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AN ENGLISH VIEW
OF
FREEMASONRY IN AMERICA,

SET FORTH IN A LETTER BY

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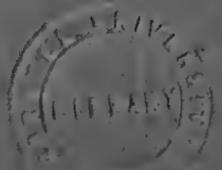
WITH

Notes by an American Mason.

(William H. Upton)

TACOMA, WASHINGTON, U. S. A.
J. E. CATES, PRINTER
1898

W. H.



AN ENGLISH VIEW OF FREEMASONRY IN AMERICA.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

In justice to the author of the following letter, a word of explanation seems called for.

Brother GEORGE W. SPETH, as is well known to most students of Masonry, stands in the front rank of Masonic scholars, whether we judge him by the extent and minuteness of his knowledge of the history, usages and principles of our Fraternity, by the variety and brilliancy of his talents, or by the extent of his services to Masonic scholarship. His intimate acquaintance with the English and continental usages of the Craft is personal; while his position as originator and head of the Correspondence Circle of the famous Lodge Quatuor Coronati, No. 2076, has placed him in close touch with the Fraternity wherever dispersed, and made him almost as familiar with the peculiar customs and theories of the Craft in other countries as with those of his own Lodge.

I have counted myself most fortunate in having had, through a correspondence with him which has extended through several years, the benefit of many invaluable hints and suggestions from so helpful an adviser; and I have frequently urged Brother SPETH to give me at greater length, his views on some of the subjects that claim so much attention from American Grand Masters and committees on correspondence. The following letter is a result of these urgings; and the circumstances under which it was written—it having been intended for my eye alone—explain its colloquial tone, its freedom of comment, and its entire absence of reserve.

The judgment of a competent friendly critic in a foreign country is liable to closely resemble the judgment which posterity will pronounce. For a century and a half, we in America have been working out Masonic problems in our own way. We can hardly hope that we have fallen into no errors. I myself am satisfied that some of our peculiarities will appear to posterity very much as they appear to the intelligent English, German or Australian Mason of today. If this be so, it gives an added value to Brother SPETH's impressions of us; and hence, as soon as I had read his letter, it seemed to me a pity not to share with my brethren criticisms which appear to me so replete with instruction to all who are not rendered impervious to suggestion by a conviction of the infallibility of their preconceived notions or the authority of their local customs, and most helpful to those who desire to free American Masonry from modern fads and fancies, and restore the ancient Landmarks. Hence I sought and—after much hesitation on his part—at last obtained Brother SPETH's reluctant permission to print what he had written. Only a few sentences of a purely personal character at the end of the letter have been omitted.

Brother SPETH is, of course, not responsible for the title which has been given the pamphlet, or for the side heads.

A few notes have been appended, as a possible aid to younger brethren; and the whole is submitted to the Craft with the hope that it may be a help to a better understanding of pure ancient Masonry.

Seattle,
27 Dec., 1897.

WILLIAM H. UPTON.

BROMLEY, KENT, October 20, 1897.

My Dear Brother Upton:

I have read your last Report on Foreign Correspondence through from beginning to end. Now, when you come to think of it, this is a very high compliment to have paid you. I receive so many of these Reports in the course of the year. Many of them are marked by rare literary excellence, so that their perusal partakes of the nature of an intellectual treat, in spite of occasional Americanisms which jar upon our English ears; most of them are replete with clever argument, although the writers appear to me frequently to be

Of Correspondence Reports.

speaking to a brief instead of devoting their gifts to ascertaining the truth, and to be straining logic to the breaking point; and all deal with questions which are intensely interesting in themselves, although, I am glad to say, for the most part strange to the circumstances surrounding our English Craft. And yet I seldom do more than dip into them here and there. You see, in the first place, A and B criticise C, which often renders it needless to read the latter, because I know already what he has said; and then, I have so little time to spare. With eight hours a day all the year round devoted to the actual conduct of the business of my own Lodge, you will not wonder that I try to minimise all extraneous Masonic work. And so, having nevertheless studied your last Report from Alpha to Omega, I assert that I have paid you the highest compliment in my power, and am deserving of your gratitude. But I shall not now further comment on it than to briefly glance at

*Of certain
phases of
Masonic
History.*

1. You claim more than I am willing to concede, although I do not deny that my thoughts have more than once turned in the same direction. I almost agree with your last five words, however, "But absolute proof is wanting," only I should put it thus:—Proof is absolutely wanting.²

2. Hangs or falls with No. 1, and is therefore not discussible until its forerunner is settled.

3. I disagree *in toto*; nothing even like it existed on the Continent in historical times.³ (I do not, of course, know what went on there before the flood).

4. I must modify your statement in the sense indicated by you lower down on the same page. Institutions similar to our *Mason's Gilds* did exist on the Continent both before and after 1717, but none before 1717 with the faintest real resemblance to our *Freemasons' Lodges*. There is, no doubt, a decided resemblance in the French *Compagnonage*, but the doubt here is as to whether this resemblance is not *post 1717* and a copy of Freemasonry.

5-7. I am in thorough accord with you.

8. Too vaguely put: It may be twisted to mean two different things. Lodge may be held to mean the ordinary masons' lodge or workshop. In that sense the Steinmetz Huetten, or Lodges, did and do still exist. But if Lodge be held to mean anything approaching in form or intention the Freemasons' Lodges of London in 1717. I must go further than you and state my belief that outside the British Isles it not only did not exist then, but never had existed at all.

9. Agreed.

10. You claim too much: I believe "majority" to be an excessive estimate. But I am willing to allow that in 1752 there were probably a few Lodges in England, and a goodly number in Scotland, which still remained outside the Grand Lodge System. One of these at Melrose remained isolated until three or four years ago, when it finally joined the Grand Lodge of Scotland. Such a Lodge naturally could only be called "clandestine" or "irregular" in a strictly technical sense and viewed from the standpoint of the Grand Lodge.⁴

11. Is answered by the above comments on 10.

1. Notes, including these "conclusions," will be found at the end of Bro. SPERN's letter.

12. Again you claim rather more than I can concede. Let me rewrite the whole clause for you: I believe it will be sufficient for your argument. Thus:

"That throughout the last century and well on into this, lodges have been formed by British Masons^b without the previous consent or authority of Grand Lodge or of the Grand Master, and that although such action would have been considered irregular, if formal complaint had been laid, there has never been the least difficulty made by Grand Lodge in granting a warrant to such lodges on application and thus regularizing them, neither have the founders of such lodge ever been censured for their irregularity of conduct."

You ask me to give you some idea how American Masonry strikes the average English Craftsman. Well, in the first place, I think the *Ye average Englishman.* average Englishman, with that insular self-sufficiency which is so truly charming a trait in his character, knows very little about American Masonry, and cares, if possible, still less. He is content to know that the Craft with you is prospering; he hears that English Masons are well received when they visit your Lodges; he reciprocates by showing his genuine pleasure when American Masons visit his Lodge, and by offering them such hospitality as is in his power. He is naturally somewhat astonished to find that about every third Mason who hails from your side is a Grand Master or Past Grand Master; he wishes he could "orate" after dinner as they do; and he probably enquires whether the visitor, who perhaps lives in New York, happens to know his cousin who has settled down in some place in California. And he has not the faintest suspicion that your organization and arrangements differ from those he is accustomed to, about as much as chalk from cheese. He lives in a delightful state of blissful ignorance, which it were pity to needlessly disturb.

