

heartily responded to by them. The investment might not pay, directly, for a few years, as well as some others, but directly and indirectly, it would be a great benefit to Grand Lodge to have in this city a Masonic Hall commensurate with the standing and position of the fraternity. Eventually, looking at the excellence and eligibility of the site which has been chosen, the property, if judiciously managed, must yield a handsome return on the amount invested. I think that through this proposed Temple Grand Lodge might be able to secure a permanent charity fund, which would enable us to do much good in dispensing assistance to the needy and deserving of our own family.

The sum of One Hundred Dollars voted last Session to Zion Lodge, No. 21, Sussex, in aid of its Hall, was forwarded by the Grand Secretary, and the Lodge transmitted a kindly vote or thanks for the gift.

I found it necessary, early in the year, to suspend the labors of Hibernia Lodge, No. 3, pending the final settlement of certain charges preferred against the Worshipful Master elect of the Lodge, and arising out of a pernicious system of canvassing for office which appeared to prevail in that Lodge. The matter will, no doubt, be referred to at full length in the report of the Board of General Purposes, who gave the whole question a careful and thorough sifting. I most sincerely hope that the views of the Board on the practice of canvassing for office may be profitably read by all the Masons in the jurisdiction. The suspension of the Lodge labors was merely temporary; and the whole difficulty having been, I trust, amicably settled, this spirited Lodge will proceed harmoniously in its work. I have, since the installation of its officers, twice attended its meeting unofficially, and have seen no interruptions in the good feeling that should ever characterize the meetings of a Masonic Lodge.

An application was made to me personally, by a brother hailing from a sister jurisdiction, to issue a circular as Grand Master, to all the Lodges in the Province, asking them to subscribe, through the office of the Grand Secretary, to a book of which he was the author. The brother was suffering from a severe infirmity, which prevented him from making a personal canvass through the country, and he came armed with printed letters and circulars, such as he desired to have issued here, from the Grand Master and other Brethren high in position in the jurisdiction in which he had resided. I sympathised deeply with his misfortune, and felt keenly my regret that a sense of duty compelled me to refuse his request. Our Constitution prohibits private Lodges from issuing certificates to enable brethren to proceed from place to place seeking aid. I not only felt that in a case of this kind, the Grand Master ought not to do what was pre-eminently contrary to the system here established among our Subordinate Lodges; but, that if the Grand Master proceeded to endorse the works of one brother, he would have to do it for another, and that it would be hard to draw the dividing line; one day it might be books, another day it might be some other article of commerce. If I asked the Lodges to help an infirm brother to sell what might be an inferior book, could I refuse an able-bodied brother my countenance and official signature when he desired to sell Masonic books? I must confess that the fact that, brethren holding sway in jurisdictions whose subordinates are numbered by hundreds, had issued such circulars, and lent the names of their Grand Lodges to such a system of canvassing, made me somewhat doubtful as to whether I was right in refusing the demand. But my views of the principles involved overcame my fears and I declined the request.

Early in the year the Worshipful Master of Restigouche Lodge, No. 25, applied for instructions as to the course he should take in respect to a Brother hailing from St. John's Lodge, No. 317, on the Registry of the Grand Lodge of Scotland, who had been a visitor to Restigouche Lodge, and who was charged with a serious crime, in violation of his Masonic vows, against the honor of a member of that Lodge. I directed the Worshipful Master, through the Grand Secretary, to place the offending Brother on his trial, make an investigation into the facts, and submit a report. The papers on the subject will be laid before you, and I think you will conclude with me that there are good grounds to justify, by formal vote of Grand Lodge, the exclusion of the accused from all Masonic fellowship with the Brethren in this Province, and an application to the Grand Lodge of Scotland to expel him from the fraternity. I know of no other mode of reaching him, as his name is not borne upon our roll.

Several applications have been made from time to time from different Lodges and brothers for information as to accepting persons not physically qualified, or concerning whose physical qualifications there appeared to be doubt. It is, of course, impossible for the Grand Master or the Grand Secretary who has never seen an individual to judge of his fitness, but there is one safe rule in these matters and that is a compliance with the ancient custom. The Grand Secretary has, therefore uniformly replied to all letters on this subject that unless the person is physically competent to