. Your Grand Master puts the case in most elegant and forcible style, and I hope you may succeed in adopting the proposed rule, though I anticipate that you will encounter stubborn opposition.

Our Grand Lodge adopted a resolution, more than thirty years ago, against the conferring of side degrees in Ohio, and that resolution has kept out of Ohio all those Masonic charlatans who peddle the "Eastern Star," "Heroine of Jericho," "Master Mason's Daughter," etc., etc.

Then our Grand Commandery has substantially such a law as the one proposed, and it has done us a "power of good." It is the duty of the Grand Bodies to protect the less-informed Brethren from being preyed upon by those infernal Masonic buzzards who are continually on the alert to turn an "*honest penny*" by selling so-called Masonic degrees.

If Massachusetts adopts this rule it will give the idea a start and a standing that will ultimately result in much good to genuine, honest Masonry.

Truly and fraternally yours,

E. T. CARSON.

LETTER FROM J. P. C. COTTRILL, Esq., PAST GRAND  
MASTER OF WISCONSIN.

The first difficulty we had in Wisconsin concerning these outside Bodies, claiming to be Masonic and yet out of the pale, was in 1870. Then certain Knights Templar concluded to unite with the Rite of Memphis. It is, of course, a perfectly spurious concern, not Masonic or known to Masonry. I was offered their rituals free several years ago by Harry J. Seymour, of New York, he understanding that I was a 32° Mason. I declined his offer. The action of our Grand Commandery about it is found on p. 46, Proceedings of 1870. Further action was had. See Grand Commandery Proceedings, 1872, pp. 53 and 56; 1873, p. 12. This squelched the Rite of Memphis business.

In 1875 the Eastern Star business broke out here while I was Grand Master. I effectually broke that up. See my address to the Grand Lodge, in its Proceedings for 1875, p. 11. You will observe that I reported that your Grand Lodge, in 1871, took similar action, and my decision was based in part upon that action. I hope you will suppress all these spurious concerns, and that your Constitutional amendment may be adopted. A Masonic Grand Lodge has, in my opinion, the clear right to prevent, by discipline, if necessary, the uniting by Masons with spurious Masonic Bodies, or Bodies calling themselves Masonic without authority, and to declare and determine just what are, and just what are not, regularly constituted Masonic Bodies.

Yours fraternally,

J. P. C. COTTRILL.



LETTER FROM BRO. R. F. GOULD, AUTHOR OF "THE  
FOUR OLD LODGES."

Here in England we — *i.e.*, the Grand Lodge — affect not to know anything about degrees outside the Royal Arch. No Mason can wear any insignia in Lodge or Chapter beyond that of Royal Arch.

Of late years the influence of "high degree" Brethren has increased, owing chiefly, no doubt, to the Prince of Wales being one of that class; but although our Craft rulers are nearly all (*i.e.*, in the leading positions) members of what is termed the A. and A. Rite, the avoidance of public displays, processions, etc., in this country, results in no clashing occurring.

For my own part, though opposed very strongly, on principle, to any extension of the Masonic system, I must admit that our leading 33° men are most earnest and devoted Masons.

D. Murray Lyon gives some facts respecting the introduction of the "high degrees" into Scotland. See his invaluable "History of the Lodge of Edinburgh (Mary's Chapel), No. 1."

In Ireland, I believe, the Grand Master is always the head of all kinds of degrees.

For my own part, I have been ever of opinion that if we can *adopt* Masonic children, so equally can we *adopt* Masonic ancestors, and if the thirty-third degree, by any process of reasoning, can be termed Masonic, so, in a similar fashion, can the Ancient Mysteries.

According to my view the so-called "high degrees" are pernicious. Still many people think otherwise, and ours, like yours, is a free country!

In great haste, yours truly and fraternally,

R. F. GOULD.

LETTER FROM BRO. J. G. FINDEL, AUTHOR OF **THE**  
**"HISTORY OF FREEMASONRY."**

Your friendly communications and the amendments to your Grand Lodge Constitutions I have received, and was very much rejoiced. It is a step in the right way. Under the present circumstances I must also approve the moderate, prudent, and careful mode in which the Grand Lodge is moving.

Relating to your questions I can inform you that there is no Grand Lodge in Germany, except the Grand Country Lodge of Germany (Swedish Rite), at Berlin, which has *as such* any control over higher degrees. The Grand Lodge of the Sun, at Bayreuth (Bavaria); that of Concord, at Darmstadt; the Eclectic Union, of Frankfort; that of Saxony, of Hamburg and Royal York, at Berlin, — *i.e.*, six Grand Lodges of Germany, — do not acknowledge at all any higher degree or practise any. They are *only* Symbolic Grand Lodges, and their subordinate Lodges work only in the three blue, or ancient degrees, in which, to our conviction, Masonry is contained and finished. There is no step higher than to be a Master Mason.

The Grand Lodge of the Three Globes, at Berlin, has, besides the Grand Lodge, a Scottish Directory, with some so-called Scottish degrees. But these higher degrees, separated from Grand Lodge, have not the significance of higher degrees, but serve only as a mode of information and instruction. Many subordinate Lodges of the Grand Lodge of the Three Globes do not cultivate these Scottish degrees.

The essence of the Swedish Rite (Grand Country Lodge of Germany), with nine degrees, you may find described in my "History of Freemasonry." Till now it was the only Rite practised in Sweden, Denmark, and Berlin; but at present

there is a movement going on in Norway to put it aside and to come back to pure, ancient Masonry, with its three degrees. The Grand Lodge of the Three Globes, which has some instructing Scottish degrees, has, nevertheless, concerning the so-called Grand Constitutions of the Scottish Rite of thirty-three degrees, declared that they are "the grand lie of the Order."

I suppose you have in your Library the English edition of my "History of Freemasonry." There you may find all you want. No higher degree of any name can prove its usefulness, or any legitimate, historical source from which it has sprung. All higher degrees are a pious fraud and humbug. Your Grand Lodge will do a great service to the Craft when it stops the movement for higher degrees.

The Grand Lodge of Switzerland, "Alpina," has also none of these degrees, and works only in the three degrees; also the Grand Lodge of Hungary.

Hoping that these notes may be in some way useful to you, I send you, for your Grand Lodge, the best wishes, and I am

Most fraternally yours,

J. G. FINDEL.

**LETTER FROM THE DISTINGUISHED MASONIC AUTHOR AND HISTORIAN, BRO. WILLIAM JAMES HUGHAN, PAST SENIOR GRAND DEACON OF THE GRAND LODGE OF ENGLAND.**

I see that your Grand Lodge is to consider the question of the "higher degrees," as they are sometimes called, on the 14th prox.; so I send you a brief account of the laws and customs in relation thereto, prevalent in England, Ireland, and Scotland.

1. The Grand Lodge of England, established in 1717, reeognized no degrees beyond the "Master Mason," until December, 1813, when, for the sake of harmony and union, it agreed to adopt the "Royal Arch," as the concluding part of the *third* degree (not as a fourth), which was so warmly adopted by the *seceders* or "Ancients," from their origin, about 1750, and, as you know, united then with the latter Body. Thereafter we have had but the one Grand Lodge in this country, the York Grand Lodge, and its offshoot in London, having previously expired.

