

# ADDRESSES

DELIVERED AT THE

GRAND ANNUAL COMMUNICATION

OF THE

## GRAND LODGE OF KENTUCKY,

HELD AT THE MASONIC TEMPLE,

IN THE

CITY OF LOUISVILLE,

OCTOBER 18<sup>TH</sup>, A. D. 1869, A. L. 5869.



FRANKFORT, KY.  
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1869.

## IN GRAND LODGE,

October 21, 1869.

*Resolved,* That the Grand Secretary be directed to publish for distribution one thousand copies, in pamphlet form, of the address of Grand Master, E. S. Fitch, delivered at the opening of this Grand Lodge; his address at the laying of the corner-stone of the Masonic Widows' and Orphans' Home; the address of Grand Master Charles Eginton, delivered upon his installation into office; and the address of Past Grand Master Fitch in answer to a vote of thanks by this Grand Lodge, for the able manner in which he had discharged the duties of Grand Master for the past two years.

# ADDRESS

OF

## GRAND MASTER ELISHA S. FITCH,

AT THE OPENING OF THE GRAND LODGE,

On the 18th day of October, A. D. 1869, A. L. 5869.

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*Brethren of the Grand Lodge of the State of Kentucky:*

Another Masonic year has passed away—a year of general harmony throughout our entire Brotherhood, and of continued prosperity within our own immediate jurisdiction. In consideration, therefore, of our increased obligations to the Great Dispenser of All Good; and in view of this large concourse of Free and Accepted Masons, permitted again to assemble in his name; we humbly trust that the incense of grateful hearts has already risen, in sweet accord, with the fervent and impressive invocation just addressed to the mercy seat in our behalf. While traveling through this vale of tears, so thickly interspersed with the sepulchers of the departed, it is certainly “but our reasonable service” to acknowledge with becoming reverence the watchful supervision of that “All-Seeing Eye,” which, in its infinite ken, embraces alike the vast and the minute, which controls the careering march of numberless worlds, and yet contemplates with complacency, the toiling architects of the ant-hill—which directs the triumphal processions of the starry hosts, and yet looks, with pitying love, upon a “sparrow’s fall;” and which, therefore, while it has furnished, with its own blissful glance, the halo of glory, in which cherubim and seraphim delight to dwell, has, nevertheless, been ever kindly bent, even upon our own low estate, and is still beaming benignant upon the humble pathway which, as worms of the dust, we are destined to tread. While suitably impressed with a sense of our dependence upon this infinitely powerful yet all gracious Benefactor, and inspired with a lively sense of gratitude, resulting from this dependence, and His unwearied goodness in all the past, let us also remember, that we

are still only imperfect craftsmen working under His inspection as our Supreme Grand Master; and should therefore labor assiduously upon those infallible designs, drawn upon His trestle-board, as revealed by our Great Light, and trust implicitly to the guidance of His unerring wisdom in all time to come. We will thus become in the highest sense first prepared in our hearts, as Masons are taught to be, for the solemn engagements and responsible duties which lie before us.

Believing you to be thus prepared, brethren, permit me in the honored name of Masonry to greet you with a hearty fraternal welcome on your annual return to this Grand Hall. As the scattered members of one common household feel a rapturous delight in revisiting together the old parental home, thus living over again the springtime of life in awakened reminiscences, so, as Craftsmen who for a season have been widely dispersed, it is natural that we should feel jubilant and joyous in thus reassembling in our old Masonic homestead, to revive the interesting associations of other days, and to perpetuate those friendships which have been developed and purified under the benign influences of our Royal Art. On such occasions a livelier sense of fraternal obligation and attachment seems to pervade our mystic band—a host of associated memories and treasured sympathies throng and thrill the Masonic heart, and conspire to signalize and to hallow the time and place of our reunion. In the vicissitudes of every-day life it is often the case on returning to the old family mansion from which we have wandered,

“Pursuing fortune’s slippery ba,”

that the heart is saddened by the melancholy changes which time has wrought, the scenes of dilapidation and decay which meet the eye on every hand. In the descriptive language of Irving, while contemplating the deserted home of Roscoe, it is often “like visiting some classic fountain which once welled its pure waters in a sacred shade, but finding it dry and dusty, with the lizard and the toad brooding over the shattered marble.”

On our return, however, to the old Masonic Temple to-day, our hearts may well be filled with joy and rejoicing, for there are no such sad surroundings to check our happy greetings; no such scenes of desolation to deplore or to mar our fraternal congratulations. Changes, it is true, have occurred in this old Masonic home, but they are such as we contemplate with exulting pride. They are changes that have been wrought by the cunning hands of enterprise and art and not by the corroding tooth of time or the defacing finger of decay.

During our absence the skill of operative Masonry has been invoked, as you perceive, to improve and embellish this sacred retreat, and the architect and artist seem to have vied with each other in rendering it more beautiful and attractive than ever before.

May we not indulge the hope that an inspection of our speculative Masonry during the same period may indicate a corresponding improvement, and that as the designs of the operative Craftsmen have added strength and symmetry to this material structure, so the designs of our noble Art will be found to have contributed to the security and harmony of that mystic temple devoted to the cause of brotherly love, relief and truth.

## INSPECTION OF THE WORK.

The supervision of this work of speculative Masonry, as it may come up in the official returns of the Subordinate Lodges embraced in this jurisdiction, will constitute an important part of your duty. The Grand Master, not being invested with the divine attribute of ubiquity, as it would sometimes seem that the Craft imagine him to be, is generally cognizant only of such defective work or gross irregularity as in the estimation of those immediately interested may call for his official advice or interposition. To your inspection, however, through appropriate committees, the entire work of the year must be submitted, and, as skillful and vigilant overseers, it is your province to examine critically the respective trestle-boards of each W. M., and to decide impartially upon the designs which he has planned or permitted the Craft under him to execute. To accomplish any practical good in this direction toward the establishment of the desired uniformity, it is all-important that this work of revision should be thorough and discriminating, and that every presiding officer or Subordinate Lodge found to be delinquent should be duly admonished or justly reprehended for any departure from the established laws and usages of the institution.

## DISPENSATIONS.

In pursuance of the policy indicated in my last report, I have not thought proper to add to your labors in this respect by granting Dispensations for the formation of new Lodges during the past year. It will be remembered, however, that previous to our last grand communication a Dispensation was granted to Milford Lodge, at Milford, Bracken county, but in consequence of some irregularity, (of which the G. M. was not at the time advised,) this Dispensation was subsequently revoked, but without prejudice to the applicants. The brethren at Milford having since renewed their application, unvitiated by any informality, a second Dispensation was issued to said Lodge on the 18th of January last. This is the only new Lodge for which any Dispensation has been granted since our last communication.

In consequence of disastrous conflagrations which have visited certain localities and consumed Lodge Charters in their ravages, it has become my duty to grant the following special Dispensations, empowering the Lodges thus interrupted in their work to resume their labors, viz:

To Ion Lodge, No. 301, at Potts' Mill, Jessamine co., Feb. 1;

To Bigham Lodge, No. 256, at Marion, Crittenden co., March 20;

To Mt. Vernon Lodge, No. 14, at Georgetown, Scott co., June 14 ;

To Morrison Lodge, No. 76, at Elizabethtown, Hardin co., Aug. 28.

I have also granted like Dispensations to the following Lodges, whose charters have been lost :

To Columbus Lodge, No. 173, at Columbus, Hickman co., April 3 ;

To Monticello Lodge, No. 431, at Monticello, Wayne co., Sept. 15 ;

These dispensations having now expired by constitutional limitation, it will devolve upon you to renew them, or supply charters in their stead, as in your judgment may seem expedient. In regard to all those lodges, which have been unfortunately despoiled of their charters, I would recommend the donation of duplicates by this Grand Lodge, upon payment of the Grand Secretary's fees.

Quite a large number of petitions for new Lodges have been received and duly considered, and in withholding all further dispensations I fear I may have unfortunately subjected myself to the censorious judgment of many good brethren throughout the State, whom I personally esteem and honor, and would delight to serve in any matter involving simply a personal responsibility. But while I sincerely regret their disappointment, and would not willingly perpetuate any of the grievances, real or imaginary, of which they complain, I nevertheless feel sustained in the negative policy I have pursued by the highest interests, as I conceive, of the fraternity in this jurisdiction.

By way of self-vindication, permit me to say that in many instances the petitioners themselves have unwittingly defeated their own purpose by putting the case too strongly, or proving too much; for, in addition to the usual form of appeal, it would often be represented to the Grand Master, by way of special inducement, that many members of an adjoining Lodge would procure dimits and affiliate with the proposed new Lodge, as soon as organized; and yet, upon an examination of the annual returns, it would turn out in evidence (as lawyers say) that the aforesaid adjoining Lodge was itself too feeble to undergo any depletion, and yet remain self-sustaining. In all such cases, therefore, the establishment of the new Lodge would perhaps involve the suspension or embarrass the work of an old one, and the result would be, that while adding to the number of our Lodges, and thereby incurring the expense of separate organizations, there would be but little, if any, addition to our aggregate membership, and no commensurate increase whatever of the general prosperity.

In other cases it was very apparent that the applications for new Lodges were prompted by General Regulation No. 15. According to the representations of the parties, a large majority of them had been for many years the victims of something like chronic coma—a sort of Rip Van Winkle sleep—on the subject of Masonry, until their working tools had become



even more rusty and useless than was the fowling-piece of the old Dutch hunter among the highlands of the Hudson after lying by his side during his twenty-years' nap in the humid atmosphere of "Sleepy Hollow." But, having been suddenly aroused by this general regulation, and galvanized into something like Masonic activity again, they are all at once very forcibly reminded of their isolated condition, and evince a new-born desire to enjoy the sweet fellowship of the fraternity! But alas! they are not "convenient" to any regular Lodge. The nearest is "at least five or six miles distant," and, to meet with their brethren and thus enjoy the privileges of the institution they have always so much loved and venerated, they are compelled to perform this wearisome journey of five or six miles, and that, too, often over nothing better than a plank road or a macadamized turnpike; and, therefore, having become somewhat rheumatic, we suppose (as old Rip did,) during their long stay in the profane world, and not being able to betake themselves to the "iron horse" and speed away in a twinkling to some commodious Lodge-room, the Grand Master must forsooth establish another Lodge within sound of their own dinner horn, or possibly "the cause of Masonry will suffer any irreparable loss!" I need not say that under these circumstances I have not felt disposed, as your official representative, to offer any such premium to Masonic inertia, and more especially to elevate those who had been so long the demitted drones of an old hive, into the dignity and authority of king bees in a new one. It occurred to me, in view of your recent legislation (whether expedient or not) in regard to this class of Masons, that it will be neither just nor consistent to reward with special favor their palpable and persistent dereliction of duty.