But of course there are many of us who do know something more, only they are not the average English Mason; and as they are all men who think for themselves, I hardly know that I am in any way authorised to voice their sentiments. I might make a mistake, and there are too many of them to consult before writing to you. However, having thus premised that I am possibly judging the sentiments of my fellows by my own, I will touch, in a sort of cursory way, upon one or two subjects which strike us as remarkable.

What on earth does an American Grand Master want to be always giving decisions on some triviality for? Why can not such trumpery questions, as most of them are, be left to the good sense and initiative of the Lodges or their Masters? Are they children, *Grand Masters' decisions.* that they can not be allowed to act on their own judgment?

With us a W. M. does as seems best to him, after consultation with his experienced Past Masters; and if wrong or any one can be offended, the matter can be placed before our Board of General Purposes, from which an appeal lies to the Grand Lodge, but not to the Grand Master. Nine-tenths of the puerilities which are submitted to your Grand Masters would never be heard of here beyond the walls of the particular Lodge concerned. *We* are over-legislated for enough, in all conscience, but *you* do not seem to dare to call your souls your own without appealing to a Grand Master to corroborate the fact. Do you not think that if, instead of electing your Grand Masters for one year, or perhaps two, you were to choose your very best men for the purpose and keep them in office for a good spell, say till they got too old to bear

the burthen, they would be less anxious to mark their tenure of office by a whole string of decisions on trumpery matters, and would remit these absurd questions to the senders, with the wholesome advice to study the Constitutions and By-Laws, and to utilise such common sense as T. G. A. O. T. U. may have endowed them with? Of course I know my plan would not suit you, more's the pity, because every Mason among you wants his chance of becoming a Grand Master, just as every one here wants to be the Master of a Lodge at some absurdly short interval after his initiation, arising from the fact that, owing to our reserving certain secrets for the chair, the office of W. M. is looked upon less as a rank in Lodge, than as a degree, which, according to our Constitutions, it is not. In Germany they have no chair secrets, neither is it necessary to be a Past Master in order to sit in Grand Lodge; therefore, there is no overwhelming desire to be W. M. The consequence is that the German brethren choose the very best man they have to preside over them, sometimes even against his inclination, and then they keep him in the post until age or infirmity forces them to let him retire. It is not everything which is "made in Germany" which can be pronounced supremely good, but here, at least, we have an ideal state of affairs. It would be impossible for us to copy the Germans in this matter, and I know it would be impossible for you to copy us in the matter of Grand Masters, but I submit that your plan has its disadvantages. There is a character in one of Dickens' novels, who went out walking one day with his "best girl." Suddenly he exclaimed in a tone of surprise, as if the artful fellow had not prepared it all beforehand, "Hallo! Here's a church! Hallo! Why, I've got a ring in my pocket! Let's get married!" And so I conceive your Grand Masters welcoming every trifling question submitted to them, and then exclaiming in well-feigned innocence, "Hallo! I'm a Grand Master! Let's decide something."

One of these questions of constant recurrence, concerns the precise amount of injury to a man's limbs which shall disqualify him for membership. Second only to our astonishment at the enquiry itself, is our amusement at the variety of solutions proffered by the Grand Masters in different states, or even by successive Grand Masters in the same state. Such a question as this would be answered by every W. M. according to common sense, so far as we are concerned. As long as a candidate can comply with the ritualistic requirements, we are satisfied. Fancy debarring a man from the purely intellectual and moral delights of Lodge life, because he has had the misfortune to lose the top joint of his little toe or finger! We should as soon think of turning a candidate back because he happened to squint or was bald. By the way, what do you do with a bald man? He is just as physically imperfect as some who have been rejected. What do you do with a Jew? Owing to a certain religious rite, they are none of them quite *perfect* specimens of humanity. Early last century the question arose in Germany whether an Italian opera singer, a castrate, could be initiated. No race has grasped the moral beauties of Freemasonry better than the Germans, so we need not be surprised to learn that the reply was to the effect that moral excellence should be the point to strive for, not physical perfection. Where shall we look for a physically perfect man? And where shall we draw the line? What amount of imperfection shall we wink at? If you should be desirous of writing a really amusing little pamphlet, collect all the different decisions given in this

*Physical
Qualifications.*

matter, and do not forget to record also the reasoning. It would be great fun.⁶

Another point which astonishes us, and which I cannot but think must be very detrimental to the true spirit of Freemasonry, is the size of your Lodges. What real comfort can there be in a *Large Lodges.* Lodge of 200, 300 or 400 members? What possibility of each member knowing, as he should do, all the others? What sociability? And, as if to take away what little chance might be left, I understand that it is very seldom you sit down to a common meal after the work of the Lodge is over. Our Lodges average 40 or 50 members, and our initiations about three or four per annum. There is thus time for the new members to be assimilated and form part of a united whole. When one of our Lodges grows too large, there is always a swarm-off and a new Lodge is established. Promotion to office, except in rare cases, goes by seniority;⁷ that is to say, we ballot for our Master, and although exercising our free choice, we usually elect the S. W. The W. M. appoints his officers, and his choice is unlimited, but he seldom fails to give every officer a step upward, and to select for the junior officer the first in seniority on the roll of unofficial members. The result of these small Lodges is, therefore, that we all know each other intimately, and that every man is tolerably sure of promotion in the course of a few years; and thus we avoid all canvassing for office, log-rolling, wire-pulling, party divisions and cliques. Can this be said of your Lodges? There is one disadvantage in our plan; owing to this promotion by seniority, we sometimes get poor presidents and officers, but not so often as you would think. It acts fairly well in practice. Although I should prefer the German plan to which I have already alluded, on the whole, I think ours must be much better than yours. Then again, we almost invariably sit down to a meal in common after the labours of the evening. This gives the opportunity, which is lacking during Lodge hours, of becoming well acquainted with each other. The result is, that each Lodge is a little family to itself, and the main object of the Craft, good-fellowship, is promoted. Do not run away with the *Social Side of Masonry.* idea that these dinners are costly banquets. This may be more or less the case in London, but the great majority of the provincial Lodges only have one *banquet* a year, on the installation night, and on other occasions content themselves with a simple joint, vegetables and cheese, washed down with beer or whiskey, at a cost of about 50 to 75 cents per head. Sometimes it simply consists of bread and cheese and a smoke to follow, which costs even less, but answers the same purpose of social intercourse. I think if you generally adopted this plan, you would be less troubled with what appears to annoy you so much, the unattached Mason. If I understand your circumstances correctly, I wonder you have not more. A man joins a Lodge of over 100 members of whom he knows some three or four, and even these he can only *look at* in Lodge, because, of course, silence must be observed. He perhaps is diffident, and therefore does not aspire to office, or is conscious that he stands no chance of being elected, and so, after listening to the same ceremonies for a year or two, and feeling himself almost as much a stranger in the Lodge as when he entered, and of little importance, he begins by stopping away, and finally sends in his resignation. Frankly, what is there to induce him to remain? But give him an opportunity, at every meeting, of extending the circle of his friends, of spending a pleasant hour or two over the dinner table and desert, of

gradually feeling that he is really an integral part of the Lodge, and I think you will keep him with you. The experiment would be worth trying; it is certainly more reasonable than the too prevalent habit of reviling him, trying to coerce him, and almost branding him as infamous, because, forsooth, he has in the first case exercised his free-will in joining you, and finding you were not interesting enough, has asserted his free-will once more, and his undoubted right, in leaving you. Americans claim to be a