The "Articles of Union" provided: "II. It is declared and pronounced that pure Ancient Masonry consists of three degrees, and no more, viz., those of the Entered Apprentice, the Fellow Craft, and the Master Mason, including the Supreme Order of the Holy Royal Arch. But this Article is not intended to prevent any Lodge or Chapter from holding a meeting in any of the degrees of the Orders of Chivalry, according to the Constitutions of the said Orders." (Hughan's Masonic Register, 1878, p. 15.)

The first part of this declaration is to be found in the present "Book of Constitutions" (1873), as introductory to the first of the Rules. The *second* portion it is not easy now exactly to understand, and I must say it is rather freely explained to mean *all* the degrees termed Masonic, other than the first *three* and the Royal Arch, which were working in A.D. 1813.

Taking the example set by our chief Brethren, or at least very many of them, there are virtually *four* Masonic organizations *quasi* recognized by the Grand Lodge, *but not actually so*, and nothing is allowed to be worn in the Grand Lodge, or any subordinate Lodge, which appertains to degrees, other than those allowed by the Grand Lodge, viz.: the three degrees,

including the Royal Arch. I much lament the puerile rage after useless *pseudo*-Masonic decorations.

(a.) Grand Lodge Mark Master Masons,<sup>1</sup> of whom the Lord Henniker is the Grand Master, and of its Past Grand Masters may be named the Earl of Carnarvon, Pro. G.M. of England, the Earl of Lathom, the Dep. G.M. of England, and several Provincial Grand Masters; the present Grand Secretary of England being a Past Grand Mark Warden, and just lately H.R.H. Prince Leopold has been enrolled as a Past Grand Mark Master.

Other degrees are included in a "Grand Council of the Allied Masonic Degrees," under the wing of the Mark Grand Lodge, such as the Royal and Select Masters, and other still more modern arrangements.

(b.) The Supreme Council of the A. and A. Rite, 33°, etc. Of this Body, the Grand Master of England (H.R.H. the Prince of Wales) is a Grand Patron, and his two Royal and Masonic Brothers are Honorary Members. The Earl of Carnarvon, Pro. Grand Master, is a Past Grand Commander; the present chief being the Dep. G.M., the Earl of Lathom, and I believe all the members of the Supreme Council are Past or present Officers of the Grand Lodge.

(c.) The United orders of the Temple and Malta. H.R.H. the Grand Master of England is the Grand Master of this Body for England, Ireland, and Canada. The subordinate Bodies, as you are aware, are called "Great Priories," that for England having the Earl of Lathom for its Great Prior, and the G. Sec. of the Grand Lodge (Colonel S. H. Clerke)

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<sup>1</sup> The Mark is not adopted by the Royal Arch in England, which is the only country that drops the degree, and so is the only country that has a Mark *Grand Lodge*.

is next in rank as Great Sub-Prior. Many of its Provincial Priors are connected officially with the Grand Lodge as in *a* and *b*.

(*d.*) Grand Imperial Council of the Knights of Rome and Red Cross of Constantine. This Society has Sir Francis Burdett, Prov. G.M. of Middlesex and Past G. Warden of England, as its Grand Sovereign, and the Earl of Lathom, Dep. G.M., and other Provincial Grand Masters, are among its members and officers.

2. SCOTLAND. — The Grand Lodge does not recognize any degrees but the three *first* and the *Mark* though many of its chief members are connected with Bodies similar to the foregoing. Past G. Master Sir M.R. Shaw-Stewart is First G. Principal of the R.A., and the G. Master, the Earl of Mar, is Second G. Principal. Past G. Master J. Whyte Melville is G. Commander of the Supreme Council 33°, Governor of the Royal Order and Grand Master of the Temple; the Earl of Kintore, a Prov. G. Master, being at the head of the Red Cross.

The recognition of the Mark degree is a late affair, but chiefly owing to so many old Craft Lodges working the ceremony.

3. IRELAND. — This Grand Lodge differs from the other two, in actually recognizing the Royal Arch, the Temple, the Rose Croix (which is a separate Body) and the Supreme Council 33°, and allows of *no other organization*, save its own.

28. The Grand Lodge strictly prohibits, as unlawful, all assemblies of Freemasons in Ireland, under any title whatever, purporting to be Masonic, not held by virtue of a warrant or constitution from the Grand Lodge, or from one of the other Masonic Grand Bodies recognized by and acting in Masonic union with it. — *Laws, 1875*, p. 11.

It also provides that any Brother under its jurisdiction who shall take part in such illegal assemblies "*shall be liable to suspension, or such other penalty as Grand Lodge may think fit.*"

Although it thus admits the legality, so to speak, of the R. A., K.T., and A. and A. Rite, it enacts that "no member of the Grand Lodge, or visitor thereto, shall be permitted to wear any jewel, medal, or device, belonging to any Order or Degree beyond that of Master Mason, in which, however, the jewel of a Past Master is considered to be included" (p. 6), just as, I may say, it is in England and Scotland.

Now surely these Bodies are enough, and in fact *too much* in many respects, as the Supreme Council 33° might fairly be worked to include them all. As to the "Swedenborgian Rite," the "Rite of Memphis," and the "Ancient and Primitive Rite," and other absurd and pernicious organizations, I wish they were all *decently buried*.

Yours fraternally,

WM. J. HUGHAN.

After the reading of these letters the discussion was resumed; Bro. Warner W. Carpenter, Junior Warden of Monitor Lodge, of Waltham, addressing the Grand Lodge in opposition to the amendment. To him Bro. Bicknell replied as follows:—

#### REMARKS OF W. BRO. Z. L. BICKNELL.

MOST WORSHIPFUL GRAND MASTER:—I suppose we are all getting information from this discussion. As I understand this question, this Grand Lodge does not propose to deal with

any Body, unless it is claimed that to be Masons shall be one of the qualifications to membership in the institution proposed to be organized. Now, in regard to an allusion just made to the Methodist Conference, I think the Methodist Conference would have been right if the Oddfellows had claimed that no man should be admitted to membership unless he belonged to the Methodist Church. But they do not claim any such thing. They do not claim that the Methodist Church should recognize them and be their sponsors.

It was said by the last speaker that we have no right to interfere, and that these "higher Bodies" would not submit to any interference by this Grand Lodge. I would like to ask in what condition a member of one of those Bodies would be if expelled from this? Where would he be? Would he not be expelled from every "higher Body" also? Do they not recognize that? I have always understood so. Now I think that we *have* something to do with any organization over whose members we have that power. I think we *have* something to do with any organization that is gotten up by any individual, or clique, claiming that its members shall be members of this Body or this Masonic Institution — Master Masons. That is my idea.

