

HOW MASONIC WRITERS PERVERTED MASONIC HISTORY.

BY BRO. JACOB NORTON.

In the Appendix to the American edition to Bro. Gould's History of Freemasonry, I find a History of Symbolic Masonry in the United States, by the well known Josiah H. Drummond. Now, as the said Brother Drummond has taken (I believe) all the Masonic degrees in creation, I have reason to presume that he is somewhat *credulous*, and such being the case, I was not at all surprised to find that he believes that every word in the early Massachusetts Grand Lodge record to be "gospel truth." On page 350 he began the history of Masonry in Massachusetts thus :

"In July 30th (O.S.) Henry Price called together ten other brethren at 'The Bunch of Grapes' tavern in Boston, and organized and opened a Provincial Grand Lodge—the first meeting of Masons in America, held under written authority. * * * His Commission or Deputation was read, and eight candidates were at once initiated. The eighteen brethren then joined the petition for a Lodge, which was granted by the Provincial Grand Master; he proceeded at once to constitute the Lodge. * * * Thus was organized the first Lodge," etc., etc. 1733

Now, first—there is nothing in the petition as to when it was written, but "Monday, 30th inst.," "and neither year nor month is mentioned; and, second, I believe that an old original letter of 1733 proved that the Lodge was not constituted before August 31st. Again. If Price initiated eight persons in one day, he violated the Constitution, which limited the number to *five*, and I don't think that Price had a right to initiate even one candidate before the Lodge was regularly constituted.

C. W. Moore, in his life of Henry Price, printed in 1857 (being a supplement to a Constitution), says, that the petition to Henry Price, in 1733, was signed by "eighteen Master Masons," but from Pelham's list of the names of all the Master Masons in Boston, from 1733 to about the middle of 1751, I infer that Andrew Halliburton was one of the signers of the petition who was a Master Mason in 1733, and I cannot find that *one of the other signers of said petition,* ✓

including Andrew Belcher, who played the part of Deputy Grand Master when the Lodge was constituted by Price in 1733, have received the third degree up to the middle of 1751, nor have I reason to believe that either of them have received the Master Mason's degree after 1751.

When referring to Price's Deputation from G. M. Montague, Bro. Drummond says :

“ The authenticity of this commission was denied by zealous antiquarians, mainly because the original was not in existence, and no record of it could be found in the archives of the Grand Lodge of England. The fact that the question was first raised nearly a century and a half after the occurrence, during all which time frequent public mention of it had been made, would seem to be a sufficient answer to the allegation. In the courts this fact would be so decisive that no allegation to the contrary would be heard. That the document is not found in the Provincial Grand Lodge is of no consequence, for it did not belong there ; it was the *personal* muniment of title of the Provincial Grand Master, and properly remained in his possession ; it was proper to record a copy of it in the books of the Provincial Grand Lodge, and this was done.”

But, in the first place, my reason for disbelieving in the genuineness of Price's deputation, was not on account of the original copy being absent, which he claims to have received from Viscount Montague. The original copies of Tomlinson's, Oxnard's, Gridley's and Rowe's Deputations are also absent, but I never doubted the genuineness of the said Deputations. Nor is it true, “ that the question was first raised nearly a century and a half after the occurrence,” for the question was raised by Bro. Thos. French, G.S. of England, in 1768, when, in a letter to Price, he said :

“ I know not how your name should have been omitted in the list of Provincials, but Brother Robert Tomlinson, Esq., is the first appearing on Our Book for part of America during the Grand Mastership of the Earl of Loudon, in 1736. These mistakes might have long since been rectified if you had kept up, according to your Charter regular annual correspondence with the Grand Lodge.”

The letters which Price sent to the English Grand Secretary proved to me conclusively that he was a *trickster*. The fact is, he evaded answering the question, but promised more than once that he would go to England where he would explain everything, “ face

to face," and sent a copy of his deputation taken from the Boston record. Now, in the first place, why did he not send a copy taken from the original English copy?—and, second, why did he not send a copy of his second deputation?—and, third, why was not the second deputation recorded in the Grand Lodge record? For further reasons upon the question at issue, I refer Bro. Drummond to the article in the MASONIC REVIEW of 1890 and 1891 : also to an article in the *American Tyler* (headed "Massachusetts's Claim Repudiated"), of Sept. 23d, 1893.