I presume that many, if not all of these applications, will be renewed during the present session for your decision, and while I certainly have no disposition to forestall your action in regard to any of them, but cheerfully and confidently commit the responsibility into your hands, I would nevertheless respectfully urge the necessity of more than usual caution and discrimination in multiplying Lodges in this jurisdiction.

While we are annually complaining, and very justly too, that our subordinate Lodges are doing too much work and receiving too indiscriminately those who are knocking at their doors, may it not be possible that, as a Grand Lodge, we are acting inconsistently and quite as indiscreetly in granting by wholesale, as has been too much our habit, the multitudinous petitions which from year to year are found crowding our Grand Secretary's table? While I believe, and am willing to concede, that there are some portions of the State which may not be sufficiently supplied with Lodge facilities, and which may even, perhaps, be embraced by some of the petitions referred to the Grand Master, yet I am quite as well satisfied that we are forming Lodges far too rapidly and promiscuously for the general good of Masonry in this Commonwealth.

I had scarcely reached home from attendance on our last Grand Communication, before I received an importunate request from one of the oldest and best conducted Lodges in this jurisdiction, to interpose my official authority and prevent the organization of a Lodge which had just received a dispensation at your hands, alleging as important reasons that its proposed officers were wholly incompetent, that as the recommending Lodge they had been taken by surprise, and that there was clearly no necessity or suitable material for another Lodge in that locality. This was a Lodge to which I had previously refused a Dispensation; but the Grand Lodge having overruled my decision, I of course did not feel at liberty to assume the responsibility sought to be imposed by this request, or to permit this old Lodge "to take advantage of its own wrong" in defeating the organization in pursuance of your dispensation. The work of this Lodge, U. D., will necessarily undergo your inspection, and I trust will prove better than anticipated—such work as we are authorized to receive. I have alluded to this instance only by way of abundant caution and to suggest the reflection that if the Grand Lodge is thus liable to err, with all the representatives of surrounding Lodges present to furnish the needed light, much more so is the Grand Master, whose decision is of necessity almost solely influenced by an *ex parte* representation of the case.

Such cases also suggest very forcibly the propriety of the recommendation on this subject, made in my last report (which is now a pending amendment of the constitution,) that it be required as an indispensable preliminary to the granting of any dispensation, that the proposed Master and Wardens shall undergo a satisfactory examination in open Lodge, and that this fact shall be duly attested by the nearest Lodge granting certificate of recommendation. The official experience of another year has only more fully demonstrated the expediency of some such provision, that will practically test the capacity of Lodges U. D., for the work we authorized them to do.

#### IMPROPER DEPLETION OF GRAND TREASURY.

The pernicious consequences of an indiscriminate exercise of the Lodge-making power, are not limited to the respective communities in which they are established; but they are also very sensibly and disastrously felt in their depleting influence upon our Grand Treasury.

There is a constantly recurring and increasing drain upon your resources to continue in being many of the Lodges you have organized. Some of these Lodges have been in existence for many years, but having only a small membership, and located in a remote part of the State, they annually receive more through their representatives, from the general fund, than they contribute. If you will examine our last year's returns, you will find that this was the case with a large number of our subordinates, and that in



some instances more than double the amount was received by the representative than was paid in by his Lodge. It will become apparent to every brother, who will take the pains to examine our Grand Lodge returns for the last few years, that this annually increasing systematic depletion is becoming more and more oppressive, and calls loudly for some measure of relief.

After a patient investigation of this delicate subject in all its various bearings, I would respectfully suggest, as an amendment to the Constitution, that when any subordinate Lodge in this jurisdiction has had an existence of five or more years, her representative shall not be allowed to draw a larger amount, in mileage and per diem, than is actually paid into the Grand Treasury by the Lodge he represents, as her dues to this Grand Lodge.

The policy thus indicated would seem to be only just to the Grand Lodge, while it would also be generous toward her subordinates. Its object is not to create any distinction between Lodges in the estimation of this Grand Body, or to establish any favoritism whatever. It only requires all her subordinates to defray the expenses of their respective representatives, less the amount of their annual dues to the Grand Lodge, unless said dues should be in excess of said expenses, in which event the excess would be payable to the Grand Lodge. Justice to this Grand Lodge, as well as to her self-sustaining subordinates, demands some corrective of the evil complained of, and surely, if we desire to appropriate the "jewel of consistency," we should take some step in this direction. For many years past this Body has been legislating to rid the Lodges in her jurisdiction of the incubus of individual drones so thickly scattered throughout our Masonic community; and yet, during all this time, she has herself borne patiently with whole hives of drones, which have annually been taking away from her treasury more than they have contributed, and, while "having a name to live," have been, for all practical and equitable co-operation, Masonically "dead." Such a policy, we think, cannot be sustained either by justice or expediency.

It is my deliberate judgment that if, after a probation of five years, a Masonic Lodge is unable to stand alone and work successfully in this jurisdiction, it might as well surrender its charter at once; but if not disposed to do this, it ought at least, after that period, cease to be a charge upon the Grand Treasury, and be willing, if necessary, to dispense with a representative, rather than withdraw from the common fund for his attendance, more than it has been taxed to contribute in common with her sister Lodges.

It is by no means the purpose of the proposed amendment to deprive the feeblest Lodge of its right of representation in this Grand Body—certainly not. That right should be indefeasible, and preserved intact. I would be quite as much opposed to the principle of "taxation without representa-

tion" in the Masonic government as in any other form of government. But the practical question before us is, not whether any Lodge subject to Grand Lodge taxation shall be represented upon this floor, but whether such Lodge shall be represented at the expense of the Grand Lodge, after every dollar of her assessed taxes has been generously refunded to her by the Grand Lodge. I think not. "*Fiat justitia ruat cælum.*"

#### INCREASE OF FEES AND DUES OF SUBORDINATE LODGES.

In connection with this subject, and with this trite motto before us, let us make a clean breast of the whole matter, and, if possible, thorough work of the reform in hand. It is a fact worthy of special consideration, that in all our smaller towns and throughout the rural districts of the State our subordinate Lodges have very generally adopted the minimum price of degrees, which this Grand Lodge has established by constitutional provision, and hence we find, as a prevailing custom, that the degrees of Symbolic Masonry cost the candidate only twenty dollars, while the annual dues of the members are only about two dollars! It will be seen at once that such financial arrangement is well calculated to impoverish any Lodge, and that unless her membership is unusually large, and the calls of charity unusually "few and far between," her treasury would be generally bankrupt. Such figures are greatly out of joint with the present times, however well they may have suited the exigencies of the case when adopted by the Grand Lodge. It is very certain that, with such inadequate fees and dues, many of our Lodges need scarcely hope ever to be represented in this Grand Body without the aid of the Grand Treasury. If, then, you would secure an equal representation to them all, and at the same time relieve your treasury of the annual tax now imposed for this purpose, you must advance the minimum price of degrees, or, which in my judgment would be more desirable, abolish the minimum altogether, and establish a higher price for the degrees, and a higher rate of dues, and make them uniform throughout the entire jurisdiction, and require all the subordinate Lodges to amend their by-laws in harmony with such a regulation. This, brethren, I consider an important change, and one which is imperiously demanded by the present condition of the Craft in Kentucky.

#### IMPOLICY OF CHEAPENING MASONRY.

It is a lamentable fact that a too rapid multiplication of Lodges has tended only to cheapen Masonry, and this cheapening policy, in its turn, has tended only to lessen its dignity, to depreciate its comparative value and importance in the estimation of the world, and to render the privileges of the Fraternity a matter of too easy attainment, and therefore, instead of the door of our Mystic Temple being closely tyled to all save the worthy and well qualified, it is virtually thrown wide open, and thus invites an indiscriminate

rush from the inquisitive populace without. This is indeed a sad and most deplorable perversion of the original design of the Institution, and one which, as a Grand Lodge, we should not for a moment tolerate, much less in any way sustain or sanction. In view of the unprecedented popularity of the Fraternity, it behooves us to be more vigilant and guarded than ever before.

Otherwise, brethren, the pure and beautiful stream of Masonic philanthropy which for ages past has glided on in quiet majesty within its own appointed channel, bearing on its bosom the richest argosies of "Good men and true," to gladden and bless the wasted and destitute portions of our moral domain, may become, even in its fancied floodtide of prosperity, a wild and unmanageable torrent of popular passion and prejudice overflowing its ancient embankments, only to gather up in its destructive course the drift wood of our common humanity, and float upon its turbid waters the worthless wrecks of a former glory and splendor. Such a catastrophe is not more revolting than the danger is impending, and it becomes all our Lodges, throughout the land, both Grand and Subordinate, to attend well to this vociferous alarm at the outer door; to do all in their power to stay and direct the heady current of popular impulse which has already set in and threatens to bear us away from our ancient moorings, and set us adrift without compass or plummet, upon the shoreless sea of expediency. It is the manifest tendency of the times to popularize everything, both in Church and State, and the same dangerous leaven is at work in our Masonic Lodges. Hence it is that we find such importunate and persistent appeals for new Lodges, not only in our cities and larger towns, but also in every village and hamlet, and at almost every cross roads and wagon stand in the State.

These Lodges, if established, must secure a membership, and to accomplish this the more readily, the fees and dues must be reduced to the lowest possible rates, and if this vending of Masonry, in "cheap cash store," style "at greatly reduced prices with a view to replenish stock," does not accomplish the desired purpose, the next step by way of "extraordinary inducement" is to lower practically the standard of the qualifications of candidates, until in some instances these proselyting missionaries would seem to be almost ready to "go into the highways and hedges and compel them to come in." So true is this, indeed to our shame be it said—that already in some portions of our jurisdiction there is scarcely any man in the community who may not with perfect impunity petition a Masonic Lodge for admission. Our high standard of qualification is practically lowered, not only by receiving into the Lodge those who are not worthy, but also, and perhaps more frequently, by retaining in our fellowship those who have become unworthy, who habitually and for years set at defiance the preceptive teachings of the institution, and have even become offensive to the moral sense of the general community in which they live.

"Can such things be,  
And o'ercome us like a summer's cloud,  
Without our special wonder!"

