

# SECRET SOCIETIES.

## A Colored Mason's Defense of Prince Hall Lodge and Its Offspring.

### Meeting of the Masonic Grand Lodge of Michigan---A Ruling on the Funeral Question.

### Michigan Knights of Pythias in Session---List of Officers Elected.

#### MASONIC.

##### A DEFENSE OF COLORED MASONRY.

The interesting discussion of the status of colored Masons, especially in Ohio, has led to the expression of opinions differing so widely from each other as to seem impossible of reconciliation. In a recent issue there was given in these columns an English criticism on the action of the Grand Lodge of Ohio, and now comes the Hon. John Jones, a colored citizen, with the following expression of diametrically opposite opinions:

To the Editor of The Chicago Tribune:  
 CHICAGO, Jan. 24.—In an article on Secret Societies in your issue of Jan. 9, a part was devoted to colored Masonry in the United States. You say "The Masonic periodicals of this country and Europe are very generally expressing strong opinions on the subject of the action taken by the Grand Lodge of Ohio in partially, at least, recognizing the existence of the colored lodges in that State."

I am not surprised at the opposition of the Masonic journals of this country; they are always consistent. It has been their constant effort since 1813 to make us appear in the eyes of the world as clandestine Masons. They have not been (or pretend so) able to see how colored lodges can have a legitimate existence in the United States. The fault is not ours that they do not see it, as we have endeavored to show them the law and precedents for our existence. They must therefore take the consequences.

But I am surprised at our English brother from whom you quote. You report him as saying in the London *Freemason*: "There is no doubt that the Prince Hall Lodge was lawfully warranted." So far our English brother is right, but at this point he becomes somewhat "hazy upon the question of color." And in this fog he loses himself as our American Masonic writers do on the same subject. Our English brother goes on in the same haze and says, "but owing to failure to meet for a number of years and making returns and paying the dues to the Grand Lodge, it certainly ceased to exist and became to all intents and purposes a dead lodge." This we deny, and ask for the proof. If any such proceeding was had in the Grand Lodge of England and the warrant of Prince Hall Lodge arrested, why does not our English brother or any one else who asserts it as a fact furnish us the date of such proceedings, together with the book and page whereon it is recorded? Our English brother certainly has access to the records. The organization of Prince Hall Lodge into a Grand Lodge became necessary for the interests of masonry among colored men, and for this purpose we absolved all connection with the Grand Lodge of England, after having served it a proper time. Our white brother attempts to deny the authority of Prince Hall to constitute itself into a Grand Lodge without the consent of the Grand Lodge of England. We will now cite a few precedents to show the regularity and propriety of our proceedings in these Masonic undertakings. Aside from the fact that the organization of Grand Lodges for the supervision of Masons is of comparatively recent date (1717), it must be recollected that the provincial and subordinate Lodges of the Grand Lodge of England in the North American Colonies have since the War of Independence themselves not asked the consent of their Grand Lodge to constitute Grand Lodges. Let us look also into the history of the Masonic fraternity in Germany. The Lodge of Unity in Frankfurt, instituted by London, has from the beginning organized Lodges on its own account, among others the Lodge of Unity in Nuremberg. The brethren of Berlin formed (Sept. 13, 1740), by royal authority, and without asking a warrant from any other Grand Lodge, the Lodge "Aux Trois Globes," from which originated, in 1744, "the Grand Royal Mother Lodge of the three Globes" and from it the Margrave of Barreth transplanted Masonry to the town of that name. The first Lodge of Vienna (Aux Trois Canons) likewise exercised the functions of a Grand Lodge. The same has repeatedly been done by the Lodge of the "Three Keys" in Ratisbon, and in Saxony the same thing has taken place. From the Lodge of the "Three White Eagles," founded in 1738 in Dresden, by Count Barowsky, emanated in 1739 that of the "Three Swords," which still exists, and in 1741 that of the "Three Swans." These two united in one Grand Lodge, whose Grand Master, Count Rutowsky, independently instituted several daughter lodges. The Lodge "Minerva," also chartered by the Grand Lodge of London in 1741, has in its turn instituted lodges, whilst still other lodges of Saxony were called into existence by the mother lodge of the Three Globes. All these lodges originating in the manner indicated were, and those which yet exist are, still recognized as regular lodges. This practice is known to every student of Masonic history; and every intelligent Mason knows this to be true; that there has been no objection made and no complaint offered against this regulation by the Sons of Shem and Japhet until we, the Sons of Ham, adopted the same means (they having first set the example) to establish Masonry in this country among colored men.