And, as to Bro. Drummond's argument, viz. : "That the question was first raised nearly a century and a half after the occurrence, during all which time frequent public mention of it has been made," etc., etc., I beg to remind Bro. Drummond that ever since the middle of the 15th century Masons believed that King Athelstone was the founder of Masonry in York ; and since the Reformation, Masons believed that Lemach was the founder of Masonry ; that St. Alban brought Masonry into England, etc. ; and these stories formed part of the pre-1717 rituals ; and the first Grand Master of York, in his address, referred to these events as matters of fact. Bro. Findel, however, in 1860, has exploded all that nonsense, though Masons believed all the said stories for about three or four hundred years ; and, before I am done with this paper, I shall make even Bro. Drummond disbelieve what has been believed for nearly a century and a half.

Bro. Drummond further says :

"The early records of the Provincial Grand Lodge are meagre, those of the first sixteen years were not entered in the book now in existence till 1749 or '50 ; an attempt has been made to discredit these records on account of that fact ; but, considering the well-known Masonic custom to enter the minutes on loose papers or a book other than the regular record, and subsequently, at convenience, to transcribe them, the objection has no force ; moreover, the records are abundantly corroborated by other contemporary records and publications."

Now, our good Bro. Drummond was as much carried away by imagination, when he wrote the above paragraph, as he was in his believing that Henry Price received a Deputation from England in 1733, and another Deputation he received in 1734. The fact is, a glance at the said record will convince anyone that the only meet-

ings the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts held between 1733 and 1750, were on Saint John's days; nor can I see that any other business was transacted on those days but to have a jolly good time. The Grand Lodge, therefore, had no records or Secretary during that time, because it did not need any, and, consequently, the record of Pelham, from 1733 to 1750, reads like a chronicle. But here is an account of the first regular business meeting of the Grand Lodge, when, for the first time, measures were adopted, viz. :

“ On the 13th of April, 1750, Our Rt. W. G. M. called a Grand Lodge, consisting of the Rt. W. Grand Officers, and Masters and Wardens of the several Lodges, when it was determined to hold quarterly communications in the year, viz. : the *second Friday* in April, July, October and January, and the Grand Committee of Charity, consisting of the Rt. W. Grand Officers and Masters of the several Lodges, shall meet eight days before the Grand Lodge, *which has been regularly observed to this time*, where has been quarterly contributions of charity from the several Lodges, and business of Masonry in general transacted to the satisfaction and advantage of the Lodges and brethren in general.”

The words I have italicised prove that the above paragraph was not written till about a year or more after its date. “ This is further confirmed by the fact that the name of *Pelham*, as Grand Secretary, does not appear until June, 1751. The confusion of dates previous to 1751, shows that Pelham did not receive the appointment until then.” (See *American Freemasons*, 1870, p. 205.)

The following paragraph in the said record first started in my mind some doubt about its genuineness, viz. :

“ June 24th, 1734, About this time our Bro. Benjamin Franklin, from Philadelphia, became acquainted with our Rt. W. G. M., Mr. Price, who further instructed him in the Royal Art, and said Franklin, on his return to Philadelphia, called the brethren there together, who petitioned our Rt. W. G. M. for a constitution to hold a Lodge, and our Rt. W. G. M. having this year received orders from the G. L. in England to establish Masonry in all N. A., did send a deputation to Philadelphia, appointing Rt. W. Mr. Benjamin Franklin first Master, which *is the beginning* of Masonry there.”