We may rest assured that such demoralization of our Lodges will do infinitely more to prejudice and degrade the institution, in the estimation of all thinking and sensible men, than all the fanatical conventions of political clergymen which have met or may ever assemble for the purpose of Masonic misrepresentation and abuse. This demoralization is indeed only the fruitful cause and occasion of such conventions, and without it they would have no stock in trade.

I for one shall rejoice that the battering rams of bigotry have renewed their assaults upon the institution, it will only prompt us to fortify, as we should, this only vulnerable angle of our venerable temple.

This will perhaps be considered a departure from the prescriptive "metes and bounds" of an annual report, but brethren I have no apology to offer for it. It is a digression necessarily made to notice a far more fatal digression from the ancient landmarks of Masonry, and if I could only infuse into the minds of the representatives present and, through them, into their respective Lodges, the serious apprehensions which I myself entertain of the evil complained of, and could stimulate them to a speedy and thorough reform in this matter, I would most cheerfully subject my feeble report to any amount of criticism, deserved or undeserved, which might be indulged in by the scholar or the cynic. For I would then feel assured that I had accomplished more in this one instance for the interests of the Fraternity in this jurisdiction than in all the other service which I may have rendered during the whole of my official term.

#### GRAND TREASURER'S REPORT.

The report of the Grand Treasurer for the past year presents a satisfactory statement of our financial condition. According to this report, our total resources amount to \$84,347 14, instead of \$78,006 92, reported for the year 1868, showing an increase in our favor of \$6,340 22, after purchasing nine more of the first mortgage bonds of Masonic Temple company, and leaving only eight more of the aforesaid bonds now outstanding. The report of the Grand Treasurer is well condensed, and yet sufficiently comprehensive, and although necessarily a matter of figures, it is desirable that all the representatives should make a careful examination of its contents, and especially with reference to the subjects already referred to as affecting the resources of the Grand Lodge.

The Board of Directors of the Masonic Temple Company have distributed their report, and ask its reference to the Finance Committee, that the condition of the Company, the necessity for the repairs which they have made, and its general financial management may receive the supervision of



this Grand Lodge. Having but a few moments since received a copy of said report, my examination has necessarily been too hurried and imperfect to justify any comments, and I therefore leave it in the hands of the proper committee of the Grand Lodge to suggest such action in regard to the interests of this Grand Body in said Company as they may deem expedient.

MASONIC WIDOWS' AND ORPHANS' HOME AND INFIRMARY.

I am happy to announce that the "Masonic Widows' and Orphans' Home and Infirmary," which for some time has had "a name" only, now rejoices in the prospect also of "a local habitation." The policy of the Board of Trustees of this institution has been, as you are aware, to solicit donations and subscriptions for the laudable enterprise, but to take no steps toward the purchase of any site or property, or to make any permanent investment of the funds thus realized, until the whole amount necessary to complete the buildings and endow the charity, had been secured and rendered available. This policy seemed to be sanctioned by considerations of prudence, and was pursued with a view to secure confidence in its general management and final success. After an honest experiment of this policy had been made however, it was found that such abundant caution, on the part of its founders, operated rather as an hindrance than an help, to the enterprise, and that, instead of inspiring confidence, it was calculated to beget distrust, and was often used as an argument against the whole project, defeating further subscriptions, and often becoming a pretext for withholding the payment of sums already promised. It was then determined by the Board of Trustees—embracing some of the most prudent and sagacious business men of the State—that this stumbling block should be removed—that the achievement was worthy of their best efforts, even though involving personal responsibilities, and had already elicited too much of sympathy and hope, to be permitted to languish, much less to fail of its purpose, and therefore they have wisely resolved to commit themselves and the Brotherhood of the State to the success of the glorious work.

Accordingly, in addition to the generous donation of a liberal minded brother of this city, they have negotiated for some adjoining lots, and thus procured an eligible site for the proposed "Home," the corner-stone of which will be laid, with appropriate ceremonies, during our present Grand Communication, and they will at once proceed to erect a suitable building for the comfort and welfare of those homeless widows and orphans whom our deceased brethren have confidently committed to our fraternal care and protection. I feel assured that these philanthropic brethren will now be sustained and encouraged as they deserve to be by the whole Masonic fraternity in this jurisdiction; that we will consider it our enterprise, as well as theirs, and accept the responsibilities it imposes. Thoroughly impressed with the necessity of this great public charity, and the ability of our Breth-



ren to establish and sustain it, I have never permitted myself to doubt its ultimate success. I have the fullest confidence in the liberality of the fraternity when appealed to in behalf of any laudable and feasible scheme of Masonic philanthropy, and especially one like this, which contemplates the rescue of our own widows and orphans from the cold charity of this heartless world, and their removal to a home of their own under the immediate supervision and guardianship of those who are under the most solemn obligations to shield, to succor and to bless.

In compliance with the urgent request of the Board, I have consented to devote one year, at least, of unremitting labor in behalf of this institution, and shall soon enter upon this mission of mercy with all the earnestness of my nature, and, in full assurance of faith. Nothing less, I assure you, than the sublime hope inspired by such a mission, could induce me to forego the endearments of home to canvass the State in its interest, and encounter the privations and casualties of such an engagement. With no inflated notion of personal influence or popularity, but with implicit faith in the widows' God, and the Father of the fatherless—the justice of the plea, and the co-operation of the Brotherhood—I shall engage in this labor of love, and if I have not wholly mistaken the spirit of the fraternity in Kentucky, and greatly over-rated the fidelity and generosity of those who are already under the most sacred bonds to relieve and befriend the proposed beneficiaries of this humane enterprise, it will be my supreme happiness, at your next Grand Communication, to present to this Grand Lodge—*her foster mother*—the “Masonic Widows' and Orphans' Home and Infirmary” as an accomplished fact—an appropriate and perpetual monument of Kentucky Freemasonry!

During the past year I have been placed under renewed obligations to distinguished brethren throughout the jurisdiction, who have kindly officiated as my proxies in laying the corner-stones of various public buildings, dedicating Masonic halls, cemeteries, &c; and I have been gratified to learn from private sources, as well as through the public prints, that this work has been in every instance that of “the Wise Master-builder.” It is utterly impossible, in such an extended jurisdiction as this, and in view of the frequency of such calls for the Grand Master to be always, or even generally, present to officiate in this capacity; but as far as practicable I have met with the brethren and furnished such public addresses and private lectures as seemed to be appropriate to the occasion and most befitting the condition of the Lodge.

I have found, wherever I have visited, a general desire and quite as general a necessity for Masonic instruction, and have deeply regretted that my engagements would not permit a more extended and thorough revision of the work. Connected with my travels of the ensuing year is associated the pleasing anticipation of meeting with our Subordinate Lodges, and exchanging an unsatisfactory official correspondence for a more fraternal personal

communion with the brotherhood (by whom I have been so highly honored) at their own homes and around their own Masonic altars.

RE-ELECTION OF GRAND MASTER.

The practice of this Grand Lodge to change its Grand Master at each Annual Communication I have always regarded as of doubtful propriety, and this view has only been confirmed by my connection with the office. Inasmuch as my acceptance, for the ensuing year, of another sacred public trust, already alluded to, kindred in its grand design, but incompatible in its duties, will render it wholly impracticable for me to serve you again, even were it desirable on your part, I trust you will permit me to renew and urge upon your serious consideration the recommendation of my immediate predecessor on this subject.

If there be wisdom in retaining in office an efficient and faithful Grand Secretary and Grand Treasurer, which none, we presume, will question, we think, in view of his weighty and diversified responsibilities, it is quite as important to re-elect, for at least two or three terms, a competent and trustworthy Grand Master; and having, by an act of distinguishing partiality toward the present incumbent, broken the long line of precedents which you have heretofore established in reference to this office, it is probably the most opportune occasion to consider the expediency of continuing the policy you have thus inaugurated.

The duties of his exalted station as Grand Master are not less onerous, to say the least, than those pertaining to either of the other Grand Officers mentioned, and like them, require not only capacity, tact, and administrative talent, but also actual experience in the office itself, to enable him to promote the highest welfare of the Fraternity throughout so extended a jurisdiction. Such re-elections would tend greatly to establish uniformity in the decisions of Masonic questions, involving law and usage, and under the continued and judicious administration of an able and discreet Grand Master we would be furnished with an harmonious system of jurisprudence, based upon our own Constitutional Rules and Regulations, and the immemorial usages of the Institution. By pursuing this policy the Grand Wardens, if re-elected (which if competent and faithful they should be) would also be better prepared to occupy the Grand Master's station and succeed to his duties. Besides, such a change, we think, would go far toward banishing from the Grand Lodge the present pernicious custom of electioneering for office—a custom bad enough, in all conscience, when confined to the political arena, but which becomes positively contemptible and infamous when transferred to such a grave and dignified body as a Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons.

This disreputable custom has repeatedly elicited the rebuke of the Grand Lodge, and yet it is patent to every Brother that electioneering for these

high and responsible Grand Offices is annually commenced almost immediately upon the arrival of our Representatives, and unblushingly persisted in until the contest has been decided. The regulation adopted on this subject does not, in my judgment, go far enough. It simply contemplates the electioneering of the candidates themselves, and limits to them the penalty, as though they were the only offenders. But it should be remembered that this electioneering may be quite as successfully carried on, and yet the candidates themselves remain apparently passive. "*Qui facit per alium facit per se.*" The resolution should therefore extend further, and embrace the partizan friends of the candidate, and punish their ill-judged officiousness and distempered zeal in this matter. Looking upon this demoralizing system of electioneering in the Grand Lodge with utter abhorrence, and feeling the necessity of some further legislation in this direction, I would recommend, as an additional clause to the 14th General Regulation, that any Representative who shall be guilty of electioneering in any way to promote the success of any candidate for any office in this Grand Lodge, shall receive a public reprimand from the Grand Master, be disfranchised during his attendance on the Grand Lodge, and forever after prohibited from taking his seat as a Representative in this Grand Body! This may appear to some unnecessarily rigorous and severe, but I am quite sure the penalty proposed is not disproportionate to the offense committed, and it is high time we should take hold of this matter in good earnest.

OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENCE WITH SUBORDINATE LODGES.