#### REMARKS OF R.W. BRO. ISAAC HULL WRIGHT.

MOST WORSHIPFUL GRAND MASTER: — It appears to me that that address which has been made to us on this occasion by the Brother from Waltham [in opposition to the amendment] is delivered at the wrong time and in the wrong place. When, in a Blue Lodge, he was kneeling at the altar, and had propounded to him the solemn obligation taken by every Brother when he is made a Master of the third degree, that speech, declaring independence, freedom of judgment and freedom of action from



the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, would perhaps have been in order, and I think it would have terminated his progress at that point. He has forgotten, it appears to me, the obligation he took upon himself then. It would seem to be too late now to go back upon the avowals and admissions he then made, and undertake to advocate such a doctrine as he has most eloquently and thoroughly elaborated in his speech on this occasion.

Sir, as I was reading a daily newspaper not long ago, I came across the following advertisement, which I cut out for the purpose of inquiry, as it was the first I had heard of the subject: —

**Independent Grand Lodge F. & A. M., of Mass.**

**A**N Independent Grand Lodge for this State, **LOYAL TO THE FIRST THREE DEGREES ONLY**, will be organized **WEDNESDAY, June 21, 1882**, provided the present Grand Lodge adopts **THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT** to its Constitution; 1,000 good men are already pledged. Master Masons in good standing, who desire to become charter and life members, may address in confidence, "P. 246," Herald Office.

I do not know whether my brother from Waltham is one of that 1,000 or not; but, sir, if this is the commencement — if this is what we see in the green tree, what shall we see in the ripe and mature tree of opposition to the Masonry of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts? I, for one, think that little advertisement preaches as strongly in favor of sustaining the position assumed by your committee in their unanimous report as anything any one could say.

**REMARKS OF R.W. BRO. EDWIN WRIGHT.**

**MOST WORSHIPFUL GRAND MASTER: —** I desire to direct attention to the opening of the speech of the Brother from

Waltham. I allude to the broad ground of independent thought which he assumed under the Constitution, by the guidance and government of God. I want to call attention to the fact that a few years ago certain citizens used that freedom guaranteed by the Constitution a little too far, and they were capitally punished. A war was instituted, in which they perished upon the battle-field. I want to call attention to the fact that, by the exercise of that identical freedom of opinion, one of our fellow-citizens, claiming that precise right, to-day stands sentenced to be executed on the thirtieth of the present month. In other words, there is a freedom of opinion which amounts to treason to the government and everything else; and the government defines how far the citizen may go, what citizenship shall consist of, what he may say and do. So there may be a treason to Freemasonry, to this Grand Lodge, and we are now defining by law what shall constitute treason. When Brother Masons reach that point in free thought that it becomes treason to Freemasonry, then they will be subject to the penalty which this amendment provides, which we ought to pass, and which is designed for our own protection. It is an amendment for the preservation of our own personal Masonic character — the very centre and heart of our Masonic character. It is easy for a man to run through all the contortions which men can devise, and to become so loose and unsettled that he cannot exercise the virtues of Freemasonry. A man may become so dissipated that he cannot be a Mason. We have a right to pronounce how far he may go in that direction.

It seems to me this amendment goes, as my Brother Welch has said, straight to the purity of our members and what shall protect them. I think the suggestions which have been made

by the Brother from Waltham strongly indicate that we have a right to define what shall be treason and what shall be loyalty to Masonry in Massachusetts.

REMARKS OF R.W. SERENO D. NICKERSON.

MOST WORSHIPFUL GRAND MASTER:—I desire to say a single word upon this subject. I believe it to be the most important question which has come before the Grand Lodge for many years, and I deem the Grand Lodge exceedingly fortunate in having it presented in the way in which it has been presented. Both Brother Hughan and Brother Gould have noted the fact that the chief officers of the Grand Lodge of England are active members of all the other Masonic organizations which have any standing in that country, and both Brethren bear testimony to the fact that those officers are “most earnest and devoted Masons.” In like manner the chief officers and the most active permanent members of this Grand Lodge are among the most zealous and active members of the Bodies conferring what are called the “high degrees,” and I think we shall all admit that they also are “most earnest and devoted Masons.” No one can question their knowledge as to the Masonic character of those organizations, or their devotion to the best interests of the whole Fraternity. Surely none of us can doubt the sincere, unqualified, disinterested devotion to the interests of Masonry in general, and of this Grand Lodge in particular, of our present Grand Master, or his immediate predecessor. But it is these very Brethren who have presented this amendment, and urge its adoption.

We have heard it said that the Grand Lodge has nothing to do with anything but the three degrees in Masonry. I do not

think any greater Masonic heresy could be proclaimed. What is the Grand Lodge? It is the representative of the whole Fraternity. It is nothing more nor less than the Masters and Wardens of the Lodges throughout the Commonwealth. In their hands rests all the power of this Grand Lodge, and for the last fifteen or twenty years each of our Grand Masters has striven to impress this doctrine upon the minds of the Brethren, and has urged upon the Lodges the importance of being represented in Grand Lodge and properly discharging their duties here, because they are responsible for the action of the Grand Lodge. Great and special pains have been taken to secure a full representation of the Lodges to-day. Now, who is to say — who should say — what is Masonry, and what is not, if not the representatives of the whole Fraternity, — the Masters and Wardens of the Lodges? Where can we rest that power more safely than in their hands? It is an authority I trust will be maintained forever, in this jurisdiction at least. I will not admit the authority of any other Body than the Grand Lodge to control and regulate our opinions as to what is Masonry and what is not. We are citizens, it is true, and we have our rights under the Constitution. But if there is any conflict between the Constitutions of Freemasonry and the Constitution of the United States — which I by no means admit — but if there is any such conflict, we have deliberately waived any rights which may be affected when we came into the Masonic Fraternity. Every one of us, as R.W. Bro. Wright has said, has taken a solemn obligation at the altar of Freemasonry to stand to and abide by the particular regulations of the Grand Lodge under whose jurisdiction we may reside, — not this Grand Lodge, but any Grand Lodge under which we may be located. I think the

Brethren should carefully consider this important question; that they should satisfy themselves whether or not there is any other organization which could be considered to have control of Masonic degrees.

The Brother from Waltham told us he could find nothing in the Constitutions which would warrant this amendment. In Part I., Article IV., Section 1, he will find the Grand Lodge described as "the snpreme Masonic authority in this Commonwealth." In Section 2 of the same Article it is declared that the Grand Lodge has "the inherent power of investigating, regnulating, and deciding all matters relating to the Craft"; and in Part IV., Art. 1, Section 7, the Grand Lodge is described as an assembly in which "all the powers of the Fraternity reside." Now, what power has the Grand Lodge if it cannot say what is Masonry, and what is not? Are we at the mercy of the sweet will of any Brother who may choose to start a Masonic degree? If it is not Masonry, the Grand Lodge has nothing to do with it. The addition of the word Masonic — the building upon the foundation of the Master Mason — brings the new organization under the control of the Grand Lodge. It seems to me that it must be clear to every Brother who will consider the subject calmly and dispassionately that the Masters and Wardens of Lodges, — the representatives of the whole Fraternity, — are the rightful depositories, and the only safe depositories, of this great power, which clearly must rest *somewhere*.