C. W. Moore, in his *Life of Henry Price*, page 97, says :

“ During the four years of his [Price's] presidency, he established three other Lodges, two of which were in distant provinces. The

first Warrant he issued was for a Lodge in Philadelphia, called in the records 'The First Lodge in Pennsylvania.' The authority for it was granted to his intimate friend and Bro. Benj. Franklin, who was its first Master. The Warrant bears date June 24th, 1734. On the same day and year, he also granted a Warrant for the Holy Lodge of St. John, at Portsmouth, in New Hampshire; and on the 27th of December, 1735, he issued a Warrant for the establishment of the first Lodge in South Carolina, at Charleston. * * * And, in explanation of this, it is proper to state, that early [how early?] in the year 1734, he had received authority from the Grand Lodge of England to establish Masonry in all North America, or, in other terms, he had been appointed Prov. Grand Master for the whole continent, as were his two immediate successors, Robert Tomlinson, in 1736,* and Tho. Oxnard, in 1742."

Now, first of all, the paragraph in the record, beginning with the words of, "About this time," at once started my suspicion that it was not an original record. Second. Before I saw the Massachusetts record, I had read Franklin's letter to Price, dated Nov. 28th, 1734 (not "early" in 1734), in which he wrote:

"I have seen in the Boston prints an article of news from London, importing that at a Grand Lodge held there in August last, Mr. Price's deputation and powers was extended over all America, which we hope is true, * * * and though this has not been as yet regularly signified to us by you, yet giving credit thereto, we think it our duty to lay before your Lodge what we apprehend needful to be done for us in order to promote and strengthen the interest of Masonry in this Province, * * * * To-wit: a deputation or charter granted by the R. W. Mr. Price, by virtue of his commission from Britain, confirming the brethren of Pennsylvania in he privileges they at present enjoy of holding annually their Grand Lodge, choosing their Grand Master, Wardens, and other officers," etc., etc.

But, further on, Franklin very respectfully demanded, that with the said deputation, Price should also send "a copy of the R. W.

* Tomlinson was appointed Pro. G. M. for *New England and its Territories only*. Moore also asserts that Charles Pelham was appointed G. Sec. in 1744, which is untrue, and I was amused to read in his book, p. 93, that William Cowper, the poet, was chosen to be G. Sec. of England in 1723. But the fact is, William Cowper, the poet, was not born before the 26th November, 1731.

Grand Master's first deputation [meaning the Deputation he brought with him from England in 1733], and the instrument by which it appears to be enlarged, as above mentioned, witnessed by your Wardens, and signed by the Secretary."

Now, Franklin, was in Boston in the early part of 1734, and got acquainted with Price, *doubtless* asked Price to show him his deputation from Grand Master Viscount Montague, and Price *doubtless* avoided Franklin's request by some kind of unsatisfactory excuses, but when Franklin saw in the Boston prints or newspapers, that Price received an extension of his powers as Provincial Grand Master over North America, "which advice (he said) we hope is true," he then asked Price to confirm him in his privileges of being Provincial Grand Master over Pennsylvania; but not being quite satisfied with Price's truthfulness, he therefore demanded not only to have copies of Price's deputations sent to him, but further requested to have the copies attested by the signatures of Price's Wardens and Secretary; but instead of Price sending him a deputation to confirm his privileges as Provincial Grand Master, Price, in the record, intimates that he sent to Franklin a mere charter, appointing Franklin to be a mere Master of the Lodge. It is my firm belief, however, that Price never sent to Franklin *even a charter*, because I am perfectly satisfied that Price did not in 1733 receive a deputation for New England and its Territories, nor did he receive any powers in 1734 from a Grand Lodge held in London in August, for no Grand Lodge was held in London in August, 1734; nor did Grand Master Crawford send Price any thing, because the said Grand Master did not visit London from the 30th of March, 1734, till the 1st of March, 1735. In short, Price had no genuine deputation from England, save and except a deputation to establish a Lodge in Boston, and he acted the part of Grand Master only while performing the ceremony of constituting the first Lodge in Boston in 1733, after which his Grand Mastership ceased. And as Franklin did not apply to Price for a deputation before Nov. 28th, 1734, the deputation could not have been sent by Price to Franklin, as Moore says, on the 24th of June 1734. Moore was also wrong about the other Lodges (which he said) Price chartered on said 24th of June. The fact is, Henry Price *never granted a charter to any Lodge whatever*, either in New England or outside of New England.