My official correspondence, within our own jurisdiction, during the past year has been unusually voluminous, very general in its territorial range, and embracing, it would appear, almost every topic which could be suggested by the ritual or the regulations of the Fraternity! Many of our presiding officers seem to be still oblivious of the fact that we have any fundamental governing law, and refer all matters of law and grievance indiscriminately to the decision of the G. M. So very general has been this practice, and in many instances so unnecessary (having a plain provision of the Constitution to guide them,) that I have sometimes thought this method was adopted to ascertain what acquaintance the G. M. himself might have with that instrument, or perhaps to test his loyalty to it, or, possibly, simply to procure his autograph!

It should be remembered by the Craft, that in all cases provided for by positive law, the G. M. is not in any sense the source of more light, and therefore his "*ipse dixit*" must be the mere echo of our Constitutional rules and regulations. It is only in regard to matters of prescriptive law or of doubt and expediency, to which the positive law may or may not constructively apply, that his advice may be acted upon, or becomes in any sense authoritative. I make this suggestion for the benefit of my successor, hop-

ing that by a due observance of this distinction on the part of those who sit in the East, he will be relieved of a vast amount of unnecessary labor.

I deem it unnecessary to submit any detailed report of the numerous decisions which I have made touching Masonic law and usage, where these decisions have been made only in pursuance of precedents which have been long established, not only in this, but also in other jurisdictions. Under the recent legislation of this Grand Body, however, some questions have arisen of practical bearing and importance, in which I have been called to render a decision, without having the benefit of any directing precedent, and to some of these I desire briefly to call your attention

General Regulation No. 15, provides that "all unaffiliated Masons who have remained so for a period of twelve months shall be divested of the following rights: The right of Masonic burial; the right to walk in Masonic procession," etc.

In the case of a venerable Brother, living near Bowlinggreen, represented to me as in every way worthy and exemplary, and the oldest Mason then living in the State, I was requested by the Brethren of Bowlinggreen Lodge to grant a special dispensation permitting them to bury him with Masonic honors. It appears that he had been, in early life, an active and zealous member of the Lodge, but that the Church, to which he also belonged, "having a zeal," as we think, "not according to knowledge," required him to relinquish his membership either with the Lodge or the Church. Concurring in sentiment, we presume, with the Great Apostle to the Gentiles, "that if eating meat would cause his brother to offend, he would not eat meat while the world stood," this old Christian Mason decided (and I honor him for his decision) to dimit from the Lodge, and retain his membership in the Church. In deference to his Church relations he remained thus unaffiliated with the Fraternity to the close of his life. When, however, he felt that he was about to be called by his Supreme Grand Master from the Church militant to the Church triumphant, and believing that his allegiance to ecclesiastical authority had been fully and faithfully discharged, and wishing to give a last public testimonial of his sincere, though long suppressed, attachment to the Institution, he requested a Masonic burial at the hands of his brethren of "the mystic tie." It was thought by the Bowlinggreen Lodge that the regulation under consideration was imperative, and that a special dispensation was therefore necessary to enable them to pay this tribute of respect to his memory. Instead, however, of issuing any dispensation, I decided that the concluding clause of the fifteenth General Regulation permitted the Lodge to reinvest the aged Brother with his forfeited privileges, and directed them to proceed in the matter as their sympathies might dictate, or the facts of the case seemed to warrant. I trust that my reply was received in time, and that this old patriarch was affectionately borne to his last rest-



ing place by the gentle hands of the Brotherhood, and that his freed spirit is now enjoying unrestrained fellowship with all the "good and true" in that Supreme Grand Lodge on high, into which the religious bigot can never enter, and from which, thank Heaven, he has no power to exclude.

I have alluded to this case only to show that in the estimation of some of our brethren a perplexing ambiguity is connected with this 15th General Regulation, which should be removed, and the discretionary power of the Subordinate Lodges more definitely expressed.

In connection with this General Regulation another question of practical importance has been submitted for my decision: "Has a Royal Arch Mason, who is unaffiliated with any Lodge, the right to walk in a Masonic procession, or is a R. A. M. subject to the disabilities enumerated in said Regulation?" In response to this inquiry, I have decided, that, as the Grand Lodge has no jurisdiction over a R. A. Chapter, or any R. A. M., considered as such, it would be manifestly inexpedient, as tending to an unfortunate conflict of jurisdiction, to enforce the regulation against any R. A. M. who might appear in a Masonic procession, under the direction and with the consent of his own Chapter; but that, when he was not thus under the immediate control of the Chapter of which he was a member, he had no right, to walk in a procession, simply by taking the insignia and relative position of a R. A. M. in such a procession. In other words, that simply changing the color of sash and apron did not of itself oust the Lodge of her jurisdiction, while his presence and participation with his own Chapter as an affiliated R. A. M., might, as a matter of expediency, and, in my judgment, ought to have this effect. This decision is respectfully submitted for your consideration and revision, as it is important, in view of the frequency of Masonic processions, that there should be an authoritative *dictum* of the Grand Lodge upon this subject.

Before dismissing this aforesaid general regulation, I would respectfully suggest, that, while it has doubtless had the desired effect of hiving a large number of drones, it is in its present form, as a Grand Lodge regulation, attended with many difficulties, not to say hardships, in its practical operation and effect upon a large class of brethren, who are thus indiscriminately and rather unceremoniously disposed of, and inasmuch as it virtually refers the whole subject matter embraced to the discretion of the Subordinate Lodges for final decision, would it not be as well, perhaps, to expunge it altogether as a general regulation and let each Subordinate Lodge (which it seems to me can alone make a proper discrimination,) dispose of the unaffiliated Masons in their respective jurisdictions as they may think proper, having a due regard for the ancient usages of the Institution?

Letters of inquiry have been received from all points of the compass upon the subject of the jurisdiction of Lodges over their own suspended



members, suggesting doubts whether or not the same Lodge which suspends a brother can still prosecute him for other offenses while under the sentence of suspension.

Article fourth, section first, of our Constitution would seem to be sufficiently explicit upon this point; but in many instances I find it has been strangely overlooked, or more strangely misconstrued, and Lodges are doubting and debating this point of discipline, and possibly treating with undeserved lenity many unworthy Masons in their midst, simply because they stand suspended, and as they erroneously conclude, are therefore beyond the further jurisdiction of the Lodge.

It should be remembered that the suspension only leaves the brother in the condition of any other unaffiliated Mason, and therefore he is amenable to the Lodge under whose jurisdiction he resides for his deportment as a Mason, and that the Lodge may, if necessary, proceed from one prosecution against him to another, according to the grade of the offense committed, until the persistent delinquent is finally expelled from the Fraternity. Otherwise, a brother suspended for non-payment of dues could at any subsequent period demand admission and fellowship simply on paying his dues, no matter how grossly immoral or even infamous he might in the meantime have become!

A review of my correspondence with the various Lodges in this jurisdiction, during the past year, forces the reflection upon my mind, and I would transfer it to yours with emphasis, that there is generally a deplorable laxity of discipline not only with reference to resident unaffiliated Masons, but also toward those who are ostensibly in good fellowship with their respective Lodges, but who are nevertheless confessedly immoral and profane.

It is a cardinal precept of the Institution, that as Masons we are to be "good men and true, and strictly to obey the moral law."

Brethren, are all our Lodges composed of such men? In their relations to general society are all law-abiding and peaceable citizens? In their social relations, are they "diligent, prudent, temperate, discreet," and in view of their connection with the Fraternity, are they humane and charitable, those "to whom the burdened heart may pour out its sorrows, to whom distress may prefer its suit, whose hands are guided by justice, and whose hearts are expanded by benevolence?"

Let every W. M. present summon the craft under his charge into an ideal presence, and with these pertinent questions ringing in his ears, and in view of his responsibilities to that portion of the general Craft and to this Grand Lodge, let him seriously contemplate for a moment the work of the past year! Has there been a faithful application of your Symbolic Square to every "Ashlar" wrought into the building, under your immediate supervision? Has every unworthy one been rejected and every defective one removed?

Has the Symbolic Gavel been regularly and faithfully sounded, in calling the craft from refreshment to labor, and when thus sounded, has it gathered from the honorable walks of life a skillful and harmonious band of Brothers, united in the grand design of "being happy and communicating happiness"—or, on the other hand, has a promiscuous and incongenial company only rallied in response to your gavel and been convened, from time to time, in your Lodge room, a company as variegated as the mosaic pavement of the temple upon which they walk, embracing and commingling in seeming good fellowship all classes of the community—the prudent and the pious with the profligate and the profane—the minister of God and the devotee of Bacchus—the rigid professor and the heartless gamester—the grasping, sordid Shylock and his too confiding bankrupt victim—the unprincipled destroyer of domestic bliss and social harmony, who preys upon innocence and virtue, and the earnest man of God, who "visits the fatherless and the widow in their afflictions, and keeps himself unspotted from the world?" And with such an incongruous medley are you vainly attempting to win the "golden opinions" of your "brothers and fellows," and to secure the confidence of the public in behalf of Masonry—solacing yourself meanwhile with the fond delusion that you are indeed the W. M. of a regular Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons? I tell you nay, verily! Be not longer deceived. In the highest moral and Masonic sense, yours is but a clandestine Lodge, no matter how regularly derived may be your charter, or how bright soever may be your ritual. While you may have "the form" of Masonry, you are practically "denying the power thereof." From such Lodges the best Masons are compelled to retire to find congenial companionship elsewhere, while into such Lodges the vicious and immoral are as naturally attracted to enjoy a closer mystic union with their "boon companions of the bowl," or their convivial confederates of the card table.

Brethren, this is indeed plain talk, but it is nevertheless true, and uttered only as earnest and fraternal admonition, proceeding from the abundance of a heart devoted to the cause of Masonry as next to the cause of God.

#### OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENCE WITH OTHER JURISDICTIONS.

My official correspondence with other Masonic jurisdictions during the past year has been in the highest degree courteous and brotherly, nothing having occurred in our intercourse to mar the harmony of our relations as independent constituents of one great fraternal system of social amelioration. This affords subject of special congratulations, in view of the fact that other organizations in our country, of higher dignity and pretension, have been unable to avoid the collisions of sectional interest and prejudice following in the wake of our national troubles, and are therefore still unfortunately arrayed in bitter antagonism, notwithstanding the fierce waves of civil strife have long since spent their fury, and sullenly receded from our wasted borders. This fact, while it inspires implicit faith in our time-

honored institution to weather any adverse tide in triumph, should at the same time prompt a continued steadfast fidelity to our ancient land-marks as that to which, under Heaven, we are this day indebted as an institution for our secure anchorage in the haven of peace.