There is another important consideration connected with this subject. There are, it is said, some hundreds of degrees called Masonic. I have even heard the number stated as high as one thousand. Only a few months ago a Brother residing in an obscure village in Canada sent me a cirncular, setting forth the

different Masonic "Rites" practised there, giving the names of the officers of the various Bodies, with all their high-sounding and most un-Masonic titles. By that document it appeared that, without going outside of his own little precinct, any Brother, who had an "unbounded stomach" for such stuff, might take, if I recollect rightly, *two hundred and sixty-five degrees!* May we not fairly ask, how much of this tomfoolery can the Masonic Institution stand? Is it not in a fair way to be overwhelmed with ridicule and contempt? Is there ever to be an end to the manufacture and sale of so-called Masonic degrees? If there is ever to be a stop put to this business, what power can or should do it but the Grand Lodge itself?

The M.W. Grand Master put the question upon the adoption of the amendment proposed by the committee, — to insert the word "hereafter," — and it was carried unanimously in the affirmative.

Upon the question of the adoption of the amendment as amended, the Grand Master ordered the roll of officers, permanent members, and Lodges to be called, whereupon the whole number of votes given was three hundred and forty-seven, of which three hundred and nineteen were in the affirmative, and twenty-eight in the negative. The Grand Master accordingly declared the  
• amendment adopted.

[*From Proceedings, June 13, 1883.*]

REPORT ON AMENDMENT TO GRAND CONSTITUTIONS.

R.W. Charles Levi Woodbury, in behalf of the committee, submitted the following report: —

The undersigned, a committee appointed to report upon an Amendment to the Grand Constitutions, Part Fifth, Section 25, proposed by R.W. Bro. Weleh, have duly considered the subject, and respectfully submit the following report: —

The section sought to be amended, is an appendix to Sect. 24, and must be considered in its relations to that section in the Miscellaneous Regulations. That section provides as follows: —

“SECT. 24. Whereas, this Grand Lodge recognizes no degrees in Masonry except those conferred under the regulations of the GRAND LODGES of the various States and Territories of the United States and the Governments throughout the world; and whereas it admits the following-named organizations to be regular and duly constituted Masonic Bodies, namely: —

“The General Grand Royal Arch Chapter of the United States; The Grand Royal Arch Chapters of the several States and Territories of the United States, and the Royal Arch Chapters and other Bodies under their jurisdiction; The General Grand Council of Royal and Select Masters of the United States; The Grand Councils of Royal and Select Masters of the several States and Territories of the United States, and the Councils under their jurisdiction; The Grand Encamp-

ment of the United States; The Grand Commanderies of the several States and Territories of the United States, and the Commanderies under their jurisdiction; The Supreme Councils of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite for the Northern and Southern jurisdictions of the United States, of which Henry L. Palmer and Albert Pike are M. P. Sov. Grand Commanders respectively, and the various Bodies under their jurisdiction:—

“Now, therefore, it is hereby declared that any Mason who is hereafter admitted, in this jurisdiction, into any other Orders, as Masonic, whether called the Rite of Memphis or by any other name, is acting un-Masonically, and for such conduct shall be liable to be expelled from all the rights and privileges of Masonry, and shall be ineligible to membership or office in this Grand Lodge.”

The Sect. 25, which is an appendage, is as follows:—

“SECTION 25. Any Mason in this jurisdiction who shall hawk and sell any of the degrees so called, hereinbefore forbidden, calling them degrees in Masonry, may be expelled from all the rights and privileges of Masonry.”

The amendment proposed by R.W. Bro. Welch is as follows:—

“SECT. 25. Any Mason in this jurisdiction who shall confer, communicate, or sell, or assist in conferring, communicating, or selling, or solicit any one to receive, or apply for, any so-called Masonic degree or degrees, limited to Freemasons, not hereinbefore recognized or admitted, may be expelled from all the rights and privileges of Masonry.”

Thus it appears that this Grand Lodge of the Free and Accepted Masons of Massachusetts, by Sect. 24, has determined



there shall be no Masonic intercourse held by its Fraternity and organization, with any Bodies or rites claiming to be Masonic, whose regularity, legality, and Masonic quality have not previously been accepted and confirmed by this Grand Lodge.

Neither Sect. 25, nor its proposed amendment, in any way modifies the Constitutional doctrine of this Grand Lodge thus set out; they merely relate to the measure of punishment to be awarded for certain defined violations of the will and pleasure of this Fraternity in Grand Lodge thus distinctly declared.

As a general proposition it cannot be denied that any Brother of the Fraternity who wilfully violates any Masonic injunction put upon him by competent authority does act “un-Masonically,” and that every one who directly or indirectly aids and abets him in such wilful violation is equally guilty of un-Masonic conduct. It is morally as offensive for a Mason of this Fraternity to propagate and disseminate a forbidden thing among the Brethren, as it is for one of them to receive it from him; and Freemasonry in its general powers is competent to punish such offences.

The power and duty of the Grand Lodge to enforce obedience to its Constitutions by Masonic punishment distinctly appears in Sect. 21, Part V. :—

“A Lodge or Brother offending against any law or regulation of the Craft, or of this Grand Lodge, to the breach of which no penalty is attached, shall, at the discretion of the Grand Lodge, be subject to admonition, suspension, or expulsion.”

This plain language must remove all doubt from every intelligent mind of the power of this Grand Lodge to decree the measure of punishment that shall be awarded for such a Masonic offence.

The intention of the party who violates a Masonic law ought to have weight in awarding the due measure of punishment. It has in the criminal laws of all nations, and Sect. 21, whilst it gives the sword of justice, also enables the Grand Lodge to apply the attributes of mercy whenever there is an honest claim for its exercise.

When obedience to the laws and regulations fails among the Craft, and when the Grand Lodge irresolutely fails to enforce its authority, the Institution will become a rope of sand, and the decay of Freemasonry is at hand.

Your committee, in considering the Amendment and the circumstances which led to its proposal, have thought that a brief review of the principles and precedents for this authority, exercised by this Grand Lodge, would inform the faithful of its solid grounds, and might enable those whose want of such knowledge has made them the prey of designing misrepresentation, to recognize their false position towards the Craft, renounce their errors, and return to their due allegiance to this Grand Lodge.

As far as we can learn, two grounds are urged on Masons to induce them to disobey Section 24 of the Constitutions : that the Grand Lodge has no right to meddle with other Bodies professing to be Masons, and no right to control its Masons as to what other Bodies, professing to be Masonic, they shall enter or associate with ; next, that if they violate the laws and regulations of this Grand Lodge, no power to punish them exists. The error and evil tendency of such opinions will be readily manifest.

The organization of Freemasonry has been the growth of ages. The doctrines are kept true to their original purpose,

and the benefits of Masoury are exclusively reserved to those who have obtained its mysteries in a lawful way and from a lawful source. Within a century and a half its organization has spread into every nation professing to be civilized. A lawful Brother of a legitimate Body of the Institution may go where he will, in foreign countries, with the certainty that he will find Brethren of the Craft who will admit his claims and reciprocate Masonic courtesy. This cosmopolitan Fraternity is created through the Grand Lodges of the Craft in the several States and nations recognizing and reciprocating with each other. The lawful Freemasons of a political State have the Masonic right to form into a Grand Lodge for that political State, and within it to possess the exclusive right to practise Freemasonry and make laws for the government of the Craft at home, and for controlling the intercourse of its Masons with those of foreign countries, or of different Rites.