Bro. Drummond admits that there is no evidence that Franklin

accepted even a Warrant to legalize his Lodge from Henry Price; for, in the first place, all correspondence between Price and Franklin ceased after Franklin sent his letter to Price in Nov. 28th, 1734; and, second, though Price did not send a Provincial Deputation to Franklin, the Philadelphia Masons continued to elect annually Grand Masters after 1734. But, as it is written in the record, that Price appointed Franklin to be the first Master, Bro. Drummond believes it, and the reason he gives why Price did not send the Provincial Deputation to Franklin, sounds *like a true lawyer's logic*. He says :

“ Franklin had also asked to have the Philadelphia brethren confirmed in the privilege of holding a Grand Lodge annually.”

But this was beyond the power of Price to grant; he was, it is true Provincial Grand Master for North America, but, as he was only *Provincial* Grand Master, and while he could issue Warrants for Lodges situated in any part of America, he could not create or confirm a Grand Lodge in any particular Province. * * * * From this fact, it is quite certain, that the Boston record, that Franklin's petition was held to be for a constitution to hold a Lodge, and that Price did send a deputation to Philadelphia, appointing the Right Worshipful Franklin first Master,” etc., etc.

In 1749 Oxnard, from Boston, did grant to Benjamin Franklin a deputation to hold a Grand Lodge in Philadelphia annually, etc., etc. Now, if Price possessed the same power in 1734 which Oxnard possessed in 1749, why could not Price grant to Franklin, in 1734 the same power that Oxnard granted to him in 1749? Again. Soon after the Masonry in Pennsylvania was legalized by Oxnard in 1749, Past Grand Master Allen, of Philadelphia, immediately applied to the Grand Lodge of England for a Provincial Deputation, so as to make Pennsylvania independent of Boston authorities, and the Grand Master of England granted to Allen such deputation.

Now, if Price had been empowered to charter a Lodge in Philadelphia in 1734, and had sent one to Franklin, in the said year, Franklin would undoubtedly have accepted the charter, because it would enable Grand Master Allen to petition the Grand Lodge of England for an independent Provincial Deputation in 1735, instead of doing so in 1750.

But that is not all. Price pretended (as I shall presently show) that he granted a Provincial Deputation to Erasmus James Phillipps, for Nova Scotia, before 1740, all which Bro. Drummond believes as "gospel truth." Now, if Price had the power between 1737 and 1740 to grant such a Provincial Deputation to Phillipps, as above stated, why did he not have the power at the close of 1734 to grant such a deputation to Benjamin Franklin? The fact, however is, Price did not send to Franklin even a charter, because he could not comply with Franklin's demand to send copies of his English Deputations, attested by his Wardens and Secretary.

Price's ambition was to make the world believe that he was the founder of Lodges which came into existence up to the time when the Boston record was written by Charles Pelham in 1751, and here is a specimen of the way he advertised it, thus, in the Boston record is the following statement, viz. :

"Dec. 27th, 1735. About this time, sundry brethren going to South Carolina, met with some Masons in Charleston, who there went to work, from which spring Masonry in these parts."

Price does not in the record pretend that he sent to South Carolina a charter for a Lodge, but very soon after the record was written the Bostonians pretended that Price did charter a Lodge in South Carolina. This was repeated by Moore, and it is also believed by Bro. Drummond.