*Legislation
against
non-affiliates.*

free people, but who would guess it from reading the accounts of the measures advocated and sometimes resorted to, in order to compel a brother to do that to which he is not inclined? The spirit shown in some of your jurisdictions is not that of Freemasonry, but of the worst type of trades-unionism. I take it that your eccentric Mystic Shrine is practically an acknowledgement that you feel the want of this social side to your arrangements. The Shriner's ways seem to me to be rather undignified for anything in connection, however remotely, with Freemasonry; but in spite of that, it must be rare fun, and were I in America I would like to join it; only they would not have me, because I am neither a Knight Templar nor a Scottish Riter.⁸

Another typical American arrangement is that of conceding a specified territorial jurisdiction to each Lodge. This would not do at all in England, and I am much inclined to doubt if it proves a success in the States. We hold that "Masonry is free," but the very first thing *you* do is to limit a man's freedom in his choice of a Lodge. With us, the Lodge in many respects resembles the family, as I have already observed. You may liken a man's entrance into a Lodge to his adoption into a family by marriage or otherwise. The family (or Lodge) has an undoubted right to say whether they will receive him as a son or son-in-law, and he, being a free man, has as unequivocal a right to choose the family into which he will enter or marry. Consequently here in England, a man enquires previously as to the men who constitute the Lodge, so that he may form some idea whether he will feel comfortable in it; and the Lodge only accepts his nomination on the *personal knowledge* of at least one of the members. There is thus a sort of mutual introduction, but should a mistake nevertheless occur, a remedy is easily found; the brother visits other Lodges until he finds one which suits him, and joins that. "Free to, free from," no coercion of any sort, as it should be in Freemasonry. But in the United States he has, generally speaking, no choice at all. He must petition to join a certain Lodge and no other, and once in, if he does not find himself comfortable, if the tone of the Lodge does not suit him, or if he is dissatisfied with its working—thinks it not go-ahead enough or too much so—or meets therein one or two members whom he, perhaps causelessly but none the less sincerely, dislikes, there is no help for him; he must either put up with it all or demit, and if he choose the latter alternative, he can not affiliate with any other Lodge except by changing his residence.⁹ Would it not be possible to account for a few of your unaffiliates in this manner? And so I hold that the regulation is unjustified, both on first principles, and also in its results.

But even this is not the worst. The plan entails as a necessary consequence an utterly perverse view as to the obligations of a Mason in casting his ballot. As I have before insisted, the Lodge is my home, my family, and I have a right to expect absolute comfort in it. I have a right, and in England I exercise it, to say when

*Use of the
blackball.*

a candidate is proposed, "I do not like this man; he may be a very worthy fellow, I am perhaps wrong in disliking him, but none the less, if he joins my family and I am thrown into constant contact with him, home will no longer be home to me, I shall be uncomfortable, and therefore I refuse to admit him into the Lodge." And I either acquaint his proposer with this fact, in order that the nomination may be quietly withdrawn, or I blackball him.¹⁰ I do not thereby cast any stigma upon him. My action at most raises a slight suspicion which calls for added caution on the part of any other Lodge to which he may apply, if they know of it. And I in no way bar his entrance into the Craft. But with you the case is different. If he be blackballed in your Lodge, he can not apply to another unless he change his residence, and therefore the doctrine has grown up in America, and most logically so, that private likes and dislikes must not be allowed to weigh with a brother in casting his ballot. The applicant's character only must be considered, because rejection by the Lodge means his exclusion altogether from the Craft, and undoubtedly casts a lasting stigma upon his fair fame. Now, if we grant that all your members are conscientious and follow this perverted, although in your case necessary, view of the ballot, then it must inevitably happen that uncongenial men are thrust into close relationship in your Lodges. It practically amounts to this: A. is proposed, B. does not like him, but knows nothing against him, so like an honest man he votes for him, and his pleasure in Lodge association is destroyed. The end of it must often be that B. becomes that bugbear of the American Mason, an unaffiliate. Or else, B. forgetting his obligation as a good *American* Mason, casts a blackball, and a worthy man is deprived of all opportunity of becoming a member, and a possible credit to the Craft. In either event great injury is done to A. or to B., as the case may be. Do you not think I have managed to account for a large percentage of your non-affiliates? And do you think there is any likelihood of coercing them into rejoining, so long as these hindrances exist?

And then again, this perverted view of the ballot causes mischief by providing some sort of colourable excuse for that nightmare of a doctrine which is now fighting for acceptance in the United States. I mean the doctrine of perpetual jurisdiction, so that, even by changing his residence, the persecuted candidate shall be unable to escape the evil effects of a rejection, caused, for all that is known, by the private pique of one or two brethren. The argument is to a certain extent logical. It runs thus: "Mr. S. was rejected by Lodge A., therefore there must be something very shady about his character, he cannot possibly be a fit candidate for our society. He lived quite close to Lodge A., and of course they know all about him. He now applies to Lodge B., 500 miles off, where he has only lately come to reside, and it cannot be expected that Lodge B. should know much about his past career. Therefore, let us make it a law that Lodge B. shall not accept his nomination unless Lodge A. signifies to them that Mr. S. has reformed his ways and that they now see no objection to his being made a member of the Craft." Admitting that such a thing as a ballot cast in mistake, from ignorance, or from pique, is an absolute impossibility; premising, in fact, that such a thing as an unconscientious American Mason does not exist, I really think the doctrine, tyrannical as it appears, could be defended. But even American Masons are not all impeccable angels; you are one, of course, my dear Bro. UPTON, and so am I, and so are all our intimate friends, no doubt (Eh?), but there are

*Perpetual
Jurisdiction.*

a few whom we know and about whom we are not quite so sure. Is not that so? And thus one mistake leads to another. Your local jurisdiction necessitates a wrong idea of the ballot, and this naturally leads to attempted tyranny, and claims which are logically untenable. For this doctrine of perpetual jurisdiction involves two assertions; the one of perpetual jurisdiction over an individual who has never come under the Lodge's jurisdiction at all; and the other of jurisdiction over a sister Lodge, by limiting its choice of members. Was I right to call the doctrine a nightmare? It oppresses those who have been seized by it to such an extent that they have lost all sense of right and wrong, all perception of first principles, all appreciation of logic. And some of them are trained lawyers, too! A very terrible nightmare, i' faith!

From the American doctrine of Lodge jurisdiction, we naturally pass to the American doctrine of Grand Lodge jurisdiction. It is, of course, no secret that this is utterly distasteful to us in England, and that we refuse to concur in it. To treat it as a landmark constitutes the height of absurdity, because Freemasonry predates Grand Lodges by centuries, and any rule of Grand Lodge sovereignty must have had its origin in some regulation of a Grand Lodge, and have been absolutely unknown before 1717.