New Grand Lodges obtain a place in the Masonic Commonwealth by the recognition of the previously existing Grand Lodges, that the applicant has been lawfully organized in a territory which it was lawful for it to occupy, and that it practises the legitimate ancient Masonry and performs its Masonic duties. One quality of a Grand Lodge is its exclusive right to practise the Rite in the territory for which it is recognized.

*Recognition* by other Grand Lodges involves as part of the Masonic compact it implies :—

1. That the aspirant is recognized as the only sovereign power in that territory.
2. That the recognizing powers will not hold intercourse with or countenance any rival grand Body, or any rebellious schism against that Body, in the territory.

3. That they are satisfied and admit the Masonry professed by the aspirant is faithful to the landmarks, and lawfully acquired.

4. That the new Grand Lodge will not innovate on the Rite, that it will respect and maintain the exclusive sovereignty of each of the recognizing Bodies, and affiliate with none as Masons, of the territories of the other Grand Lodges, who are not in full communication with the Grand Lodge thus recognized as the exclusive Masonic authority for the territory its jurisdiction includes.

Freemasonry is thus a Commonwealth of distinct Grand Lodges, pervading the earth in the exercise of its fraternity and charity among its legitimate Brethren, bound together by solemn Masonic treaties.

How is this made effectual, and how are lawful Brethren distinguished from impostors or the unworthy?

It is by very much the same means as intercourse is kept up between different nations, that is, by treaties recognizing each other as Sovereign States, establishing amity between them.

There is a Law of Nations among Grand Lodges to respect the exclusive territorial rights of each other, a system of guarantees against invasions of their territorial rights, and against insurrection or spurious and clandestine Masonry at home.

Where a Grand Lodge breaks its pledge or fails in its duty to another Grand Lodge, the international remedies, of remonstrance, non-intercourse, or withdrawal of the right hand of fellowship, are the means, in the hands of the offended, and of impartial Grand Lodges, of censure, and compelling a return of Masonic harmony.

The weapons of war, the cannon, the sword and the rifle, have no place in our tactics. Like the Congregational churches in their internal organization, the extending of fellowship and the withdrawal of fellowship are the sole means of securing harmony and union; and among the Grand Lodges have been the successful means.

Thus the Grand Lodges, as do the Executive and Senate of the nation, perform the exclusive duty of regulating the foreign Masonic intercourse of their Brethren, with those professing a Masonic character; and whether its decisions favor commerce or non-intercourse the members of the Fraternity are bound by their loyalty to act on the subject-matter as its Grand Lodge shall prescribe.

This great Commonwealth of Sovereign Masonic Bodies, this vast Brotherhood of their respective members, fraternizing in the cause of humanity, and the preservation of the purity of these solemn Masonic doctrines, teachings and rites, in every part of the world, necessarily depend on the power and authority of each of the Grand Lodges to act beyond its own Lodges, and beyond its own territorial limits, on other than its own Masons, and also on its own Masons in their relations to other Bodies or societies or persons professing to be Masonic, whether at home or abroad, alike to acknowledge or denounce their pretensions, and to permit or forbid its members to hold Masonic intercourse therewith.

The Revolutionary Carbonari and Forestieri were denounced as un-Masonic.

This does not interfere with the civil and religious associations and liberty of a Mason; it leaves these as the Old Charges left them; but, as in this Great Republic, whose flag

our Craftsmen helped to plant among the national emblems of civilization and government, every citizen must be faithful to this government, who made him its citizen, in his relation to all others, so the Freemason in Masonic matters has pledged his allegiance to the Craft which made him a Mason, and must take his guidance from its Grand Lodge in Masonic matters.

Referring to the history of this Grand Lodge, these various powers have been so frequently called into action that it would be too tedious to cite every example; a few illustrations must suffice.

In 1802, and for years after, on the title-page of our Annual Proceedings, this Grand Lodge styled itself as "in union with the Grand Lodges of Europe and America." A year or two after that we find a communication from the Grand Lodge of England, notifying us of a Masonic impostor in England with a forged Charter, and warning this Grand Lodge against crediting him or the Charter. She also styled herself in the Preamble as "in union with the Grand Lodges of Europe and America."

#### RECOGNITIONS OR REFUSALS BY THE GRAND LODGE OF MASSACHUSETTS.

1849. — This Grand Lodge, in 1849, when examining the dissensions of the Craft of New York as to regularity, declared, "A Grand Lodge legally formed and organized has, from high antiquity, ample right to bear Masonic rule over those subject to its jurisdiction."

Its resolutions recognized the Grand Lodge over which John D. Willard presided, and further declared, "That we will continue to hold fraternal communication with that Body, and with no other claiming similar authority in that State."

In 1851 the St. John's Grand Lodge subsided into the Grand Lodge of New York.

1853. The Grand Lodge of Massachusetts denounced as illegal and spurious the following organizations in New York : —

1. The Phillips Grand Lodge.

2. St. John's Revived Grand Lodge.

3. Hamburg Grand Lodge.

4. Two spurious Bodies of the Scottish Rite, namely, —

St. John's No. 18, and La Sincerite, No. 2 ; including in all, so far as it was informed, twenty-nine unlawful Lodges.

The Grand Lodge of Massachusetts adopted also protective measures to enforce the non-intercourse between its Brethren and them : —

1. Not to receive any New York visitors who have not a certificate from the recognized Grand Lodge that the visitor was regularly made under its authority ; that he is now in regular standing as a Mason ; that he is no schismatic or disturber of the harmony of the Craft, but true to his allegiance and obedient to the Grand Lodge of New York.

2. Any Mason made in an irregular Lodge must bring a certificate from the lawful Grand Lodge that he has been lawfully “ healed ” and obligated ; that he is now in good and honorable repute and standing as a Mason, obedient to the laws, and acknowledging the jurisdiction and supreme authority of the aforesaid lawful Grand Lodge of New York.

3. The Lodges of Massachusetts, under penalty of forfeiture of Charter, are forbidden to receive as visitors, or hold Masonic intercourse with any persons hailing from New York who do not furnish evidence as above required of their present regularity and good standing as Masons.

Without going into the details, we should state that every Grand Lodge in the Union, with one exception, acted in the same way as the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts did towards the insurgent and clandestine opposition to the exclusive authority of the Grand Lodge of New York, and refused Masonic intercourse with its opposers.

The exceptional Grand Lodge withheld its opinion, and offered to mediate, if all parties would agree to abide by its decision, which they would not do.

1856. *Canada*. — Massachusetts refused to recognize the so-called Grand Lodge of Canada, and voted that “the Lodges and individual Brethren under this jurisdiction are hereby strictly forbidden to hold any Masonic communication with said illegal Body, or with any Lodge, or any individual having any connection therewith.”