Having now successfully crossed this tempestuous "sea of troubles"—more dangerous far than were the straits of Messina to the mariners of old—and having reached the desired port in safety, to the amazement and discomfiture of our enemies, surely nothing but the most suicidal frenzy could prompt any of the now tranquil fleet to provoke an angry bombardment of the others. We hope, therefore, that we shall hear nothing more of a forced recognition of an alien crew in the shape of negro Lodges, or of any other pseudo-philanthropic chimeras suggested by the spurious socialistic Masonry of the day.

To put in jeopardy the harmony and prosperity of our entire Brotherhood, in order to fraternize with any particular element in our society, and especially one that has ever been a disturbing one, or to promote any such kindred purpose whatever, would be to rival the folly of him of old who "sold his birthright for a mess of pottage." If our sister Grand Lodges would all cultivate that spirit of forbearance and genuine fraternity which it is the true mission of our common Freemasonry to inspire, we opine that none of them would find the requisite time or taste for the negro polemics which have of late, in some instances, disgraced their assemblies. It becomes us as Masons to seek out the old paths and pursue them, rather than be decoyed into dangerous quagmires, under the delusive guidance of a mere *ignis fatuus*, generated by political miasma, and luring only to destroy; instead of vying with each other in introducing confusion into the temple, we should be inspired with that nobler emulation of "who can best work and best agree," and, instead of planting the "apples of discord," we should be cultivating more faithfully the lovely and exuberant vine of charity. While it is the privilege of each to rebuke, in a fraternal spirit, all efforts at innovation on the part of the others, and to repudiate all designs foreign to our common trestleboard, it should be our earnest and constant desire to cement closely and indissolubly the various jurisdictions throughout the land, which, although sovereign in their own legitimate spheres, are nevertheless mutually dependent upon that same ancient Book of Constitutions, and are fondly embraced in our mystic zone of 'Brotherly Love, Relief, and Truth.

#### GRAND LODGE REPRESENTATION.

In this connection permit me to call your attention to a subject which I think has heretofore been rather unceremoniously dismissed from your consideration. I allude to the subject of Grand Lodge representation—a kind of diplomatic arrangement through which our respective Grand Lodges may hold more immediate and convenient intercourse and personal correspondence with each other. I am aware that some of our good brethren are

disposed to regard the system with disfavor, contemplating it in the light of a mere useless appendage, conferring a high-sounding title only, without being productive of any practical good. I would respectfully submit that the universal recognition of the system by our trans-atlantic brethren, and its adoption by many of our own Grand Lodges, should perhaps incline our opposing brethren to distrust the correctness of their opinion, or at least to hold it in modest abeyance.

An examination of this subject has developed the fact that throughout the European continent, as well as in South America, this system of Grand Lodge representation is universal, and that their Grand Lodges hold communications only through their representatives. On this continent this representative policy has been sanctioned and adopted by the Grand Lodges of Alabama, California, Canada, Connecticut, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Minnesota, Mississippi, New Brunswick, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Nova Scotia, Nebraska, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, Vermont, Washington Territory and Wisconsin, making in all thirty-one Grand Lodges in the northern and southern portions of the continent which have appointed representatives, leaving only twelve Grand Lodges in the northern part which have not as yet adopted the system.

These representatives are found residing near the Grand Bodies with which they are placed in communication, and are made the depositaries of the "proceedings," foreign correspondence, and other important documents of the respective Grand Lodges they represent, and thus afford important facilities for the transaction of any business, or the dispatch of any correspondence between different jurisdictions. It will already be seen that such local depositaries would become valuable auxiliaries to the various G. M., and especially to the various Grand Secretaries in the discharge of their official duties, involving any intercourse or correspondence with other Grand Bodies.

It would also, no doubt, be available for good in thwarting that refined rascality which of late has been so often perpetrated by roving impostors who are traveling through the country at the expense of our Lodges, and levying their fraudulent exactions upon our charity fund under the bogus sanction and authority of some foreign jurisdiction. Such artful and accomplished swindlers could thus, we think, be more readily detected and exposed, while other applicants who might be proper beneficiaries could be regularly vouched for and accredited as deserving our Masonic sympathy and assistance.

Believing that the tendency of the system is to strengthen the bonds of brotherly love and fraternal intercourse between the various Grand Lodges, and thereby promote a general harmony of our entire Brotherhood, I am



inclined to regard it with much favor, and would be gratified to see it adopted by this Grand Lodge. And, as many of our sister Grand Lodges have already designated some of our distinguished brethren as their accredited representatives, and have invited a reciprocation of the courtesy at our hands, I would respectfully recommend such co-operation.

But if the Grand Lodge should conclude still to remain in selfish isolation in this matter, I would nevertheless suggest that we at least respect our own dignity and place on record a more consistent and satisfactory reason for our course than that given in the resolution and adopted at a former communication—"that this Grand Lodge had never adopted the representative system, and had never received any representatives from other Grand Lodges, and they saw no reason to change the practice!"

#### GRAND ORIENT OF FRANCE.

There is perhaps no subject of general interest to the Fraternity which has of late excited more attention and surprise, or elicited a more universal sentiment of disapprobation, than the unwarrantable invasion of the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Louisiana by the Grand Orient of France; and I deem it my duty to submit, for your consideration, this gross departure from the principles of Masonic comity—not only on account of its violation of the recognized sovereignty of the Grand Lodge of Louisiana over symbolic Masonry within the limits of that State, but also because of its covert attack upon the prerogative of this and every other Grand Lodge on the Continent.

If the spirit of propagandism, so foreign to the mission of our conservative institution, which has, in this instance, been confessedly adopted and acted upon by the Grand Orient of France, be not properly rebuked and punished, by the indignant withdrawal of all Masonic intercourse with the offending party, it may prove but the inauguration of a foreign aggressive policy which will, sooner or later, seek to subvert our American Freemasonry, or degrade it to the condition of a cringing vassal at the footstool of French domination.

It will be remembered, that for some years past there has been an illegal and spurious organization of the A. and A. S. Rite of Masonry in the east end of the city of New Orleans, assuming to confer the degrees of Symbolic Masonry, in open defiance of the prerogative of the Grand Lodge of that State. This organization was established by a resident Frenchman of the name of Foulhouse, on his own personal responsibility, and, instead of bestowing his own significant and most appropriate name upon his illegitimate bantling, he dubbed the organization the "*Supreme Council of the State of Louisiana.*" This so-called Supreme Council was justly repudiated by the Grand Lodge of Louisiana, as a clandestine body of Masons, and, so far as we know or believe, was never recognized by any Masonic authority on either side of the Atlantic, until recently adopted as the special *protege*



of the Grand Orient of France; and, what is still more remarkable, this same Grand Orient of France, only ten years ago, not only refused to recognize it as a legitimate Supreme Council, but also boldly denounced its arrogant pretensions as such, and even expelled the originator—the aforesaid Foulhouse—“*by erasing his name from its Book of Gold!*”

Notwithstanding this very emphatic and unmistakable repudiation we find, that after the lapse of ten years this isolated and unrecognized body of Masons, in the city of New Orleans, renew their application to the Grand Orient of France for Masonic recognition, and, strange to tell, the result is in harmony with their wishes. We look in vain for any Masonic change in the relative position of these parties—for any Masonic reason which has subsequently developed, or for any Masonic surroundings whatever—to authorize or explain or palliate this change of policy on the part of our French Brethren, involving so serious an infringement of the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Louisiana. We are therefore forced to the conclusion, that this change of policy was not made upon any Masonic grounds whatever. In truth, the decree of the Grand Orient, and the French report which it prompted, clearly demonstrate that the whole procedure has been set on foot only to favor certain political and socialistic reforms, which have of late established a community of interest between the Grand Orient of France and this Foulhouse bogus Supreme Council, especially as manifested in ‘opening the doors of their respective temples to all men, without regard to nationality, race, or *color.*’

In the French report referred to, and prepared by order of Millenet, the “Grand Master of the Masonic Order in France,” we find this most significant paragraph: “We hold that the Grand Orient of France cannot decide the question of regularity or irregularity which is purely relative between these two American Masonic powers. If the Grand Orient believes that the name of Masons belongs to the applicants, that the manner in which they bear that name, and the application they make of the principles of our Order, entitle them to receive a favorable response, no one ought to see, in that answer, the decision of a case which has not been submitted to it by the two parties, and upon which it is not competent to decide. With this reservation we do not hesitate to say, that if circumstances prove the existence of this new power; if it is not only an accomplished but an accepted fact; if, moreover, it gives to the principles of Masonry an efficiency which they would not possess without it, friendly relations are permissible and even imperative.”

This is indeed a model specimen of special pleading! Here is an assumption, that the bogus Supreme Council in New Orleans is an American Masonic power—a fact which was denied by this same Grand Orient of France only a few years ago, and which has been persistently denied not only by the Grand Lodge of Louisiana, and all her sister Grand Lodges on the

Continent, but also by the regular Supreme Councils of the A. and A. S. Rite, all of which have declined any Masonic intercourse with any Mason claiming affiliation with it.

The position taken in the paragraph under consideration we conceive to be wholly untenable, "that if circumstances prove the existence of any new Masonic powers," (whether regularly authorized or not,) "and if this power is not only an accomplished but an accepted fact," and embraces this French idea of peculiar "*efficiency*," that therefore friendly relations with other jurisdictions "are permissible and even imperative." On the contrary, we hold that if this new Masonic power lacks the important feature of regularity, and is a self-constituted power, in open hostility to another acknowledged sovereignty, no such recognition is either imperative or permissible.

Adopting the principle advanced in the French report, the Grand Orient of France could not consistently refuse to recognize any other clandestine Lodge of Masons in the United States, provided only that they incorporated the negro element of "*efficiency*" in their "application of the principles of Masonry;" for they are as much a "Masonic power" as the so-called Supreme Council of the State of Louisiana. Their existence is as much "an accomplished and an accepted fact," and, with the negro element super-added, would have the necessary "*efficiency*," and thus might the prerogative of any of our Grand Lodge jurisdictions, which did not boast this fascinating element of "*efficiency*," be invaded and supplanted by this self-exultant propagandist of socialistic Freemasonry!

We endorse, most heartily, the views embodied in the able report of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts on this subject, and rejoice that this old "Pioneer Grand Lodge of America" has taken a stand so bold and decided, and yet so courteous and fraternal, in regard to this unprovoked and unauthorized interference, with the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Louisiana, on the part of the Grand Orient of France.