The doctrine in its simplest form took birth between 1717 and 1720, as it is laid down by Grand Master Payne in the "Old Regulations" that no new Lodge was to be accepted as regular unless formed with the Grand Master's consent. But in this form it is not very far reaching. Note in the first place, that although not distinctly so stated, the regulation only contemplates new Lodges within the Bills of Mortality. i. e., within the confines of the cities of London and Westminster. Lodges, therefore, formed elsewhere, were considered regular enough. Next, such irregular Lodges are not termed clandestine, but simply irregular, which practically meant that they could not be recognized by Grand Lodge or their members admitted to the Quarterly Communications. Further, that no disqualification is imposed upon Lodges already existing, of which there were probably many, nor is there any indication of an effort to force them to come into the family. The whole proceeding is therefore simply the establishment of a sovereign jurisdiction for London and Westminster, but not of a sole jurisdiction. But even in this mild form, so different from the drastic measures of our American brothers, I hold it to have been a usurpation of the inherent right of Masons, when in sufficient numbers, to meet and form a Lodge at their pleasure. I do not say the usurpation was not justified, but a usurpation it undoubtedly was. Still, in course of time, the majority of Lodges throughout the country joined the Grand Lodge, and the original Masons dying and leaving no successors, whereas all the new Masons had given their adhesion to the regulation, this inherent right practically lapsed for want of user.¹¹ To this doctrine we gave a final touch, so far as we are concerned, in 1770, when, in recognising the newly formed Grand Lodge of the Netherlands, we agreed to cease granting English warrants for Lodges in the Low Countries; but, just as in 1720 we made no attempt to coerce previously existing Lodges in London, so in 1770 we took care that previously existing Lodges in Holland should not be coerced into joining the Dutch Grand Lodge, but provided by treaty for their unmolested existence, so long as they should desire.¹² And let it not be said that we only insist upon our view of the doctrine when it works favorably for us; we have relaxed its operation in at least one

notable instance to our own disadvantage. When England acquired Cape Colony we found Dutch Lodges there; we also established Lodges of our own, and according to our own rule (settled in 1770 between Holland and ourselves) we should have been justified in permitting the continuance of these Dutch Lodges, but in forbidding the Grand Lodge of the Netherlands to issue any further warrants. We did not take this latter step, and to this day new Dutch Lodges are being formed at the Cape.¹³ Our position is therefore perfectly clear. We have always insisted upon certain rights for our own Lodges, and we have not only willingly granted these same rights to foreign Lodges in our own territories, but have inagranimously waived in their favour regulations on which we might have stood firm.

But you go much further than this. Your American doctrine, if I understand it rightly, not only places it in the power of an insignificant minority of the Lodges in a given district to form themselves into a Grand Lodge and claim recognition, but enables them to compel a possibly large majority of dissentient Lodges to fall into line, or to be banned as irregular and clandestine.¹⁴ In this case it is not even the tyranny of a majority, but may be that of a minority, sheltering itself behind a so-called landmark, which is only a regulation, and not a universally acknowledged one at that.

Consider how badly it may possibly work. The *Gran Dieta* of Mexico now claims acknowledgement at the hands of the American Grand Lodges, and has been recognised by some. I am not going into the question of whether it is deserving of recognition in itself; Bro. CHISM may be right, or Bro. PARVIN may be so; it does not affect the question at all, for even Bro. PARVIN will not deny that there are many Lodges and even Grand Lodges in Mexico which, in their origin, are as legitimate as those under the *Gran Dieta*. Apparently, they are in a huge majority. Now, every American Grand Lodge which recognises the *Gran Dieta* thereby declares all these other Lodges and Grand Lodges outside the pale of Masonry, and their members illegitimate and clandestine Masons, with no right to the title and no claim to be treated as brothers.¹⁵ Even if the *Gran Dieta* be really all that Bro. PARVIN says it is, such a result in itself must strike every fair-thinking Mason as unjust and deplorable; but, supposing Bro. PARVIN be wrong, and Bro. CHISM right! What then? Surely, I need say no more! The doctrine is utterly indefensible. To merely state it in all its horrid nakedness is to condemn it. The erection of a new Grand Lodge, no matter where or when or how, can not possibly invalidate the right of a Lodge or Lodges, predating it, perhaps by a generation, to continue to be received, acknowledged and recognised as regular in every way. You might as well say that when a younger son marries and sets up house-keeping for himself, the elder son must either desert his father's house and go to live with his younger brother—showing him all the honor and obedience due to his parent—or, cease to be considered a man at all, to be treated as an outlaw whom any man may slay wherever met.

But I think what surprises us most in England, is your Drink Legislation.¹⁶ We have many confirmed teetotallers here among the brotherhood, and occasionally they form new Lodges where they can meet and practise their principles without being offended at the sight of the unregenerate enjoying one of the gifts which God has provided for man, but which they reject, and which the fanatics among them would disallow to all if they had

*Drink
Legis-
lation.*

the power. To this I have no objection whatever; these brethren either do not like alcohol, or conscientiously believe its consumption to be hurtful to their bodies or souls, and they have every right to form a Lodge where their own ideas of pleasure or morality can be carried out. I say they have every right to form a new Lodge avowedly on teetotal principles, but I would not concede to a chance majority in an old Lodge the right to pass a by-law and forcibly turn it into a teetotal Lodge, no matter how small the adverse minority of wine drinkers might be. I do not recognise the right of any majority to deprive a minority of a right, unless such right can be shown to be injurious to the majority; and it is plain that *I* cannot hurt *you* by drinking a glass of wine. So I have no quarrel with these Lodges; I do not even think it inhospitable of them not to provide wine for their visitors who are unaccustomed to find pleasure in swilling pure water or some of the indescribably nauseous concoctions which the abstainers vainly try to imagine they enjoy as substitutes for good wine or beer; because you can pay no higher compliment to a guest than to treat him as one of the family. So, if I visit a teetotal Lodge I persuade myself for the time being that I relish drinking the toasts in water, or ruining my digestion by converting the beef and mutton into leather by the action of the tannin in the tea. And I possibly revenge myself for my enforced abstinence by a nice little night-cap when I arrive home. All I object to is the title of Temperance Lodges which they incorrectly assume, an astounding piece of insolence which implies that all other Lodges are intemperate.

But this is the farthest we go. What do you do? It is not an individual Lodge which forbids the use of stimulants at its repasts. This would be unpardonable, as I have already shown, unless the Lodge were avowedly formed in the first instance on teetotal principles. And even then, it would be grossly unfair in America, owing to your doctrine of Lodge jurisdiction, so that an intending candidate or joining brother has no choice whether he will join a teetotal Lodge or a non-abstaining one. But it is your Grand Lodges which pass the law, thus depriving not only individual Masons, but whole Lodges of one more prerogative of a free man or body. It is the tyranny of the majority once more. And are then, as we might justly conclude, the majority of American Masons teetotallers? Nothing of the sort; not one in twenty of them, to judge by those who visit us here. Seldom indeed does an *Ye American* visitor decline to pledge us in a glass of good wine, *abroad.* whether in Lodge or out of it. So it amounts to this: That a majority of Masons who drink wine on occasion, but do not particularly care about doing so at meals, insist upon it that no one else shall do so at a Lodge dinner. There can be only one justification for such action, which is, that the majority fear that a large proportion of their fellow Masons can not be trusted to drink alcohol at a Lodge banquet without getting drunk and thus bringing disgrace upon the Lodge and the Craft. I hardly like to suggest such a reason; it would speak so badly for the Lodge members in admitting the drunkards in the first instance, and for not getting rid of them quickly when their want of moral fibre was discovered. But although this would render your drink legislation comprehensible to us, it would not even then excuse it in our eyes, because the Mason who would get drunk in Lodge, will do so outside with equal facility and readiness, and as most people know him to be a Mason, the disgrace to the Craft would not be minimised. The only sensible plan is to try to reform him, and if unsuccessful, expel him.