Massachusetts recognized the authority of the Louisiana Grand Lodge in the denunciation of the spurious Scottish Masonry of Foulhouze in that State, whom she expelled as un-Masonic from her Lodges whilst and when she recognized the Grand Consistory of the Southern jurisdiction of the United States over the Scottish Rite in that State, and in 1869 declared the Foulhouze Body “a spurious and non-Masonic Body, and that no person claiming to be made a Mason through its authority has any right to claim the fraternal privileges of Freemasonry.”

1865. The Grand Orient of Portugal — Count de Paraty 33° — was officially recognized by the Grand Master.

1867. Recognitions of the Grand Lodge of *Nova Scotia* and after of *New Brunswick*. The former had before been refused because it violated the vested right of another Grand Lodge; but, after remedying this, it was accepted.



*Canada.* — Twice, long troubles about the recognition.

1875. *Italy.* — Numerous difficulties. We refused to recognize seceding Lodges in Palermo, Tuscany, etc. We denounced their recognizing spurious Grand Lodges in the United States.

1869. This Grand Lodge reviewed, and again declared the so-called "Supreme Council of Louisiana, established by one Foulhouze in the territory of the Southern jurisdiction of the United States," a spurious non-Masonic Body, and that no person claiming to be made a Mason through its authority has any right to claim the fraternal privileges of Freemasonry. The Supreme Councils of the Southern and Northern jurisdictions had also declared this Body "spurious and impostors"; so also had the Grand Lodge of Louisiana.

1876. *Ontario.* — This Grand Lodge declared that a Body calling itself the Grand Lodge of Ontario was a "spurious Body," and refused it recognition. This refusal was twice repeated.

1878. *New South Wales.* — This Grand Lodge, on the remonstrance of the Grand Lodge of Scotland, after examination, refused to recognize this so-called Grand Lodge, and still refuses.

1882. *Colon.* — This Grand Lodge refused to recognize any other Grand Lodge in Cuba than the United Grand Lodge of Colon and the Island of Cuba.

The *Grand Orient of Spain*, whose Grand Master was Juan Antonio Perez, was denounced as illegitimate, and unrecognized by this Grand Lodge.

This Juan Antonio Perez is the head also of a so-called Supreme Council of Spain, which is unrecognized by the Northern and Southern Supreme Councils here.

1861. This Grand Lodge recognized the Grand Lodge of Chili as the supreme head of Scottish Masonry in that Republic, and directed its own Lodges there to so recognize it and reciprocate with it.

In 1872, after ten years' experience, it repeated the recognition, and at the same time said that the rites and government were too different for the York Lodges to merge into that Grand Lodge; in 1882 this was still in force.

There are several instances where this Grand Lodge has denounced spurious and clandestine Masonry attempted to be started in this jurisdiction, and forbidden any Masonic intercourse with its members. Prince Hall's successors have frequently been declared "spurious and clandestine," and other Grand Lodges have backed up our declaration.

*Androgynous* Masonry has three times been declared un-Masonic by Grand Masters. Gardner, G.M., said, "They stand before the enlightened Craft either as traitors or impostors." Your committee cite these instances, among an infinitely greater number equally in point, that less experienced Brethren may see that the powers of this Grand Lodge to declare what societies shall be recognized as Masonic by the Brethren of this jurisdiction, and who shall be excluded from their Masonic intercourse, are as old as our Provincial days. The same authority has been held by the other Grand Lodges of the states and nations of the world.

Without making any general search we cite the following sample instances:—

1795. Pennsylvania Grand Lodge, then working all the York degrees, blue and chapter, put down a Grand Chapter started by one Molan, denounced it as spurious, and took away three warrants of Lodges concerned in it.

1798. The Grand Lodge established her own Grand Chapter.

In England and Ireland Chapter Masonry has been and continues under the control of the Grand Lodge. At the union of 1813 the two Grand Lodges, Ancients and Moderns, both recognized the Royal Arch degree as a lawful part and completion of Craft Masonry. They had both practised it before. They also recognized *Templar* Masonry.

Ireland recognizes the Scottish Rite directly; so, Mr. Hughan thinks, does England.

Ireland prohibits, as unlawful, all assemblies of Freemasons in Ireland, under any title whatever, purporting to be Masonic, not held by virtue of a Warrant or Constitution from the Grand Lodge, or from one of the Masonic Grand Bodies, recognized by and acting in Masonic union with it.

1876. The Grand Lodge of Scotland informed the Provincial Grand Master of New Zealand that it did not recognize the Grand Orient of Egypt, and directed him to discountenance the Lodges it had formed in New Zealand, and warn the Lodges under his jurisdiction from having anything to do with it. (The Grand Orient of Egypt dabbled in the Rite of Memphis.)

1858. Louisiana Grand Lodge declared herself the governing power of Symbolic Masonry in that State; *recognized* the Grand Consistory of the Supreme Council for the Southern Jurisdiction of the World, as a lawful Masonic Body; *denounced* all who refused obedience within this jurisdiction to the Grand Lodge, and *expelled* all who adhered to Foulhouze's Council, including their own Grand Secretary.

1875. *Wisconsin* refused to recognize the Grand Orient of Hungary, or a Grand Lodge in the Indian Territory.

1853. *Ohio*. — Resolved that any Brother conferring the so-called side degrees is in all cases a proper subject of Masonic discipline, and Bro. Carson says this stands to this day effectually.

1857 and earlier. *Mississippi*. — The Constitutions forbid the holding of Masonic communication with any Mason residing in Louisiana, unless upon sufficient proof that he belongs to a Lodge under the authority of the Grand Lodge of Louisiana, and upon proof that he does not belong to, or hold any communication with, any Lodge working in that State under authority not derived from that Grand Lodge, or the members or initiates of such Lodge.

1853. *North Carolina* passed similar resolutions as to Louisiana Masons.

1856. *Vermont*. — The Grand Master and the Grand Lodge refused to recognize a Mason made in a clandestine Lodge in Massachusetts, not recognized by this Grand Lodge, or permit him to visit or be received Masonically in that State.

1849. *Maryland* recognized expulsions by the Grand Chapter for moral offences, and enforced them in her Lodges.

1875. *Wisconsin*. — Her Constitution provided, "The conferring in any Lodge of what is known as side degrees is forbidden." The Grand Master refused to permit Eastern Star degrees to be conferred, and the Grand Lodge approved, and directed him stringently to enforce the Constitution and laws against "side degrees."

1860. *Mississippi* denounced the French degree of "Louveton" or Masonic baptism, as un-Masonic.

1866. In the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania, March 5, on the recommendation of the Committee on *Landmarks*, it was resolved, "That no member of the Masonic Fraternity

under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania has the right to visit any assemblage or collection of individuals claiming to be Masons, when such assemblage or meeting is not sanctioned by the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania, and that any communion or Masonic intercourse with such clandestine assemblage or meeting is a plain, palpable, and flagrant violation of the most solemn duties and obligations of the Craft."