I think I have made it plain to every unprejudiced man that we acted just as other good men have acted before us, and just as our Anglo-Saxon brethren would act now under the same circumstances. Then why not give credit for doing just as you would in a like situation? While serving as Grand Master of Ohio and its jurisdiction I had occasion to examine this matter very carefully, and know whereof I speak. Respectfully, etc., JOHN JONES.

#### GRAND LODGE OF MICHIGAN.

The Grand Lodge of Michigan met Tuesday at Grand Rapids, a full delegation being present. Grand-Master George H. Durand read the annual address. In it he spoke of the dedication of nine new halls during the year, and mentioned the issuance of dispensations for nine new lodges. Under the head of jurisprudence the Grand Master reported a very large number of rulings which had been made necessary during the year. Perhaps the query and answer of most interest is the following in reference to the right of lodges to attend funerals not conducted by them:

Question—Has a Lodge the right to attend the funeral of a deceased member in a case where the funeral ceremony is not performed by it, but is conducted by the order of Knights Templar? Answer—The principle involved in the question propounded is one that has caused much discussion among learned and distinguished Masons in many of the grand jurisdictions in the country. It has been very uniformly held that a Lodge has no right to take part with any other organization in conducting a funeral ceremony, thereby creating a ceremony which is partly Masonic and partly the ceremony of some other Order, and in this conclusion, so wisely arrived at, I most heartily concur. At this point, however, I must stop. After a most earnest and careful examination of the subject I am unable to concede the correctness of the rule established by some decisions which prohibits a Lodge from simply attending the funeral of a deceased member as a mourner, when the ceremony is conducted entirely by some other organization. The unity of the organization of the Lodge is not thereby destroyed, nor the beautiful ceremony of our institution marred, or the dignity of Masonry lowered. The Lodge in such a case as a unit simply marches in procession to the grave, and, although taking no part in the ceremony, pays that decent respect to the memory of a departed brother which not only brotherly love but ordinary humanity dictates. Having done this—having dropped the sympathetic tear upon his grave, and shown a kindly regard and affection for a brother whom death has taken—the Lodge, still preserving the unity of its organization, returns to the place from whence it started to take such other or more formal action as may be deemed appropriate in view of the bereavement it has sustained.

I am sorry to be obliged to render a decision which seems to conflict with much respectable authority upon this subject, but I cannot in conscience do otherwise. I think that to prohibit a Lodge from appearing as a mourner at the funeral of a deceased member, simply because the funeral ceremony is performed by another and different organization, is illiberal and inhumane, and in every sense opposed to that spirit of kindly affection and fraternal regard which Masonry teaches. I shall therefore hold that a Lodge may, if it chooses, attend the funeral of a deceased brother, as a mourner, no matter by whom the ceremony is conducted; provided, however, that it shall not unite with any other organization in conducting such ceremony, and, provided further, that the unity shall be preserved in procession, and during the service, in the same manner, and to the same extent, as if the ceremony was performed by such Lodge.

At Wednesday's session the following persons were elected Grand officers for the ensuing year:

- Grand Master—M. H. Maynard, Marquette.
- Deputy Grand Master—William Dunham, Manistee.
- Senior Grand Warden—L. W. Finch, Adrian.
- Junior Grand Warden—I. T. Beach, Romeo.
- Grand Treasurer—R. W. Landon, Niles.
- Grand Secretary—E. I. Garfield, Detroit.
- Grand Lecturer—A. M. Clark, Lexington.

The Grand Lodge adjourned Wednesday evening to meet next year at the same place.

#### MASONRY AT THE CENTENNIAL.

The New York Dispatch, in its Masonic column, presents a strong argument in favor of a

celebration of the Centennial by the Order, and closes with the following:

So far the Order of Knights Templar have been the first and most earnest in the desire to participate in the Centennial celebration, and they will doubtless, under the lead of Grand Master Hopkins, make at Philadelphia the most imposing demonstration ever seen in this country, or indeed anywhere else, since the days of the original Order.

The brethren of the Ancient and Accepted Rite, accepting the invitation of Ill. Bro. Pike, Grand Commander of the Southern Jurisdiction, will meet in a social gathering, such as the world has never before seen, to renew and cement the bonds of friendship, and pledge themselves anew to "one country, one flag, and one destiny." But the great fraternity of Free and Accepted Master Masons is yet to be heard from. The latest returns we have seen make about 9,000 lodges and nearly 600,000 members on this continent, and this vast array needs and must be represented at Philadelphia this Centennial year. Let the representatives of the world there see us, or our chosen representatives, and know what manner of men we are, and judge therefrom whether the proposition to put us down is likely to meet with much success. Let the gentlemen coming here from those nations where the right to meet and pursue our peaceful labors is still denied look upon us, and, returning home, tell their people whether we look like men fit for plots and conspiracies; and, more than all, let this be an opportunity for consulting among ourselves for the better upholding of our American views of Masonic government and polity, and for the adoption of such measures as shall unite the whole Fraternity around the globe in the indissoluble bonds of friendship and unity.