But you go infinitely beyond this, and wander still further from the paths of logic and "sweet reasonableness." In some jurisdictions we hear that Grand Lodge has passed a law that no manufacturer of, or dealer in, alcoholic liquors, shall be admitted a member of the Craft. What midsummer madness is this? You actually cast a huge stigma on a large class, the majority of which is comprised of men as virtuous, as honourable, as upright as any citizen of the State. They do not get drunk themselves, they do not incite others to get drunk, they are in most cases good citizens, excellent fathers of families, charitable as beseems their wealth, foremost in every project for the amelioration of the lot of man, men whom many of you receive into your own families as intimate friends—and with one stroke of the pen you defame them indiscriminately, degrade them by declaring them unfit to associate with you in Lodge; besmirch them with an indelible stain. Some of these men your daughters love and marry, and you bless the union; some of these men your State honours by office; some of these men go down to the grave wept by the poor, the widow and the orphan; some of these men we, in England, raise to the ranks of the peerage; oh! you sanctimonious Masons, how good and moral and high toned you must be!

Liquor dealers as candidates.

Doubtless you have in America blackguards who keep beer saloons of a disreputable sort, and who fatten on the vices of their fellow mortals. So have we in England, but we do not tar the whole trade with one brush. We possess, as you do, the institution of the ballot, and we do, as you should, use it when required, and with discrimination. Your remedy lies ready to your hand, but you prefer to befoul a whole class for the faults of a few of its members.

And therewith you forget an axiom as old as the hills. "The receiver is worse than the thief." If there were no receivers, there would be no thieves; if there were no moderate drinkers, there would be no brewers; because it is not the small proportion of drunkards in a community which can supply them with a living, let alone great riches. And the majority of you are moderate drinkers, and thus you are the direct cause of existence of the brewers and distillers. You first encourage these men in their atrocious crime of brewing and distilling in order to please your palates, and then, like so many Pecksniffs, you raise your virtuous hands and eyes to heaven and villify them. There must be a dreadful tarantula loose somewhere, and biting many of our brethren in America. Cannot some of you who are not yet inoculated put your foot down upon it with a great big—squelch?

One more little growl and I have done. I am afraid as it is, this prolix letter will weary you. There is a brand new doctrine now being formulated among you and urged on your acceptance. In view of your insatiable appetite for more and ever more legislation, I really fear that, monstrous as this doctrine is, it may sooner or later win its way to general adoption. But I sincerely trust not.

Reverberatory Charity.

I allude, of course, to the proposition that relief afforded by Lodge A. to a brother who is a present or former member of Lodge B., shall be refunded to Lodge A. by Lodge B.¹⁷ And this the proposers have the effrontery to designate by the sacred name of Masonic Charity! Where does the Charity come in? Not certainly on the part of Lodge A., because they expend nothing. Not certainly on the part of Lodge B., because although they have to pay the piper, they do not call the tune; the sum expended on their behalf is given without their consent or

knowledge, and perhaps, if previously communicated with, they would have refused to give even a cent. It is reported in English legend that there was once a rare good fellow, although an outlaw, called Robin Hood. It was his pleasant practice to rob any wealthy wayfarer who happened to be passing his road, and to distribute a portion of this ill-gotten wealth among the poor of his neighbourhood, by which means he secured their secrecy and aid if he happened at any time to be cornered by the sheriff, and so he got out of many a tight place. But Robin never ventured to take credit for charity on the strength of these proceedings, and certainly nobody ever thought of lauding the charity of the despoiled victims. I do not happen to have a Johnson's dictionary by me, and do not remember how the burly and humorous philosopher defines charity. But were he living in these days and issuing a revised edition of his lexicon, we should doubtless meet some such phrase as this: "Charity—according to American Freemasons, an enforced contribution for a good purpose; the act of being excessively generous with other people's money."

Well, my dear Bro. UPRON, I have done, and you will doubtless think that to my jaundiced perceptions there is nothing good in American Freemasonry. If so, you do me an injustice. There is much which I sincerely admire, and were I in a position to visit your Lodges and thus

become better acquainted with your inner life, my admiration of its good qualities would no doubt be considerably enhanced.

An encomium. To mention only a few points: I admire intensely the serious way in which you view your duties and responsibilities as Masons, the constant effort to take and preserve a high moral tone. I admire the feeling which leads you to spend enormous sums in order that your Lodges may be decently domiciled. I admire your generosity in maintaining so many homes and other institutions for the relief of Masonic distress. I admire the combination among you which has permitted you to do so much to stop that curse of the Craft, the tramp Mason. I admire the intelligent interest of your members which suffices to support so many Masonic publications, and to form and keep up such Masonic Libraries as some of your jurisdictions can boast of. I envy you the possession of these. And not least, I admire your informal Parliament of the Craft, to which your Reporters on Foreign Correspondence are the delegates. Parliament is perhaps not quite the right word, because a parliament is supposed to possess legislative powers; and to call this combination of well read Masons a debating club will not do, either, because debating clubs are not, as a rule, taken seriously. With all its faults, and I have pointed out a good many such according to our way of thinking, American Masonry must be a grand institution to be capable of impressing upon its members such sentiments as we are accustomed to listen to when an American Mason visits our Lodges, and "orates" after dinner. Its chiefest fault, I verily believe, is an itching mania to be always legislating about something or other, the result of which we see in some of those features to which I have alluded in this all too long letter. I think it was Prime Minister LORD MELBOURNE at the beginning of this reign who, when he was asked, "What shall we do about so and so?" used to reply, "Can't we let it alone?" Now, can not you Americans let Freemasonry alone for a space and see how it gets on without any more tinkering with the laws and Constitutions?

* * * * *

Yours very fraternally,

G. W. SPETH.

NOTES

BY AN AMERICAN MASON.

1. (Page 2) To make Brother SPETH's comments intelligible, it is necessary to reprint the following extract from the Washington Correspondence Report for 1897, in which the "twelve conclusions" referred to by Brother SPETH are set forth:

"Conclusions which we have reached after what seems to us a full and impartial weighing of all the evidence yet discovered, are as follows:

"1. That before and after the dawn of history there existed throughout the world—in China as in Central America—a cult or institution, or descendants of a cult or institution, so similar to Freemasonry that it is most probable that it and Freemasonry were identical or closely related. But absolute proof is wanting.

"2. That from that cult, or from its source, have sprung institutions, some of which still exist, which were not and were never claimed to be Freemasonry.

"3. That Freemasonry—our present Fraternity—existed on the continent of Europe in the Middle Ages.

"4. That in 1717 there existed on the Continent, organizations bearing a very close outward resemblance to Freemasonry—the *Steinmetzen* in Germany, the *Corps d'Etat* and *Companionage* in France.

"5. That these bodies continued to exist long after Freemasonry was carried from the British Isles to the continent; they and Freemasonry never affiliated in any way; and no Masonic Lodge ever claimed to be descended from them (except by asserting that British Masonry descended from those bodies, and they—the Lodges—from British Masonry).

"6. That the theory of descent of British Masonry from said bodies or any of them is entirely exploded.

"7. That Lodges have existed continuously in England and Scotland and probably in Ireland, from the Middle Ages to the present day.

"8. That there is not the slightest evidence that a single Lodge existed anywhere outside of the British Isles in 1717 or had existed for a long time prior thereto. (Query: Did the Reformation gradually put an end to them?)

"9. That every Body in the world claiming to be Masonic is descended from some Masonic Body which existed in the British Isles in 1717.