Every Grand Lodge which has met since this decree of recognition by the Grand Orient of France, has condemned its policy, and we trust that every other Grand Lodge on the Continent will embrace the earliest opportunity to place on record an emphatic protest of this unfraternal and discourteous proceeding.

This is the second attempt which has been made by Foreign Masonic powers to subsidize illegal local organizations, to the overthrow or embarrassment of our Grand Jurisdictions, and it therefore becomes us to remonstrate plainly and earnestly; to give full assurance of the fact that we have no toleration or respect for such mischievous discourtesies and entrenchments, whether in the form of *French* interference—as in the last instance—or of *German* dictation—as in the first. That while, as a Grand Lodge, we deeply deplore the exhibition of such an unfortunate and dangerous spirit of propagandism on the part of our trans-Atlantic brethren, a spirit so dis-

honoring to our common Freemasonry, so subversive of her grand mission, and so destructive of her Ancient Landmarks, we shall nevertheless, persistently resist all such encroachments upon the prerogatives of our respective jurisdictions, whether French, German, or American in its origin, or from whatever point of the compass the outrage may proceed!

THE PRESS AND SOCIALISTIC MASONRY.

It is also a matter of sincere regret that, in some instances, the Masonic press of our country seems to have become imbued with the spirit of socialistic Masonry. Some of our journalists, finding the sentiment adopted in all our Masonic manuals that "Masonry is a progressive science," have artfully employed it as a motto whereby to sanction, if not to sanctify, their pernicious heresies. Instead of using it as manifestly intended by its author, to indicate that Freemasonry was taught the novitiate by advancing from one degree to another, they have perverted it to mean a progressive sympathy in its policy and teachings, with the spirit of the times, rapidly adjusting itself into new combinations under every revolution of the political kaliedoscope. This is what Pollock might call

"Stealing the livery of heaven to serve the devil in."

If there be anything stereotyped in its character and principles, beneath the sun, in the form of a moral organization, it is speculative Freemasonry, and hence it is that we find that it has for ages past so influenced our common humanity, as not only to overcome the animosities of discordant creeds and the jealousies of rival kingdoms, but also to establish independently of each, and amid the Babel-like confusion of them all, a yet more imperial sway over the hearts and lives of men—maintaining the closest relations of amity and friendship among those who have frequently nothing else in common, who are often ignorant of each other's dialect, and hold communion only through a Masonic medium. Freemasonry, therefore, seeks to affiliate mankind upon great moral and catholic principles—not upon any special policies or religious dogmas.

If we mistake not the animus of some of these Masonic editors, they would also tyle the door of our Lodges against all Christian ministers, and regard our "Great Light" simply as a symbol of moral conservatism, for which the "Common prayer-book," or "Paley's Moral Philosophy," or anything else of the sort sanctioned by the prevailing religious sentiment, would do quite as well. This is making Freemasonry far too progressive to suit our antiquated taste.

While making this passing allusion to such unworthy, time-serving Masonic journals, we rejoice in the fact that we have many accredited publications which are correct and safe exponents of our principles, and worthy of all commendation. I need not remind you that we have one such in our very midst, whose spirit is in striking contrast with this revolutionary tendency—one that has already been indorsed by this grand body, and which,

in my estimation, possesses sufficient literary merit, aside from its Masonic features, to recommend it favorably to the general reader, and Masonic character sufficient, without any other merit, to recommend it especially to the general Craft.

ANTI-MASONIC CONVENTIONS.

While we look with distrust, if not with apprehension, upon such politico-Masonic demonstrations on the part of the professed friends of the fraternity, we entertain no other feelings than those of scorn and contempt for that bellicose spirit of Anti-Masonry, which, since the subsidence of our national troubles, has been cropping out in various localities, in the form of ecclesiastical conventions, calling together a heterogeneous assembly of surpliced gentry, agreeing in nothing else but the pious purpose of issuing their bulls of denunciation against the fraternity. In these conventions we recognize the same factious spirits which, from the beginning, have been foremost and prominent in the work of agitation, and since the settlement of a great question of domestic policy by the country, they have been literally spoiling for a tilt at something.

"Their trenchant blades, Toledo trusty,  
For want of use were growing rusty,"

and finding our institution unharmed by the desolating tide of civil war, and standing proudly aloof from all sectional alliances, it was considered their lawful prey, and they have accordingly pounced upon it with the most savage and unrelenting fury! We do not, however, fear the result. It will only furnish another apt illustration of the fable of "the viper gnawing the file." These clerical dignitaries, if, in any sense, the followers of the Prince of Peace, have sadly misapprehended the character of the only offensive weapon provided for them in the Gospel armory, and instead of taking, as commanded, the "sword of the Spirit," have only presumptuously armed themselves with the spirit of the sword, and gone forth breathing out "threatenings and slaughter" against all secret societies, but more especially this of ours.

Now while I yield to no one in my sincere respect and exalted appreciation of the true minister of God who

"Points the road to heaven and leads the way,"

yet, for the querulous bigot—the contemptible pulpit partisan, whose sacerdotal robes are used merely as bulletin boards for the sanctimonious display of political phylacteries, we have no language to express the deep disgust and loathing we entertain, and can only exclaim with the gifted Cowper,

"Ye clergy, while your orbit is your place,  
Lights of the world, and stars of human race;  
But if eccentric, ye forsake your sphere,  
Prodigious, ominous, and nerved with fear,  
The comet's baneful influence is a dream,  
Yours' real, and pernicious in the extreme.

\* \* \* \* \*

Go, cast your robes at your bishop's feet,



Send your dishonored gowns to Monmouth street,  
The sacred function in your hands is made  
Sad sacrilege—no function but a trade."

The persecution of Freemasonry, by such religious zealots, has been too long our portion, to our praise, for us to hope it will ever be withdrawn. But while true to ourselves, and the sublime principles of the fraternity, we need fear no opposition from without. This has ever been our heritage. The entire history of the institution only proves,

"How sublime a thing it is  
To suffer and be strong."

To blot out her memorial from under heaven the most furious efforts of fanaticism, the most ingenious arts of statesmen and the concentrated strength of empires have been employed. Her enemies have rejoiced when she languished, and erected monuments, as they vainly imagined, of her perpetual overthrow. She has been proscribed and persecuted "by spiritual wickedness in high places," threatened and banished by the edicts of ruling sovereigns, and boldly assaulted by cruel and blood-thirsty tyrants. But where now are those tyrants, and where now their empires? They have long since vanished from the earth; their names have descended to us on the roll of infamy, and their empires have passed like shadows over the rock, leaving scarce a trace behind. But what became of Freemasonry? Did her enemies accomplish her destruction? Nay, verily! She rose triumphantly above their crumbling dynasties, fresh in beauty and in might. She has outlived the monumental marble of her foes, laughing to scorn their inscriptions and the hands that wrote them. She has celebrated the funeral of kings and of kingdoms that plotted her destruction, and with the inscription of their intolerant pride has transmitted to posterity the record of their shame. For the space of three thousand years the fiercest lightnings of religious bigotry have been blazing about her pinnacles, and the hottest thunderbolts of partisan hate have been hurled against her majestic columns; but, divinely supported by wisdom, strength and beauty, the venerable temple still remains unconsumed by the lightning and undemolished by the thunderbolt, arrayed in all its beauteous proportions and dazzling splendor.

It is true that during these fierce storms of persecution, we have occasionally seen our beloved Institution glimmering like the pale star of morn betwixt light and darkness on the horizon's verge; but when the storm-cloud has passed away, it has left our sky more clear and bright and beautiful than before, like those tempests in the physical world which seem to walk our skies only to give the rainbow birth! That Almighty Architect, who "in the beginning," assigned the star of Masonry its place in the moral heavens, and said "Let there be light," has never permitted it to become as one of the "lost Pleiades," but throughout the long night of ages it has, under His All-seeing Eye, continued to beam on the pathway of erring



humanity, and is to-day shedding abroad over the earth a moral radiance brighter far than when, at its early rising in the east, it first flashed its resplendent light around the brow of Mount Moriah !

In view of this moral phenomenon, the preservation and perpetuity of Freemasonry as a distinct organization, from the days of the renowned monarch of Israel to the present time, while all other institutions contemporaneous in origin have long since been numbered among the things that were, may we not exclaim, without irreverence, that "the Lord her God in the midst of her is mighty, that His presence is a fountain of health and His protection a wall of fire."

But while we may justly boast of the antiquity and preservation of the Fraternity, it will not do to rely upon these claims as our only passport to popular favor. In this utilitarian age "*Cui bono?*" is the great question, and Freemasonry must answer it with her moral achievements and practical benevolence if she would retain the confidence and respect of mankind. She must be true to her lofty destiny as the appointed messenger of light and knowledge, anciently and gloriously commissioned to go forth on an embassy of love to the whole family of man—to establish the mystic fellowship of "good men and true" on the purest principles of humanity, equality, and brotherly love—to teach and enforce a practical "system of morality veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols"—"to carry to remotest lands and latest ages a copy of the moral law, a knowledge of the God of Israel, the accountability of man, and the immortality of the soul,"—and, under the sanction and influence of these solemn and fundamental truths, to unite all castes in society, all parties in politics, and all sects in religion, into one universal brotherhood, where the rich and the poor, the humble and the exalted, the prince and the peasant, the savage and the sage, the republican and the royalist, the Christian, the Jew, and the Musselman, may all meet upon one common level, speak one common language, coalesce in one common faith, and worship at one common altar. In contemplation of such a glorious mission and such sublime teachings, how dignified becomes our position, and how responsible our engagements as Free and Accepted Masons ! Having passed through its beautiful and impressive ritual, how important that our hearts should ever retain the imprint of its generous spirit—that our lives should ever be influenced by the teachings of its divine philosophy—a philosophy not arrayed in the gaudy attire of oriental fancy, or the empty niceties and artificial distinctions of Grecian acumen, but in the splendors of Heavenly truth, and the loveliness of maiden modesty—the philosophy of Faith, which plants the destiny of man on the rock of ages; the philosophy of Love, which weare garlands of roses to deck the brow of Time; and the philosophy of Hope, which hangs the promise of immortality on the tomb.