But here comes another piece of Price's brag. I must, however, premise that up to 1749 the English government occupied in Nova Scotia an insignificant fort, called Annapolis Royal. Maj. Erasmus James Phillipps was the chief officer of the fort. In the summer of 1749 a colony, consisting of about seven hundred persons, arrived from England, and took possession of the port in Nova Scotia then named for the first time as Halifax, with Cornwallis as Governor of the new colony. Major Phillipps then removed to Halifax. In Halifax Phillipps opened a Lodge, and initiated Governor Cornwallis, also Lord Colvill, who commanded the fleet which brought the colony from England to Nova Scotia, and other persons. Where Phillipps obtained his Masonry no one knows; and be it remembered that in 1731 a Lodge was opened in Philadelphia without a charter, and in the middle of the last century a Lodge was opened in Boston without a charter, and I have no doubt that similar self-constituted Lodges were opened in other places about the same time. Even in

England this was done about the same time by the so-called *Ancients*. In 1750, after a sufficient number of houses were built in Halifax to accommodate the new settlers, Lord Colvil, with his ships, was stationed for some months in Boston, where he received the third degree, and was made Deputy Grand Master, and from Lord Colvil Price learned about Major Phillipps and his Masonry in Nova Scotia. All at once, it seems, Price remembered the exact date when Phillipps was initiated in the Boston Lodge, viz., Nov. 14th, 1737; he also remembered that he gave to Phillipps a Provincial Deputation for Nova Scotia, but the date and even the year when the deputation was given to Phillipps, he evidently did not remember, and here is what he says about it :

“ 1740. Omitted in place, that our Rt. Worsh’l Grand Master, Mr. Henry Price, granted a Deputation at ye Petition of Sundry Brethren at Annapolis, in Nova Scotia, to hold a Lodge there, and appointed Maj. Erasmus Ja’s Phillipps, D.G.M., who has since at ye request of sundry Brethren at Halifax, granted a Constitution to hold a Lodge there, and appointed Th Rt. Worshipful, His Excellency Edw’d Cornwallis, Esq’r, their first Master.”

All which Bro. Drummond believes with perfect faith; and he says :

“ The Provincial Grand Master Tomlinson was absent in England during the year, and until May, 1739, * * * * (and) that Price *acted* as Provincial Grand Master while Tomlinson was absent, and dursng that time granted a deputation to Phillipps for the Lodge at Annapolis, Nova Scotia.”

Now, assuming that such was the case, it seems to me that Price could not, during the absence of Tomlinson, have been allowed to exercise higher power than Tomlinson himself could have exercised had he been at home, and as Tomlinson’s deputation limited his power to New England and its Territories, he could not legally have granted a deputation for Annapolis, in Nova Scotia, and if Tomlinson could not do so, what right had Price to do so during Tomlinson’s absence ?

The truth, however is, Erasmus James Phillipps never received a deputation from Price, nor was he initiated in Boston, for the following reason : In Brenman’s History of Masonry in British America, on pages 366 and 369, the reader can find a copy of a depu-

tation, sent by Dermott to Erasmus J. Phillipps, dated 27th of December, 1757, appointing Phillipps Provincial Grand Master over Nova Scotia, and also a charter for constituting a Lodge at Halifax. Now, if Phillipps had been initiated in Boston, and had received from Price a deputation; and had in 1757 desired to have Nova Scotia made into an independant Provincial Jurisdiction, that is independent of Price, he would have done the same in 1757, as Allen did in Philadelphia in 1750—that is, he would have petitioned the Grand Master of England (under whose Jurisdiction he was initiated) for his desired Provincial Deputation. But as Phillipps applied to Dermott instead of the legitimate Grand Master of England, it proves clearly that Phillipps' Masonic doings in Nova Scotia were illegal, and knowing that Dermott was more likely to *white-wash* him than the regular Grand Master of the legal Grand Lodge would, he therefore applied to Dermott. It seems, however, that Phillipps never used the deputation he received from Dermott, and the Lodges in Halifax continued to work without authority from any Grand Lodge until 1781, and then three Lodges in Halifax applied to the Duke of Atholl, Grand Master of the Ancients, to legalize them, which he did, and Nova Scotia Lodges remained under the jurisdiction of the Ancients until the union in 1813; and as there is not a particle of evidence that any correspondence was ever carried on either between Phillipps or any Nova Scotia Mason and Henry Price, I am justified in believing that Phillipps never was initiated in Boston, and never received any authority from Boston. and the story of Price having granted a charter or deputation to Phillipps, is one of Price's own inventions. But here is another one, viz. :

Dec. 27, 1738. "This year our Rt. W. G. M. Mr. Tomlinson, went to England via Antiqua, where, finding some old Boston Masons [how old?] went to work and made the Governor and sundry other gentlemen of distinction Masons, whereby from our Lodge sprung Masonry in the West Indies."