The next resolution directed all thereafter violating this to be brought to trial and expelled.

1876. Pennsylvania Committee on Landmarks reported that Masonic recognition be withheld from the Grand Orients of France, Egypt, and others, including the Lodge of Memphis.

1883. Pennsylvania Grand Lodge, March 14, recalled to the attention of the Fraternity her decision of 1866. The following is the language of the Grand Master: "In view of the fact that certain persons are endeavoring to introduce within the jurisdiction of this Grand Lodge certain Orders, Rites, Degrees, Mystic Shrines, with their ceremonies and ritual, claiming to be Masonic, I fraternally call your attention to the decision of this Grand Lodge as adopted March 5, 1866, on the recommendation of the Committee on Landmarks, as follows" — (See quotation above.)

Sometimes, too, has our own Grand Lodge, for cause, withdrawn its recognition of another Masonic Body, as in the case of the Grand Orient of France.

We find, also, other Masonic Bodies exercising these powers: as the Grand Chapter of Wisconsin, in 1868; the Knights Templars of that State, in 1859; the Commandery of Ohio, denouncing Bodies whose legality they denied, and forbidding any Council or Commandery to receive any candidate or visitor who, in any manner or in any way, is concerned in such

clandestine degrees, and that no person shall be installed into any office under the jurisdiction who is in any way connected in such clandestine degrees.

The Grand Chapter of Wisconsin, after recognizing the Masonic character of the same Bodies that this Grand Lodge does by Sect. 24, denounces the Rite of Memphis and all irregular degrees, prohibits all Royal Arch Masons from holding Masonic intercourse with *any* Companion who has received or shall receive such Rite of Memphis or other degrees, until he withdraws therefrom in open Chapter, and provides no action shall be taken on the petition of any Master Mason who holds such degrees, or refuses to renounce them *in writing*.

In Ohio, the Grand Commandery, in its Constitutions of 1868, prohibits its members from receiving or holding to degrees conferred as Masonic by any Bodies other than those named in Section 24, Part V. of our Constitutions; and this, too, under pain of expulsion.

The recognized Supreme Councils of the two jurisdictions in the United States early in this century decided to admit none into their Rites who had not passed the degrees that are taught by this Grand Lodge, and in this jurisdiction and elsewhere have loyally abided by this standard test of Freemasonry for its ranks.

After these, which are but a few of the hundreds of illustrations that might be arrayed, the clamorous assertion that no such power exists to pass on the Masonic pretensions of other Bodies who, or whose members, seek intercourse with the Brethren this Grand Lodge represents, or to restrain its Masons from intercourse with Bodies which it holds to be clandestine, spurious, or hostile, comes either from deplorable

ignorance of Freemasonry, or from a desire to deceive unwary Masons and debauch their integrity.

This Grand Lodge, in the exercise of its usual powers to avert an impending evil, inserted an Article in its Constitutions forbidding any Mason under its authority from taking or receiving Masonic degrees in this jurisdiction, from any Order, Rite, Society, or persons, professing to be Masonic, not having been admitted by the Grand Lodge to confer them on Masons of its jurisdiction.

The Constitutions of the Grand Lodge at that time expressly declared (Part I., Article IV.) "The Grand Lodge, as the Supreme Masonic authority in this Commonwealth, is invested with certain original, essential, and unalterable powers and privileges. Among these is the power of (1) enacting laws and regulations for the governing of the Craft, and of altering, repealing, and abrogating them; (2) the inherent power of investigating, regulating, and deciding all matters relative to the Craft or to particular Lodges, *or individual brothers*; (3) of expelling Brethren."

It was her lawful duty to preserve the peace and protect Masonry in her jurisdiction from pollution. The method adopted, of prohibiting all species of Masonic intercourse with the excluded objects and persons, was an effective and usual Masonic way of accomplishing its purpose. Such regulations were in the interest of her own Craft. Who can doubt that Blue Lodges will be benefited by a more thorough concentration of the energies and generosity of their members, or that the policy of cultivating other degrees at the expense of Blue Masonry ought to have a limit? The Grand Lodge did not doubt it, and she made a limit. A policy of shutting the eyes

and folding the arms would let tares and cheats thrive among the wheat and choke the good plants. The Grand Lodge acted to preserve Masonry and prevent chaos. Shall the Grand Lodge renounce the arms with which it has hitherto protected Freemasonry? Can it be denied that if the Grand Lodge had allowed the caprices of individuals to multiply what each may be pleased to invent and call "higher degrees" at their pleasure, and engraft them upon the substructure and foundation of Blue Masonry, the Grand Lodge and its Masonry would soon fall into contempt and neglect; that piratical invasions of the exclusive rights of those Bodies with whom she had long lived in peace and amity would be encouraged; and that Freemasonry, now prosperous and popular, might become an abomination to civilized and peaceful society?

Who shall protect Masonry when the Grand Lodges refuse to protect it? This Grand Lodge, by a vote of three hundred and nineteen to twenty-eight, adopted Section 24 into her Constitutions, and the intelligent and faithful Blue Masons of the jurisdiction have acknowledged its wisdom, and bowed to its authority.

Your committee have been pained to learn that a few Brethren, from ignorance of Masonic law, or some defect of character, persist in giving personal aid, comfort, or support to the spreading among the Masons of Massachusetts of the rites, societies, etc., condemned by the Grand Lodge, and elaim that it is not contrary to their Masonic duty to this Grand Lodge, nor punishable under its authority for one so to do. They do not deny that the objects they aim to propagate here are forbidden by the Grand Lodge.

We have carefully examined these pretences to paralyze the



authority of this Grand Lodge. They do not spring from any recognized relation of speculative Masonry to the Grand Lodges. It is a new rendering of Political Nullification, applied to define the relation of a Mason to the Grand Lodge which has made or accepted him. It denies he is bound by its laws, and claims that he may nullify any of the laws at his pleasure and retain all his prior rights and standing in the Fraternity; that he shall construe at his own pleasure the laws, and recognize and promote any alien rites as Masonic among the Brethren. As to the idea of any restraint on such liberty, its assertions amount substantially to a claim that the Grand Lodge can neither protect its Freemasonry among the Brethren, exclude error, enforce its recognitions or exclusions of other Bodies, nor restrain individuals from entangling it with strange heresies, or from applying it to disgraceful or profane purposes.

A moment's reflection will show all this plainly applies to one part of the Constitutions as well as to another, and, if true, Masonry has no government, commands no obedience, enforces no landmarks, and exercises no control over individuals of its Fraternity. The Grand Lodge must look the bearing of all this on the Craft right in the face, and say whether it will maintain the Freemasonry of the Constitutions, with its recognized powers of discipline, and control of intercourse with other Bodies claiming to be Masonic, that for a century and more it has freely exercised; whether its twenty-five thousand Masons, whose sovereignty it embodies, shall be baited and defied with impunity within its own organization by a handful of "schismatics and disturbers."

Your committee are satisfied that these pretences for the law-

fulness of disobedience, put forth as apologies for maintaining spurious Bodies, are utterly unconstitutional and un-Masonic.