"10. That prior to 1752 the *majority* of *English* Lodges were outside of the Grand Lodge system, and had neither charters, warrants, nor Grand Masters.

"11. That long subsequent to 1752 a respectable number of Lodges, independent of Grand Lodges and Grand Masters, existed in the British Isles and were recognised as non-clandestine.

"12. That down to about the close of the last century it was generally recognized, both in Europe and America, among Masons of the English Rite, that it was *possible*—though undesirable and contrary to Grand Lodge policy—to form non-clandestine Lodges without authority from Grand Master, Grand Lodge or other external source; and hundreds of

Lodges were so formed; that during the same period, permission from a well established particular Lodge was frequently accepted as sufficient—though not the most desirable—authority to form a new Lodge.

“These propositions are submitted simply because arrived at deliberately after some years of study. If any of them are unsound, no one will be more glad to know it than the writer. The 8th and 9th alone bear any close connection to the discussion that suggested them, and it is concerning those two in particular that we should like to be cited to contradictory evidence, if any exists. If the new theory of the descent of English Freemasonry propounded by Brother GEORGE W. SPETH, of Lodge Quatuor Coronati, is the true one, it will perhaps be found that the bodies mentioned in No. 4 above were more nearly related to the English guild-masons than to our Fraternity.”

These conclusions have attracted an unexpected amount of attention. Other eminent brethren have favored the writer with comments upon them, as follows:

ROBERT FREKE GOULD, *the* historian of Freemasonry, says:—“Of Nos. 1 and 2, I say nothing. With Nos. 3, 10 and 11, I disagree. In Nos. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9, I concur. No. 12, I consider too broadly expressed.”

WILLIAM JAMES HUGHAN, the *doyen* of Masonic scholars, writes, “Let me say that your remarks have my full sympathy, concerning the origin of our Freemasonry. Truly it is as you state: ‘*Everything* now claiming to be Masonry is [or has] sprung from the Masonry of the British Isles.’ DR. ROBBINS, also, is undoubtedly correct in asserting that ‘there is no lawful Masonry anywhere that is not descended from the Free and Accepted Masonry of the British Isles.’

“Your 12 Propositions are very suggestive, but some of them seem to be a little weak, e. g., Nos. 10, 11 and 12, or require explanation. The most have my hearty support, and I hope they will lead to a fraternal discussion and more light.”

DR. W. J. CHETWODE CRAWLEY, whose *Caementaria Hibernica* have placed him easily in the first rank of Masonic authorities, writes:—“I had drawn up a baker’s dozen of Propositions in my *Introduction* to Fasciculus I of *Caem. Hib.*, where they may be read unto this day: ‘The particular propositions to which you invite attention might be added to my series, so completely do they follow the sequence of thought. The only point on which I would qualify your words is that [in No. 10] ‘the majority of *Lodges*’ seems too strong for the case, as I understand the evidence. I believe it to be a *majority of Brethren*; hardly of Lodges. With that qualification, I heartily endorse your propositions.”

It will be noticed that “doctors disagree.”

The Masonic press, too, seems to have been struck by the “conclusions,”—especially by Nos. 10, 11 and 12. For example, the London *Freemason* of October, 1897, contains an editorial leader, more than a page in length, in which, after being mildly facetious as to Nos. 1 and 2, declining to discuss Nos. 3, 4, 5 or 6 and approving Nos. 7, 8 and 9, the editor declares that he “should like to hear something of the evidence which has led Bro. UPTON to formulate the three conclusions,” 10, 11 and 12.

While Bro. UPTON has not posed as an advocate with a case to make out or with a brief, ready prepared, at his elbow, but rather as a juror giving his verdict from the evidence before him, under ordinary circumstances he would consider an invitation from so eminent a source as a command, and would perform the gratuitous drudgery of collecting the

evidence, that the skeptical might be convinced. But here, far from the Masonic Library upon which he has been wont to rely—

“*Dura sed emovere loco me tempora grato*,”—

such a course is impracticable. Let it suffice to say that in No. 10 “majority” must always be a matter of opinion. The writer would be as fully content with the words “large minority” or with the emendations of Brothers SPETH and CRAWLEY. But he maintains that, with this exception, the statements of Nos. 10, 11 and 12—like Brother SPETH’s recent startling statement of the relation of our Fraternity to the Guild masons—are illustrations of how a statement may appear novel to us, although upheld by an overwhelming mass of evidence with which we are entirely familiar, in cases where we have read the evidence before we ever thought of the statement; but upon reading the evidence again, we are astonished that we did not see its effect before. Further, that no one need go beyond such well known books as GOULD’S *History of Freemasonry*, SADLER’S *Masonic Facts and Fictions*, and *Thomas Dunckerley*, CRAWLEY’S *Caementaria Hibernica*, and the *Ars Quatuor Coronatorum* to find evidence ample, unquestionable and superabundant. “Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.” And if a prospectus, recently issued, of GOULD’S forthcoming *History of Military Lodges* is not misleading, additional evidence in support of No. 12 will be found in that volume.

2. (Page 2) There is no difference here between Brother SPETH and the writer: Proof *is* wanting. But *evidence* is not wanting, by any means.

3. (Page 2) We do not understand Bro. SPETH here. Few have done as much as he to prove that the Cathedral builders of the middle ages were our own Fraternity, and not the Guild masons. Compare, also, FORT’S *Early History and Antiquities of F. M.*

4. (Page 2) See authorities cited at end of note 1. First, these non-regular Lodges were sufficiently numerous even in London to call for complaint in the Grand Lodge April and November, 1723, February and November, 1724, and March, 1735; and measures were resorted to against them “in or about the year 1739.” Second, five or six of them in London formed the Grand Lodge of the Antients in 1752 or 1751. Third, away from our books, we are able to cite, in *England alone*, the following examples of such Lodges, at the dates mentioned:

Lodge connected with the Masons Company, London, 1620-1665.

Lodge at Warrington, 1646.

Lodge at Chester, 1688.

Lodge at Alwick, 1701-1757.

Lodge at York, 1705-1762.

Four Old Lodges, London, formed “Modern” Grand Lodge, 1717.

Lodge of Industry, Gateshead (perhaps at Swalwell, 1690 or 1717), became regular 1735.

Lodge No. 54, regularized 1728, but “working previously.”

Lodge at Hexham, 1736.

Five Lodges, London, *circa*, 1735, formed “Ancient” Grand Lodge, 1751-2.

Fourth, if these and other non-regular Lodges have left a record, how many were there of whom no recollection remains? If Masonry, before the revival, survived in distant corners of England, is there any reason to suppose it ceased to survive after it had become fashionable? In the form of by-laws given in CALCOTT’S *Candid Disquisition*, 1769, it will be seen that while visitors from regular Lodges paid one shilling six pence,

those from these St. John's Lodges were admitted on payment of two shillings. A trace of the fact that it took the Masonic conscience a long time to harden itself to deny these brethren survives in the ritual: We still hail from what the Irish call a "hedge Lodge"—"from a Lodge of the holy Saints John at Jerusalem."

"The word Regular, too, has had a modern connotation attributed to it. * * It simply meant, in the first instance, that the Lodge to which it was applied had come under the jurisdiction (*subregula*) of the Grand Lodge, in contradistinction to Lodges which had not submitted themselves. These latter Lodges were not necessarily clandestine or irregular. They were only non-regular, in that they were outside the jurisdiction of the recently formed Grand Lodge. But many, with hasty judgment, have assumed that all brethren who, in those early days, were not Regular must be irregular; a judgment very far from the truth.

