

co-existent law-making powers in the same jurisdiction—the grand lodge and the brother to whom it gave official power, the grand master.

Again, the *Freemason's Monthly Magazine*, in an article on "The power of a master, and lodge rights," by its M. W. contributor, D., in which that enlightened Freemason says in reference to the assumed powers of a grand master: "It is a very strange idea entertained by some of the over-zealous grand officers of the present day, that they may, when present, take charge of the entire local and private business of the lodge, managing it as they please." It is, in our opinion, more than a strange idea; it is a clear usurpation.

This subject, we are pleased to see, is also attracting some attention in England, and we find in the *Freemason* (London), for November 27th ult., an article on "the powers of a grand master." From it we make the following extracts, which will show exactly how these powers are estimated by intelligent English Freemasons:

"There is nothing in Freemasonry concerning which misapprehension seems more extensively to prevail among Freemasons than the office of grand master. On the one hand, a grand master seems often to be regarded as if he were merely regarded as the master of a grand lodge, whose office derives its existence from that of the grand lodge; on the other, it appears to be supposed that he possesses an absolute power, which he may exercise in the most arbitrary manner and without control. Both of these notions are actually erroneous, are contrary to the whole spirit of Freemasonry, and betray an ignorance at once of its nature and of its history. His powers are great, but they are limited by the very landmarks of the Order, as well as by the regulations of the grand lodge over which he presides; and in the exercise of them he is subject to the control of assembled brethren, according to that principle of liberty and brotherhood on which the whole system of Freemasonry is based. The grand master presides in the grand lodge,—but he presides because his brethren have appointed him to preside. He is elected to his office, which may be likened to that of the President of a Republic, rather than to that of an absolute monarch, who occupies his throne by right of conquest, or by hereditary descent. He has no despotic authority. In the lodge he is among brethren, not among subjects. He is the chairman of the meeting, and it belongs to him to maintain order. He may call a brother to order who is guilty of any irregularity in conduct or in speech, and he is entitled to expect the fullest support of the assembled brethren in doing so. He is entitled to interrupt any brother who, in speaking on any question, introduces things irrelevant to it, and, if necessary, to compel him to be silent. It belongs to him, also, to put questions to the vote, and to declare the result, but he has not the power of preventing a question from being brought before the lodge. When the nature of the question is such as it is proper for the lodge to consider, he has not the power of preventing the fair discussion of it. He has not the power of determining it himself, but must put it to the vote; and if there is any uncertainty as to the mind of the lodge, the roll must be called, that each brother present may vote in answer to his name. It is the privilege of every brother to protest when he thinks it necessary to do so, and the grand master has no more power than any other member of the craft to shut his mouth and refuse him the privilege."

"Nothing could be more fatal to the interests of Freemasonry than to invest the grand master with despotic power, or, in other words, with power to debar the members of the fraternity from the exercise of the rights which