But, in the first place, as Tomlinson's deputation or power, did not extend beyond New England its Territories, what right had he to open a Lodge in the West Indies? And, second, in Brother Gould's "Four Old Lodges," page 55, second column, I found as follows :

"154. Pachem Lodge, Pachem, Antiqua, January 31, 1737 [O.S.]."

Which proves that Masonry in the West Indies did not spring from Price's Lodge. Further down, on the same column, I find that No. 170, Baker's Lodge, in St. Johns, Antiqua, had an English Warrant, dated March 20th, 1738 [O.S.]. Price did not claim that he sent a Warrant to Antiqua, but subsequent Bostonians claimed that Antiqua is indebted to Boston for a Warrant to hold a Lodge there; thus, in 1754, the Boston Grand Lodge petitioned the Grand Master of England to appoint Gridley as Provincial Grand Master. The petition was accompanied with a list of Lodges chartered by the Grand Master of Massachusetts, among which are named South Carolina, Annapolis, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, Halifax, Nova Scotia, and *Antiqua*. *I have, however, no doubt that not one of the said Lodges was chartered by Price, or by his successors.* Indeed, Price never chartered a Lodge anywhere, and with the exception of the first Boston Lodge, he never constituted a Lodge anywhere; even the Lodge in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, was not chartered by Price, but by Tomlinson in 1738.

And, now, I will just give one specimen of Henry Price's falsehoods. After Tomlinson's death, Oxnard received a deputation from England, in which he was declared Grand Master for North America, and Price never said a word against it. In January 13th 1752, Oxnard was in England; a motion was then made in the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, that in the absence of the Grand Master, Bro. Price ought to preside, which *motion was rejected*, and Price never protested against the action of the Grand Lodge. In 1755 Oxnard was dead, and a petition from Boston was sent to England to have Gridley appointed Grand Master for North America, which met with Price's approbation, and he wrote to some one in England, after bragging that no less than forty Lodges sprang from his first Lodge, "Therefore [said he], we desire that our deputation may be made out for all North America, or over all North America." After the death of Gridley, the Bostonians petitioned the English Grand Master to appoint John Rowe as Grand Master of North America, but Price then protested against it, and on June 3d, 1769, Price wrote to the G.S. of England :

"I recommended our Rt. W. Brother John Rowe to be Provincial Grand Master of New England, but you cannot find that I ever gave up my own appointment over all North America. This, by the blessing of God, I shall explain to you and all our Right Worshipful brothers face to face in London, sometime in the Fall, as my business will then call me home."

Now, if he did not resign his *pretended* Grand Mastership over all North America in 1736, why did he recommend Gridley to be appointed over all North America in 1755? And why did he not write a letter to the Grand Secretary of England before 1768? I think that the above extract from Price's letter should satisfy any one that *Price was a downright humbug.*

And, now, for a few words about the record. On its cover is printed, in gilt letters, that the book was bought in 1750. Pelham's name does not appear in it as Grand ~~Master~~ before June 24, 1751. Pelham was not initiated before September, 1744. All that Pelham wrote in the record he must have obtained from Price. The dates therein are confused and faulty, and such being the case, how can any one believe that the statements in such a record, which was wholly dictated by the unscrupulous Henry Price, would be received as evidence in any court of justice?

Secretary

CORRESPONDENCE.

SOMETHING FOR BRO. SPEED TO THINK OF.