#### NOTABLE INSTALLATION.

The officers of Wabansia Lodge No. 160, A. F. and A. M., were publicly installed in Masonic Hall, Oriental Building, Thursday evening last by Deputy Grand Master J. E. Church, assisted by George McElwain and J. C. Howell, all Past Masters of Wabansia, and by the Rev. Henry G. Perry, of D. C. Cregier Lodge, who acted as Chaplain and Orator. The officers installed were:

- W. M.—Thomas J. Tuttle.
- S. W.—E. St. John.
- J. W.—J. A. Stoddard.
- Treasurer—Joseph Barstow.
- Secretary—T. Whit Perry.
- J. D.—N. M. Swasey.
- S. S.—S. W. Butterfield.
- J. S.—H. P. Reinboth.
- Tyler—D. F. Brandon.

The hall was filled with ladies and friends of the Lodge, and A. J. Cresswold with his choir performed choice selections of vocal and instrumental music during the evening. J. A. Stoddard performed several beautiful solos on his B flat tenor horn and was accompanied upon the piano. At the conclusion of the installation ceremonies a bountiful supper was provided by Wohl and Prof. Carr furnished amusement for those who wished to "trip the light fantastic." The "wee sma' hours" found the guests dispersing, well pleased with the entertainment of the evening.

#### A CONGREGATION OF CELEBRITIES.

The regular communication of Blaney Lodge 271, held on Wednesday evening last, was marked by the presence of an unusual number of distinguished Masons, among whom were M. W. G. E. Lounsbury, Past Master of Illinois; M. W. S. E. Owens, Past Grand Master State of Missouri; M. W. J. A. Hawley, Past Grand Master of Illinois; M. W. D. C. Cregier, Past Grand Master of Illinois; the Right Eminent T. T. Gurney, Grand Commander Knights Templar, of Illinois; R. W. A. A. Glenn (Lieutenant Governor of Illinois); W. I. A. Calkins, (Mayor of Galesburg), Illinois; G. W. Barnard, Commander of Oriental Consistory; Past Masters A. M. Bennet, of Hesperia Lodge #11; J. W. Buell, of Blaney 271; J. Mohr, of Kilwinning 311; Leslie Lewis, of South Park 682; G. H. Sampson, (Secretary Illinois Masonic Benevolent Society), and others. The visitors were received by the Master of Blaney, Brother Edward Cook, with appropriate remarks and ceremonies. Speeches were made by G. M. Lounsbury, P. G. M. Owens, Hawley, Cregier, Gov. Glenn, and Commanders Gurney and Barnard. After spending a short time in social intercourse with the officers and members of the Lodge, the visitors retired with pleasant impressions of Blaney Lodge.

#### NOTES FROM THE ORDER.

The death of T. Warren Floyd, the venerable Mason of Gillespie, Ill., is announced. Dr. Floyd was well known all through the State, and had been a prominent member of the Order for many years.

Washington Chapter R. A. M., through its efficient H. P., John O'Neil, have procured an elegant set of veil-banners and a Royal Arch banner, the set costing \$175. They are pronounced the finest set of Chapter banners in the West.

John Sheville, of New York, Masonic Author, Lecturer, and Writer,—active member 33d of A. & A. S. Rite for the Northern Jurisdiction United States, has recently taken up his residence in Chicago. Brother Sheville visited Oriental Sov. Consistory Thursday evening.

The rapid extension of population in the direction of Central Park is leading to the agitation of the project of forming a new Masonic Lodge in that neighborhood, and a meeting of Master Masons in favor of the project will be held at the hall, on the corner of California avenue and Madison street Wednesday evening next.

The Grand Lodge of New Jersey elected the following officers at its annual meeting, Jan. 20:

- Grand Master—Marshall B. Smith.
- D. G. M.—J. L. De La Cour.
- S. G. W.—James C. Fitzgerald.
- J. G. W.—Hamilton Wallace.
- Grand Treasurer—Charles Bethel.
- Grand Secretary—Joseph H. Hough.
- D. G. Secretary—T. H. R. Redway.
- Grand Chaplain—The Rev. N. Retil.
- S. G. D.—S. V. C. Van Benschel.
- J. G. D.—M. M. Dunham.
- Grand Marshal—Charles Russ.
- Grand Stewards—B. B. Ayerig and S. M. Gramans.
- Grand Instructor—Hiber Wells.
- Grand Guard—Charles Schulhaus.
- Grand Pursuivant—Bearer T. Van Iderstine.
- Grand Tyler—Amos Howell.