"Evidence of the existence of non-Regular Lodges has multiplied of late years."—*Cæmentaria Hibernica*, Fasciculus Secundus, Supplement, 4.

5. (Page 3) Conclusion 12 was not limited to British Masons, and referred to practices more common on the continent, though by brethren of the so-called English Rite. Yet instances were numerous in America, for examples of which it may possibly be safe to trust a defective memory so far as to refer to an early Lodge in Albany, N. Y., and the Lodge in Virginia in which WASHINGTON was made a Mason. Not to mention Kilwinning Mother Lodge and the Mother Lodges of Germany, who will venture to deny that numerous English and Irish military Lodges continually issued copies of their own warrants as sufficient authority to new Lodges to work?

6. (Page 5) It may not be impertinent to remark that American Masons did not invent their strict notions about physical qualifications, but received them from Great Britain and Ireland; also, that the much derided and not very happy expression, "A perfect Youth," did not originate in America, but in the Charges of a Free-Mason. While there is probably not a Lodge in America which would initiate a castrate, there are few which would go so far as did the Stewards' Lodge of the Ancients, in 1784, when it rejected the petition for relief of a *member* of Lodge 81, declaring that, "being lame and otherwise disfigured at the time of being made, he ought not to be relieved"!

It may be noted, also, that while in America there is a tendency towards technical construction, to exalt the letter of the law—of every law—above its spirit, and to strain after forced and unwarranted conclusions—as, for example, where we have evoked the dogma of "jurisdiction over rejected candidates" from the charge that a brother shall not "supplant" another "or put him out of his work," and have based our denial of the rights of brotherhood to the non-affiliate on the casual remark that "every brother ought to belong to" a Lodge,—there has always been in England a corresponding tendency, no less marked and very clearly pointed out in Brother SADLER's "Masonic Facts and Fictions" and Brother CRAWLEY's "*Cæmentaria Hibernica*," towards laxity, and inattention to the requirements of the law. Early in the seventeenth century—if we may rely upon the expert paleographers of the British Museum, or somewhat later, others have thought—this tendency had been so disastrous to the Craft that some of the brethren thought it necessary to enact the stringent requirements of the "New Articles" or "Additional Orders." Then the tendency continued its corroding work for another century, with the result that the revival of 1716-17 became necessary to save Lon-

don Masonry from extinction. Another century of the same tendency—during which she had sent Masonry into Germany with the signs of the first and second degrees reversed and, apparently, without the secrets of the chair—forced the premier Grand Lodge to confess, in 1809 and 1810, that she had been neglecting at least one of the “Land Marks,” and to declare that it was “not necessary any longer to continue in Force those Measures * * * resorted to in or about the year 1739” and to “enjoin the several Lodges to revert to the Ancient Land Marks of the Society.”

Will the lapse of another century bring another revival, say in 1910 or 1917, and a return to the ideas as to physical qualifications which prevailed in England a century and more ago?

Hardly stopping to point out, as Brother SPETH would be the first to concede, that it is highly erroneous to assume that the Fraternity was chiefly an operative one in 1723 when ANDERSON’S “perfect Youth” rule was approved, or had been wholly operative within several centuries prior to that, it may be remarked that the Craft will probably be more profited when brethren cease wrangling over what they think the law of the Institution ought to be, on this subject, and seek to learn what it is. This no one has yet done. Expressing no opinion of my own—for, as yet, I have none,—I may observe that the “youth” who was required to be “perfect” was the apprentice; and that ANDERSON’S second edition clearly reveals that in 1723 and 1738 the apprentice was not a Freemason, even “of the lowest degree.” Furthermore, that while the earliest version of the manuscript charges has a charge regulating the physical qualifications of an apprentice, it has none relative to those of a Mason. The original form of the former appears to have been:—

“And the apprentice to be able, of birth freeborn, and of limbs whole as a man ought to be.”

And that of the latter:—

“And he that shall be made Mason be able, of degree freeborn and no bondsman, and that he have his right limbs as a man ought to have.” See *Masonic Code of Washington*, pp. 185, 186.

Proper study may also disclose that the rule—whatever it is—is not a law of Masonry because it was put in the Charges, but was put in the Charges because it was a law: and that it has its foundation in an occult but none the less real law of nature, upon which was based, also, the requirement of the Jewish law, that no one with a blemish could serve at the holy altar:

“For whatsoever man that hath a blemish, he shall not approach: a blind man, or a lame, or he that hath a flat nose, or any thing superfluous, or a man that is brokenfooted, or brokenhanded, or crookback, or a dwarf, or that hath a blemish in his eye, or be scurvy, or scabbed, or hath his stones broken.”—*Lev. xxi. 18-20.*

7. (Page 5) “All preferment among Masons is grounded upon real Worth and personal Merit only; * * * Therefore no Master or Warden is chosen by Seniority, but for his Merit.”—*The Charges of a Free-Mason, 1723.*

8. (Page 6) So lavish are the Masters of Israel in their use of their assumed “dispensing power,” that if Brother SPETH is willing to cross the briny deep in order to traverse the burning sands and join the Shriners, it would be almost safe to guarantee him the requisite “high degrees,” in either Rite, within thirty-six hours after he lands in America.

9. (Page 6) Brother SPETH here seems to have overlooked the difference between our rule, as to residence qualification, for initiation, and that for affiliation. As to candidates for initiation, Pennsylvania and a few other jurisdictions have modified the old law only so far as to require

residence within the state—giving all their Lodges concurrent jurisdiction; and the Grand Lodge of WASHINGTON now has under consideration a proposal to abolish even that requirement, (Proceedings, 1897, pp. 159, 204.) The other Grand Lodges require the candidate to apply to the nearest Lodge, except that in cities he may usually apply to any Lodge in the city, and in some jurisdictions he may apply to a more distant Lodge with the consent of the one nearest his residence. In most parts of America, outside of our cities there are rarely two Lodges near enough the candidate's residence to cause him to desire to join any but the one nearest him. So that the very few instances in which our rule works a hardship are probably far over-balanced by the protection it affords the fraternity against the admission of unworthy men. For instance, we escape the charge which is emphatically made against several old Lodges in the seaports of Scotland, that they are constantly making Masons of the very dregs of humanity—among transient seafaring men,—apparently solely for financial considerations, and grossly inadequate ones at that.

But for affiliation, it is believed that not more than two or three American Grand Lodges require any residence qualification whatever. California seems to demand that resident unaffiliated Masons shall affiliate with her Lodges only, but her requirement is rightly disregarded, both by such Masons and by Lodges in other states; for she has no legislative jurisdiction over either the one or the other of these.

10. (Page 7) The Mason who would probably be styled by general consent the foremost authority in America on Masonic jurisprudence has, in effect, branded the writer of this note, and numerous other writers of correspondence reports, as *ignoramus* because we have contended for the sound views as to the right to black-ball and the effect of a rejection here enunciated by Brother SPETH. Some of us draw consolation from the fact that our censor is the brother who declared, a few years ago, that "many Companions err, in undertaking to test Masonic questions by actual history instead of by traditional history!"—*Proc. Gr. Chapter, Maine, ix, 306.*

11. (Page 8) The inherent right of Masons to form a Lodge without external authority would appear to be dormant rather than extinct.