BOSTON, Nov. 4th, 1894

MY DEAR BRO. WRIGHTSON :

Some two or three months ago a letter appeared in the MASONIC REVIEW, signed with initials, in which the writer admitted that the St. Johns' Masonic tradition was a mistake; which means that it was a pious fraud, but as the Saints John were Jews of most faultless character, he was, therefore, determined to perpetuate that fraud in the ritual. In the October number of the MASONIC REVIEW Bro. Frederic Speed (who I suspect was the writer of the above described letter), came out with an article written in a very angry, bluffing, and threatening style, in which he repeats the notion that the Saints John were Jews. I, however, am of opinion that the Saints John were no more Jews than Bro. Speed himself is a Jew. It is true, they may have been born of Jewish parents, and may have been brought up in the Jewish religion, but yet, I maintain, that, after they become "parallels in Christianity," as you call them, they virtually ceased to be Jews, and no Jew would have then acknowledged them to be Jews.

And with regard to the perfect and faultless character of the Saints, there is a decided difference of opinion about it. For instance, if you ask a Mohammedan about the character of the founder of his religion, he will answer that Mohammed was the most perfect and most faultless human being that ever lived. But, if you ask a Christian what he thinks about the character of Mohammed, he will answer that Mohammed was a downright crank ; or, he may say, that he was an imposter. Now, I presume that it is no secret that the very first appearance of Christianity, Jews naturally entertained the very same opinion about the characters of the founders of that religion, as Christians have always believed about the character of the founders of the Mohammedan religion, and the persecutions which Jews have suffered and are still suffering from believers in the Saintship and the Holiness of the so-called Saints John, the numerous lies they have invented for the purpose of injuring the character of the Jews, the lies that pious Christian Masons have invented for the purpose of turning the Masonic Lodge into a Christianizing trap, and the conduct of Bro. Speed, who, after admitting that the so-called St. John's Masonic traditions were pious frauds, still persists in advocating the retention and perpetuation of the said frauds in the Masonic ritual,—all which is certainly not calculated to change the minds of Jews concerning the characters of the Saints John. Now, as there is a decided difference of opinion between Jews and Christians about that question, I therefore maintain that a Christian has no more right to *brag up* the character of the Saints John in a Masonic Lodge, than a Jew has the right to *run down* the character of the Saints John in a Masonic Lodge ; and I, therefore, advocate the expunging the names of the Saints John, and other sectarian allusions, from the Masonic ritual, as the Grand Lodge of England did in 1813.

Nor am I the only one who is opposed to the retention of the Saints John in the Masonic ritual ; for instance, as long ago as 1842, I visited the Adelpia Lodge in New York, which was composed mainly or exclusively of Jews, in which Lodge the name of "Saint John" was not mentioned ; and since then, I was informed that several other Lodges were formed in New York which excluded the name of the Saints John from the ritual ; and several years ago, a Lodge composed of Jews, was formed in Providence, R. I., in which Lodge the name of the Saints John was also expunged from the ritual.

Now, I maintain, that a kind of Masonry which requires to have a *Church Lodge here*, a *Synagogue Lodge there*, and a *Mosque Lodge elsewhere*, where a Mason of one religious denomination cannot conscientiously hold office in Lodges appropriated to other religious denominations, and where, indeed, one cannot visit a Lodge which is not appropriated to his own religious denomination without being offended by ranters and centers who magnify the virtue of the founders of their own religion, I say plainly, that such Masonry is not calculated to produce *very much brotherly love between Masons who belong to different religious denominations*.

I have shown that in England, where the Masons are either Christians or Jews, the Masonic ritual was so constructed in 1813 or 1814, as to give no offence to either Jew or Christian; hence, *there* a Mason may preside over any Lodge without having to utter any thing which conflicts with his religious belief, or would offend one of any religion who was present in the Lodge; and I believe that the sectarian question would have been settled in this country long ago if our American Grand Lodges had not been ruled by cliques who were and are still as void of honor, justice, and shame, as the *meanest kind of our Tammany Hall politicians are*, or are said to be.

Fraternally and Respectfully Yours,

JACOB NORTON.

P. S.—As Bro. Speed threatens to splurge the MASONIC REVIEW with more of his peculiar logic, I take the liberty to advise him, before he does so, to read the leading articles of September, October, November and December, of the *Acacia*, printed in Natches, Miss., in 1855, and edited by the author of said articles, Bro. William P. Mellen, Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of Mississippi.

J. N.