In conclusion, then, brethren, I adjure you to remember that, as **Free and Accepted Masons**, we are the honored members of an institution which bears in all its features, the indelible impress of an Almighty Architect—that benevolence and good will to man constitute its chief foundation cornerstone, and that the supporting pillars of the superstructure are wisdom, strength and beauty—the wisdom of eternal truth, the strength of harmony and the “Beauty of Holiness”—that within this Mystic Temple we are taught by precept and symbol the important duties we owe to God, to our fellow man and to ourselves—that charity, the Godlike principle having power to “cover a multitude of sins,” is its pervading spirit—that its grand design is to assist, as an inferior and subordinate agency in repairing the ruin of our first parents, to restore the moral image of God upon the soul of man, and to fill it with goodness, purity and truth, to teach brethren to dwell together in unity, to give direction and force to those social feelings which flow so deeply in our nature, to bind us as men and as **Masons**, to grasp our fellow man in friendship’s warm embrace where each can

“Feel a brother’s woe and show a brother’s love ”

In a word, that it is the great object of the Fraternity to give full scope and active exercise to all our powers of doing good, and under the guidance of its Great Light, so to develop the moral faculties of her votaries, that the character of each shall present the appearance of a beautiful and symmetric column, founded on the firm and enduring pediment of truth and virtue and carried up in fair due proportions, combining the strength of the Doric with the beauty of the Corinthian, illustrating in its design, the skill and grace of wisdom and goodness, and displaying in its admirable finish, the embellishments of Faith, Hope and Charity, so that finally, properly marked and prepared, the cap-stone may be laid by the Almighty Architect himself in a higher and brighter sphere, and its proper place assigned it in “that spiritual temple, that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.”

Past Grand Master Swigert moved that the Grand Master’s address be spread upon the minutes, and referred to a committee of three, for appropriate reference of the various subjects contained therein, which was adopted.

The Deputy Grand Master appointed P. G. Master Swigert and Bros. Woodruff and Pickett said committee.

The Grand Treasurer presented his annual report, which was referred to the Committee on Finance.

Said report is as follows :

# ADDRESS

OF

## GRAND MASTER ELISHA S. FITCH,

AT THE LAYING OF THE CORNER STONE OF THE MASONIC  
WIDOWS' AND ORPHANS' HOME,

On the 19th day of October, A. D. 1869, A. L. 5869.

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[NOTE BY THE GRAND SECRETARY.—During the ceremonies and the delivery of the Address a violent snow storm occurred.]

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*Fellow-Citizens and Brethren :—*

By request of the President and Board of Trustees of the "Masonic Widows' and Orphans' Home and Infirmary," we have met to-day, in the capacity of Free and Accepted Masons, to lay the corner-stone of the building to be erected on this site, and devoted to this charity, with the imposing ceremonies of our time-honored institution. And permit me to say, without the least affectation, that I do not envy the stoicism of that man who could stand unmoved in such a presence, on such an occasion—much less do I envy the self-complacency of him who vainly imagines that he could heighten or intensify the feeling of the hour by any set forms of speech. It occurs to me that all studied phraseology, however beautiful and eloquent it might be, would lose its significance and effect, and be rebuked into respectful silence under the magical influence of our present surroundings.

The occasion itself is indeed its own best orator, appealing as it does so directly and pathetically to the great heart of our common humanity, and quickening as it does its throbbings of sympathy and hope for the afflicted and destitute, the sad and sorrowing ones of earth. The contemplated enterprise, with all its clustering associations, the present Grand Lodge of Kentucky, called off from its regular labors, and thus publicity displayed in ample form—this enthusiastic rally of craftsmen from all points of the

compass and every department of the order—arrayed in the symbolic vestments and insignia of the fraternity—this generous outpouring of a liberal-minded public representing, as it does, the venerable in age, and the dignified in intellect, and, enlivened as it is by the innocence of youth, the charms of beauty, and the inspiration of music, have all invested the occasion with an interest and a moral sublimity which even the most gifted and eloquent would fail to highten. And although the sunshine of heaven has been suddenly exchanged for the drifting snow storm, it is only the mere suggestion of human suffering, and in harmony with the sad vicissitudes of life, to which the widow and the orphan are exposed. Thus to step aside, fellow-citizens, from the noise and bustle and dust of the great highway of life to the great pathway of moral enterprise and achievement—to pause in the rapid whirl and excitement of business pursuits to contemplate for a moment a higher plane of human activity; to withdraw from the crowded altars of mammon, to minister for a season at the sacred shrine of charity—is alike grateful to the mind and sense, and highly honoring to the moral sensibilities of our common humanity. It brings all hearts under the influence of one harmonious and universal impulse; it casts the spell of kindness, of brotherhood, of social affection and of useful philanthropy over all classes of our agitated community, and freshens up more and more in the ethereal and immortal spirit of man that burning light, that impress of divinity within, which animalism and earth have ever been in constant and in horrid league to darken and destroy. Such occasions diversify our eternal discussion of party politics, and the fluctuations of the gold market, and remind us that there is something worth living for besides politics and pelf, and that men of all parties and politics, and of every condition in life, have a common and a higher interest in the social harmony and amelioration of our common race.

We hail this popular demonstration, therefore, as an auspicious event in the history of this noble charity—not merely as an idle pageant, with a view to catch the eye of vulgar curiosity, but as a solemn public recognition of the just claims of the institution to the patronage and support of the State at large—a recognition not only at the hands of the Grand Lodge of Kentucky, and of all her subordinates here represented, but also on the part of the citizens of this great commercial emporium, in the bosom of which, by common consent, the Widows' and Orphans' Home has been established, fully assured, that as its corner-stone will be firmly embedded in her generous soil, so the great charity which it represents would also be deeply and firmly embedded in the generous hearts of this enlightened and benevolent community.

In selecting the city of Louisville as the site of this philanthropic charity, its founders have only paid a just tribute to her proud and commanding position as the great leading metropolis of the State, and in return



would only ask of her to extend to the Widows' and Orphans' Home the same fostering care and liberal policy which have already won for the city so enviable a reputation as the friend and promoter of the various public charities established in her midst. They seek only to add another gem to the bright coronal of jewels, in the form of charitable institutions, which already encircles and graces the queenly brow of the "Falls City."

The enterprising spirit of her community is nowhere else more strikingly and appropriately displayed than in the substantial and highly ornate public buildings devoted to her numerous charities. This prominent feature of the city attracts the attention, and elicits the admiration, of every visitor to the place, and may be justly regarded as an indication not only of great municipal wealth and prosperity, but also of the highest Christian enlightenment.

In erecting this "Home" for our widows and orphans, while we will certainly be actuated by no vain ambition to excel in architectural display, it will nevertheless be our purpose to adorn the site donated for this purpose with a permanent and graceful structure, befitting the worthy and honored beneficiaries for whom it is intended, and at the same time worthy of the beautiful and liberal minded city in which it is located.

It is an enterprise, therefore, in which we trust the city of Louisville will feel a just and commendable pride, and to which she will extend an active co-operation.

To her own fair and lovely daughters who, with such admirable tact and discernment, have inaugurated the "Ladies' Masonic Widows' and Orphans' Society," and rallied so promptly to the assistance of this great enterprise, and have ever extended to it such invaluable service, we feel already especially indebted. Their zeal has been ardent and untiring, and their enthusiasm unabating, even gathering renewed energy from every discouragement, and if their success had been commensurate with either this zeal or enthusiasm, the Widows' and Orphans' Home would ere this have been erected and filled with happy inmates. And whenever this glorious work shall have been consummated, and we shall then meet to dedicate, as we have now met to inaugurate, let it not be forgotten by the orator of the occasion—but let his most chaste, beautiful and eloquent expressions announce the fact that the heroic and persistent devotion of the ladies of Louisville in behalf of this great Masonic charity has been its Archimedean lever—its most inspiring element of success.

As a Fraternity, brethren, we are especially committed to this humane enterprise, and it is in this relation that the eye, the hope and the heart of the community are upon us, and upon us too with such intensity of observation and of wish as may arouse our own sense of duty and achievement. It was the policy of an invading general to burn the fleet which landed his troops on the soil which he desired to conquer, that the impossibility of a successful retreat

might add desperation to their heroism and commit them manfully to the success of the expedition. We have pursued a like policy. By the very name we have given this charity—by the investments we have made of the sacred fund contributed in its behalf, and the ceremonies with which we inaugurate its establishment, we have left *ourselves no return fleet*—it is burned to the water's edge, and an honorable and safe retreat from this solemn engagement is now a moral impossibility. We must succeed, or suffer an inglorious and irredeemable defeat. But we shall succeed. It is an enterprise prompted and sanctified by too many uncanceled vows to the dead, and fraught with too much happiness and hope to the living, ever to be abandoned by the Masons of Kentucky. Within our jurisdiction more than thirty thousand Masonic hearts are embraced in fraternal companionship, which should feel the inspiration of this holy mission and beat in harmony with its hopes.

But there is an influence, second to this cause, far more potential than fraternal sympathy or organized benevolence—an influence which underlies and prompts them both. It is an influence from the skies, secured to the enterprise in answer to the supplicating cries of the beneficiaries themselves—the desolate widows and impoverished orphans for whom we would provide this shelter and home from the pitiless storms of life.

The mere announcement of this proposed charity has thrown a glorious sunbeam of hope athwart the darkened chambers of their souls, and amid the ceaseless toil and consuming anxieties of the day, and throughout the sad and lonely vigils of the night, their importunate appeals for its success have ascended from the hapless hut of the disconsolate widow and from the orphan's pallet of straw to that infinite Being “whose eyes are ever over the righteous and his ears open to their cries.”

An inspired apostle of Christianity has defined “pure and undefiled religion before God, the Father,” to be this, “to visit the fatherless and the widow in their afflictions, and to keep ourselves unspotted from the world.” In view of this definition, is not our charity well nigh elevated to the dignity of a religious institution? The first chapter of relative duties embraced in this comprehensive summary of “pure and undefiled religion” is but another designation for the noble charity we have this day met to inaugurate; and think you the Divine Author of this religion will permit an institution, whose grand design is in such beautiful harmony with its teachings, to fail of ultimate success? Nay, verily. When the compassionate Redeemer uttered to His disciples the mournful truth that “the poor ye have always with you,” he evidently intended to designate them as the special legatees of his love, and the obligation to minister to their wants is as imperative as it is perpetual, and will ever require the sympathy and co-operation of the Christian, the patriot, and the philanthropist, and such sympathy and

co-operation will as certainly and as continuously receive the special blessing and approval of Heaven.