12. (Page 8) From the Netherlands precedent—the oldest in existence,—Brother SPETH might have demonstrated even more clearly the utter untenability of the position taken by American Grand Lodges—for example, in their controversy with the Grand Lodge of Hamburg—that a Grand Lodge can obtain *exclusive* jurisdiction of particular territory, as against another Grand Lodge, without the consent of the latter; that is, that exclusive territorial jurisdiction is inherent in a Grand Lodge and is not dependent on the comity of other Grand Lodges. Masonry was introduced into Holland in 1731. There was a Lodge there in 1734, called the *Loge du Grand Maître*, which in 1749 became the "Union Mother-Lodge." In 1756 fourteen Lodges formed the Grand Lodge of the Netherlands. Yet England continued to warrant Lodges in the Netherlands from 1735 to 1769. In 1770 the Grand Master of the Netherlands wrote to England "promising that on condition the Grand Lodge of England did not in future constitute any new Lodges within his jurisdiction, the Grand Lodge of Holland should observe the same restriction with respect to all parts of the world where Lodges were established under the patronage of England." This was agreed to; and this agreement—treaty—and not any imaginary law of "Grand Lodge Sovereignty," is the *only* thing which prevents those Grand Lodges from rightfully erecting new Lodges in each other's country. In

other words, Masonic history discloses that a Grand Lodge possesses just such degree of *exclusive* territorial jurisdiction as other Grand Lodges are willing to concede to her; and that the so-called "American doctrine" is fanciful, unhistoric and modern.

13. (Page 9) Under the treaty mentioned in the preceding note, England would have been justified in excluding that one Grand Lodge—Holland—from the Cape Colony; but the cool way in which English Masons calmly assume that the Grand Lodges of England, Scotland and Ireland, taken together, have exclusive jurisdiction in Masonically unorganized parts of the British Empire is sufficiently astonishing. What greater right has the Grand Lodge of England in Western Australia, for example, than the Grand Lodge of British Columbia? Each of them is a Grand Lodge *in*, but neither of them *of*, the British Empire, as we understand the case. Alaska, although in the United States, is "open territory"—open to all the Grand Lodges of the world. Is Klondike—unless, indeed, it chances to be within territory heretofore claimed by one of the Canadian Grand Lodges—any less so? I doubt whether any American Grand Lodge would admit it.

14. (Page 9) Most of the preposterous doctrines which have gradually grown up around the phrases "Grand Lodge Sovereignty" and "exclusive territorial jurisdiction" are sufficiently absurd; but the extreme of Grand Lodge Sovereignty here referred to by Brother SPETH is an illustration of theorizing run mad; and there have always been conservative Americans who rejected it. "It is not within the power of any Grand Lodge," said THOMAS MILBURNE REED in 1880, "to force allegiance to its authority from a subordinate not of its creation, nor to sever the relations of such subordinate from its parent Grand Body. * * * The sooner Grand Lodges understand this question the better." Attempts like the recent one of the Grand Lodge of Iowa, referred to in the next note, to brand as clandestine or irregular those Lodges in Mexico which refuse to come under the jurisdiction of the *Gran Dieta*, will be regretted in America as keenly, if not as universally, as elsewhere.

15. (Page 9) Of the five Grand Lodges which have recognized the *Gran Dieta*, only the last one—Iowa—has gone to the extreme of declaring her the *sole* legitimate Grand Body in Mexico, or casting any reflection on the bodies in Mexico, claiming to be Masonic, not of her obedience;—bodies with which, in point of numbers, age or reputation, she and her subordinates are not to be compared. It may be that the influences which led Texas, New York, North Dakota and Kansas to recognize the *Gran Dieta* may hereafter induce them to take the additional and wholly unjustifiable step taken by Iowa. But there is no logical connection between recognition of legitimacy and recognition of exclusive jurisdiction. All the American Grand Lodges recognize the Grand Lodge of Quebec and most of those in Australia; but not one of them, it is believed, questions the regularity of the Lodges which England maintains in Quebec and Australia. Surely, after the scores of lessons it has had in the matter of a plurality of Grand Lodges in one country, from the "revival" of the Grand Lodge of All England at York in 1725 to the recognition, by the Grand Lodge of Canada in Ontario in 1896, of brethren made in Lodges of the late alleged-to-be-spurious Grand Lodge of Ontario, American Masonry ought to be prepared to accept the verdict of history, "That two rival Grand Bodies may exist side by side in the same State, neither of them clandestine in any proper sense of the word, each irregular from the point of view of the other and under its laws, but both entirely regular so far as concerns the rest of the Masonic world."

16. (Page 9) It can not be doubted that during the last two generations there has been a tendency in Grand Lodges to usurp powers at the expense of the Lodges, and to make hard and fast rules upon subjects which ought to be left to the discretion of each particular Lodge, if not to that of each individual Mason.

"Drink legislation," in American Grand Lodges, falls chiefly under five heads:

1. Some jurisdictions, it is believed, forbid the use of malt or spirituous liquors at Lodge banquets, or their purchase with Lodge funds. The attempt to defend this has been placed upon the ground that the use of liquors is immoral, or that Lodge funds are dedicated to charity; but, more plausibly, on the fact that the great majority of American Masons are *not* wont to drink wine at dinner, and that there are, in every Lodge, some to whom the presence of wine is a dangerous temptation.

2. Some jurisdictions, including Washington, merely forbid the introduction of intoxicants into the Lodge room, or an adjoining room. This may be on the theory that, if there is to be any excess, Masonry will be less liable to be censured if it takes place away from the Lodge, and in public instead of behind tiled doors.

3. Some jurisdictions declare that no petition for the degrees shall be received from one engaged in the manufacture or sale of intoxicants; and this bar has been held to apply to commercial travelers and to stockholders in brewing corporations. Even more vital than the objections to this pointed out by Brother SPETH, is, in the opinion of the writer, the fact that it conflicts with two of the Landmarks of Masonry. The latter prescribe what the qualification of a candidate shall be: this ventures to demand an additional qualification. The Landmarks, also, repose in the members of the Lodge to which a candidate, who possesses all the qualifications prescribed by the fundamental law of the Institution, applies, the *exclusive* right to determine whether or not they will make him a Mason. This legislation deprives them of that right, and would seem to be an innovation on the body of Masonry.

4. Certain jurisdictions have declared that for one who is already a Mason to engage in the manufacture or sale of intoxicants shall be deemed a Masonic offense, and shall subject him to punishment. Such legislation is *ex post facto*, deprives a Mason of vested rights, and violates the assurance that was given him before he took his first obligation. It is advocated by that class of brethren who assume that everything which seems to them promotive of morality ought to be engrafted upon Masonry. They ignore the fact that such legislation ignores Masonic history and asperses the Masonic worthiness of thousands of Masons now dead as well as of those living in other lands; and, while loudly declaiming that "Masonry is a system of morality," they forget that it is a system which is or ought to be the same yesterday, today and forever and in all lands, and one upon which they have not the slightest right to engraft the slightest change.

5. A single jurisdiction—and, so far as the writer knows, but one—provides that certain members of a Lodge may manufacture and sell intoxicants, while the other members shall not. Upon what theory this law is upheld, or how it would strike an English critic, the writer is not informed.

17. (Page 11) This theory of relief—commonly called the Wisconsin theory—has been very generally condemned, during the last few years, throughout the United States, and has found lodgment in only three or four Grand Lodges.