Through our organizations the Grand Lodges actually give, to those they receive and accept into the Fraternity, valuable and honorable social privileges, well known throughout the world, and highly esteemed by worthy men everywhere.

The Constitutions, and the precedents of this and our sister Grand Lodges, show their organization embodies exclusive authority in each jurisdiction over the Craftsmen, with full powers to regulate intercourse and repel intrusion.

Every Mason admitted to enjoy the benefits and privileges of the Craft takes them with the obligation to conform to the laws, rules, and regulations of the Grand Lodge under whose authority he was made or is sojourning; and there is no personal right in a Mason to nullify or adhere to its laws at his own pleasure, and still remain in good standing in the Craft, enjoying its benefits and social privileges.

Where a Mason sins by inadvertence and repents, the Grand Lodge has power to heal and forgive; but there is no privilege for disobedience or un-Masonic conduct secured to him whilst he remains a Mason in this State.

Let this Grand Lodge imagine a candidate for the rights and benefits of Freemasonry loudly proclaiming that he reserves to himself the exclusive right of obeying such laws as he pleases and disregarding others, and of holding fraternal intercourse with clandestine, expelled, and bogus Masons, when and where he chooses, without thereby impairing or forfeiting his right to the privileges and protection of the Fraternity! If he cannot gain *entrance* on these terms, how can they be his right after admission? No. The obligations and responsibilities of Freemasonry go hand in hand with the title to its benefits.

The citations already made show that the care of the Masonic fellowship of its Fraternity with other Bodies is one of the exalted and important duties pertaining to Grand Lodges, and extends to their relations with Bodies both within and without the territory.

Massachusetts, whilst exercising this power according to her discretion, has, where she has recognized another Masonic Body in the State, still claimed her own sovereignty over its Blue Masons, — “Constitutions, Art. 4: Expulsion from a Chapter or Templar Encampment shall not carry with it expulsion from a Lodge.”

After the Grand Lodge had drawn the line of its Masonic recognitions in the jurisdiction, was it loyal conduct in a Mason to assist in working the forbidden degrees in her territory, or in procuring recruits for them from among her Fraternity? Was it Masonic for a Mason to lead a weak Brother into an act punishable with expulsion? Was it loyal to strengthen inroads the Grand Lodge sought to repel? In the obedience of citizens to a civil government the law calls similar acts conspiracy and treason. In relation to church covenants like acts are heresy and schism. What do our Constitutions say?

Part 5, Sect. 21, says, a Lodge or Brother offending against any law or regulation of this Grand Lodge to the breach of which no penalty is attached, shall, at the discretion of the Grand Lodge, be subject to admonition, suspension, or expulsion.

SECT. 4. Any Lodge may take cognizance of a sojourning Brother on a charge of un-Masonic conduct.

Part 1, Art. 4. The Grand Lodge is invested with an

unalterable power to enact laws for the governing of the Craft, etc., the inherent power of investigating, regulating, and deciding all matters relative to the Craft, or to particular Lodges, or to individual Brothers, — the exclusive power of expulsion.

The Blue Masons, members of the Bodies recognized as legitimate, admit they are personally subject to the laws of the Grand Lodge. The treasonable pretensions to treat her duty to regulate Freemasons in Freemasonry as a nullity are set up only by those who lately have espoused the cause of the outlawed Bodies or degrees. Those of the Craft who remain Blue Masons only, have no interest to destroy the authority of the Grand Lodge over Freemasonry, in order that self-asserting mystic degrees may pervert Masonry to their own pleasures. They have too often wielded the powers of the Grand Lodge against interlopers, schismatics, and disturbers in Masonic matters to lay down the authority by which the purity of the rites and the morals of the Craft have been successfully preserved through many trials and many years.

The Grand Lodge, when it adopted Section 24, evidently in view of other Constitutional clauses, deemed a description of the ways offences might arise against the Section as unnecessary as it would be to define the methods in which a Mason can violate the moral law.

Those who have taken the forbidden degrees in this jurisdiction, in violation of Section 24, cannot plead ignorance of the law, nor protect themselves from the consequences they have willfully called down unless they can satisfy the Grand Lodge that they deserve mercy.

The class of offences referred to in the Amendment of R.W.

Bro. Welch to Section 25 is incident to efforts by Brethren to keep the clandestine and outlawed Bodies at work in this jurisdiction and the soliciting of recruits for them from among the Fraternity. The Sect. 25, as it now exists, describes the chief actors' offence, hawking and peddling such degrees. The offences described in the Amendment are now, in our opinion, violations of the 24th and other sections of the Constitutions, because they relate to aid in conferring a forbidden rite, and to soliciting candidates for it among Masons of this jurisdiction.

We incline to think those few who already have exposed themselves to Masonic discipline in this matter may in most cases candidly claim ignorance as the cause rather than an evil will. To prevent future error arising from ignorance amongst Brethren now faithful, the plain statement is made, that maintaining the propagation of the forbidden rites in the jurisdiction involves, on all who aid or abet therein, the loss of the fraternal privileges of Freemasonry.

The Amendment proposed by R.W.P.G.M. Welch accomplishes this purpose. It also has a further advantage: it plainly declares that Sect. 24 and this section are directed against those who in this jurisdiction, without the consent of this Grand Lodge, meddle with "any Masonic degree or degrees limited to Freemasons"; thus conclusively showing that the Grand Lodge in this action is regulating Masonic intercourse only, and that the prohibition does not relate to the Independent Order of Odd Fellows, the Knights of Honor, and other societies somewhat of that class, which are not limited in their admission and membership to Freemasons.

The perspicuity which it gives the whole subject your com-

mittee think quite desirable. It is true the Grand Lodge when executing Sect. 24 would doubtless define as the Amendment proposes; but it will avoid any misconstruction among the Brethren to say it plainly now. We recommend its adoption without amendment.

CHAS. LEVI WOODBURY.  
EDWARD AVERY,  
A. H. HOWLAND, JR.,  
RUFUS G. BROWN,  
CASSIUS CLAY POWERS,  
*Committee.*

The report was accepted, and Past Grand Master Coolidge moved the adoption of the Amendment. He expressed the opinion that it would carry with it the conclusive settlement of the matter in question, and clearly indicate what the Grand Lodge intends to do and to enforce; he hoped it would meet the general, if not the unanimous, approval of the Brethren present.

There appearing to be no disposition to discuss the subject, the Grand Master ordered the roll to be called, and the following was the result: —

Whole number of votes,	403
Of which two-thirds would be,	269

The yeas were :	40 officers,	40	
	18 Permanent Members,	18	
	95 Lodges, 3 votes,	285	
	2    "    2    "	4	
	4    "    1 vote,	4	
		<hr/>	351
The nays were :	1 Permanent Member,	1	
	14 Lodges, 3 votes,	42	
	4    "    2    "	8	
	1 Lodge, 1 vote.	1	
		<hr/>	52
			<hr/>
			403

The M.W. Grand Master declared that the Amendment, having received more than the necessary two-thirds vote, was adopted.









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Action of the Grand Lodge of Massachuset



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