The enterprise under consideration to-day is but a necessary result of the increased widowhood and orphanage transferred to the care of the Masonic fraternity, and of the country generally, by the merciless ravages of war. This terrible calamity, which has swept over the land with the besom of destruction, has multiplied indefinitely these objects of our care and commiseration—their natural protectors have fallen in the shock of battle, or perhaps more slowly but surely wasted away under the rigors of army prisons or the pestilential vapors of crowded hospitals, and these, their survivors, have been left, in many instances, alone in the world, to buffet as best they may with the bleak storms of adversity which now overshadow with their gloomy pall their dreary pathway through life.

"Their home a dismal ruin lies,  
Where mirth late tuned her lyre of joy,  
And tears of anguish fill your eyes,  
*Poor orphan girl and houseless boy.*"

The desolating tide of civil war has left them as social wrecks drifted upon a sterile strand, gazing fondly but hopelessly into the gloomy depths which have buried all their earthly hopes forever. And now from this scene of social isolation, with uplifted hands and streaming eyes, they are appealing to us for a shelter and a home, and invoking the mercy of the widow's God, and the protection of the Father of the fatherless in behalf of our philanthropic labors. And think you such earnest pleadings, urged with the sublime eloquence of despair, will prove unavailing in the courts of Heaven and before the "Judge of all the Earth—the King Eternal, Immortal and Invisible!" It cannot be. Their plea will prevail—nay these petitions are already being answered. In the providence of God we are here to-day in response to their supplications; and methinks the divine spirit of charity itself has been evoked from its native skies and is now hovering over this consecrated spot to hallow the services of the hour. We have an abiding faith that He who spake those words of compassionate tenderness and love, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not," and who, in response to the widow's wail, halted the bier in the city of Nain and reanimated the sleeping dust of the "widow's son," will assuredly sustain and bless our "Widows' and Orphans' Home." So mote it be.

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# ADDRESS

OF

## GRAND MASTER CHARLES EGINTON,

DELIVERED AT HIS INSTALLATION AS GRAND MASTER OF  
THE GRAND LODGE OF KENTUCKY,

On the 21st day of October, A. D. 1869, A. L. 5869.

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*Brethren of the Grand Lodge:*

I have no prepared speech with which to thank you for the great honor which your partiality has so signally conferred.

And in assuming this most important station, I assure you, with a grateful heart, that I will faithfully and assiduously, during the year that is before us, perform the duties thereof to the best of my ability, and most earnestly desire the active co-operation of not only those now present but of every Mason in the State.

Freemasonry, as a moral institution, at this time in Kentucky, has no superior in the sublimity of its principles, the number and influence of its members and the self-evident future usefulness of the organization. To sustain that power and insure continued prosperity, imposes a most sacred duty upon every one of the Brotherhood.

The hideous form of anti-Masonry within the current year has been again trying to raise its venomous head and instill its poison into the minds of the ignorant and deluded. Against this demon of mischief the respective subordinate Lodges must be prepared to show a dignified and impenetrable front. Our banner must hang on the outer wall with no uncertain fluttering, whilst within the tabernacle unity and strength, cemented with purity and love, make the Brotherhood a defiant and unconquerable host. I do not mean by this to merely gratify the ear or flatter the just pride of those who hear me, but through you to address myself to each Subordinate Lodge in the State.

The strength of this Grand Body is not in the adornments or conveniences of this beautiful hall, or in the intellect of those around and before me, its

foundation stone rests, concentrates and emanates from the Subordinate Bodies we represent. They are the fountains that give forth the living waters, from whence come the life and glory which we are endeavoring to reflect back with invigorating and refreshing beams.

It is therefore of infinite, indispensable importance that the Subordinate Lodges should be in prosperous condition—possessed of ample funds in their treasury, sufficient for every emergency. It is most commendable to be prompt in the payment of dues to the Grand Lodge and have proper representation therein; but that is only a part of the required duty. Every Lodge should, beside the payment of incidental expenses, have a sinking fund, to which recourse may be had, to provide for sudden calamity, or any other contingency, and it is in the power of every one of them to be thus provided, if they will, without favor or delay, require the prompt payment of fees and dues. The non-payers are worse than drones; they are playing a most unfriendly part. Every member, unless under affliction, can pay his dues. And if he will not, instead of passing him by quietly, year after year, give the proper notice; and, if unheeded, inflict the proper penalty and suspend him from the privileges of a Mason. Those who will not work, neither should they eat.

During the coming Masonic year it will only be in my power to visit a part of the Lodges in this jurisdiction, and the visitations that may be made will not be to lecture or instruct in either of the degrees, but to make proper inquiry as to the condition of the Lodge, and to ascertain whether the cardinal principles of temperance, prudence, fortitude, and justice, prevail. I shall inquire for the books of the Secretary and Treasurer, look over the roll of members, and inquire especially for the portion thereof who are delinquent in the performance of any of the required duties, and shall be most happy to find harmony in the ascendant and a general emulation as to who can best work and best agree.

Finally, my brothers, let us all go to our homes resolved to severally perform our respective duties as Masons, and when this Grand Lodge convenes again, on the third Monday of next October, may the prosperity of the present be continued, and the honor and glory of our own order extended through all time to come.

# A D D R E S S

O F

## PAST GRAND MASTER ELISHA S. FITCH,

IN ANSWER TO A VOTE OF THANKS, ADOPTED BY THE  
GRAND LODGE OF KENTUCKY,

On the 21st day of October, A. D. 1869, A. L. 5869.

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*Brethren of the Grand Lodge of Kentucky:*

I accept the resolution just adopted as an honorable discharge from service, and I thank you for it.

It is owing entirely to your kind and continued partiality, and not, I am sure, to any meritorious achievements on my part, that I have been thus signally promoted from the ranks, by repeated brevet commissions, to the highest post of command; and, in looking back from this proud elevation to the humble position from which you have generously transferred me, I am quite overpowered by a sense of personal obligation.

To change the illustration from the camp to our Mystic Temple: We have a symbolic stairway, which, while it is represented as long and winding, and embracing many intermediate steps, has nevertheless but three prominent divisions or landings, and in ascending this stairway, instead of being required to advance step by step, I have been kindly borne in your fraternal arms from one of these landings or platforms to another, and have thus made a rapid though irregular transition from the mosaic of its ground-floor into the very penetralia of the Temple itself.

The manner of my elevation has been as flattering as the elevation itself has been honoring. But, although thus doubly distinguished by your partial favor, I assure you I have found no occasion for the indulgence of any feelings of self-exultation; for the same symbolic stairway which led me to these high honors brought me also in contact with solemn and subduing responsibilities; and in this inner chamber, I have been constantly confronted by another Masonic symbol, which while, it explains the mystery of admission, also impresses the heart most forcibly by its initial symbolism, with the important lesson of humility, and points significantly to that "Divinity which shapes our ends, rough hew them as we may," and before

whom all created intelligences, from the lowest even unto the highest, should reverently bow and in humility adore.

It was the remark of one of our own distinguished statesmen that offices of high public trust were like the tops of the pyramids, which might be reached by the serpent as well as by the eagle; but it occurs to me that without either the soaring nature of the eagle or the crawling aptitude of the serpent, the most insignificant gossamer may be wafted by a propitious gale to the very apex of Cheops. So the humblest man, although destitute of the inspiration of genius or the arts of subtlety, may be sometimes elevated by the force of extraneous influences to the highest official station; and thus, brethren, have I attained an eminence, otherwise inaccessible, by means only of the strong scaffolding provided for me by the generous hands of the Masonic Craft in Kentucky.

In retiring from this exalted station I shall carry with me an affectionate remembrance of this devoted friendship which will thrill my heart with purest transports of joy until its throbbings are forever checked and chilled by the icy hand of death.

My Masonic career seems to have been but one continuous series of Masonic honors at the hands of the devoted Brotherhood of Kentucky; and, although repeatedly honored by your confidence and trust, permit me to say that I still treasure, as the rich legacy of the loved one gone, the kind words of cheer which first saluted my ears from the lips of an old officer of this Grand Lodge. And although many years have since intervened, and those lips have long been mute in death, I still remember well the musical and encouraging tone in which those words of cheer were then pronounced. They were the utterances of him whom all did reverence and love, while in our midst, with an ardor well-nigh bordering on idolatry, and whose memory still towers up with moral grandeur in the ranks of our Past Grand Masters, not only as the model Mason, but also as the model man—the embodiment of all the graces and amenities which adorn our humanity—a column of wisdom, strength and beauty in our Mystic Temple! I need not say that I allude to the venerable, the virtuous, the gentle and the benignant, the gifted and the good, the heavenly minded and pure-hearted Wingate!

These words of sympathy and encouragement were spoken on the eve of my departure from the first Communication of this Grand Body I ever attended. Forcibly impressed, as were all the younger representatives, with the bland dignity and unaffected simplicity of his character, I approached to take leave of him as a child would of his father (and who that ever sat with him in this Grand Body did not wish to bid him "good-by" when they left?) and, grasping my hand with much cordiality, "My son," said he, "I hope you will return again; this Grand Lodge may some day have use for you." These words sank deep into my soul as the kind utterances of a great



and noble philanthropic heart, but in no sense did I regard them as the voice of prophecy. But in the providence of God it seems that the Grand Lodge did find use for as humble an individual as myself, and has generously accorded to me all her honors.

It is, I assure you, a matter of sincere regret that I have not been more equal to the emergency—more competent to meet the varied responsibilities these honors have imposed.

That I may have committed many blunders none is more ready to admit; but, brethren, I have brought to your service all the mind and energy and heart with which I am endowed, and must rely upon your generosity to palliate what my incapacity may have failed to accomplish, or still more unfortunately may have performed amiss.

In retiring from this responsible post, I desire to tender my hearty thanks to the Grand Wardens and subordinate officers who have been associated with me during my entire term of office, and with whom my relations have been so intimate and brotherly, and from whom I have received such valuable assistance and co-operation. I also desire to thank the respective committees, both standing and special, to whom the business of the present Communication has been referred, and by whom this business has been so ably performed and presented as attested by the hearty concurrence of this Grand Body. And to the entire Brotherhood throughout the State as here represented, I would tender my most profound acknowledgments for the spirit of forbearance manifested toward one comparatively so young and inexperienced to manage its varied and complicated interests in this extended jurisdiction. As a parting admonition, I can think of nothing more appropriate than the familiar invocation of the Caledonian bard—the world's Burns, but our brother :

“May freedom, harmony and love  
Cement you in the grand design,  
Beneath the omniscient eye above—  
The glorious Architect divine—  
That you may keep the unerring line  
Still guided by the plummet's law,  
Till order bright completely shine  
Shall be my prayer when far awa.”