

Correspondence.

We do not hold ourselves responsible for the opinions of our Correspondents.

GRAND LODGE SOVEREIGNTY.

To the Editor of THE CRAFTSMAN.

DEAR SIR AND R. W. BRO.,—The dogma of Exclusive Grand Lodge Sovereignty is one that has been so fully discussed and acted upon that it is almost impossible for me to advance any new arguments in relation to it. The question, in all of its bearings, both for and against, have been fully given; while its enforcement has been rigidly adhered to by all American Masonic Grand Bodies. In fact, it has become a law that knows no infraction or infringement upon its rights.

It is, indeed, unfortunate that the question is again brought forward, after every American Grand Lodge has adopted it, by the Grand M. M. Lodge of England, Wales, etc., in the unwarranted and unjustifiable invasion of the jurisdiction of the Grand Chapter of Quebec, in granting charters to form Mark Master Lodges within the territorial jurisdiction of the Grand Chapter of Quebec, and in the appointment of a Prov. D. D. G. M. to preside over them.

I said unfortunate, for it is indeed unfortunate, from the fact that the Masonic world must again be brought into a turmoil, edicts of non-intercourse issued, and the bonds of brotherly love severed, in order to enforce one of the well known and fully recognized — by America — laws of Masonry.

The spirit that prompted the actors in this drama must be anything but that of true Masonry, for Masonry teaches us to obey all law.

If the laws that we enact for our own government are not to be obeyed, what is the use of their being enacted?

What, then, I ask, is their motive? Why is it that the violators of that law must so far forget themselves as to openly violate the law, and that,

too, without a reasonable excuse? Am I mistaken in the supposition that their motives are purely selfish ones, and a desire for notoriety? I trust I am. Why is it that purely Masonic affairs should be paraded before the whole world by a resort to the civil courts for redress, when the Masonic tribunal is the only proper one to dispose of it? I fail to find any reasonable answer, although perhaps there may be one.

Circumstantial evidences go far to show that their aim is a total disregard of the law of Grand Lodge Sovereignty. I trust that conclusion is an erroneous one, but at the present writing it has every appearance of being a fact.

The violation of the law of Exclusive Grand Lodge Sovereignty,—the particulars of which your readers are better informed than those who live without the jurisdiction of the invaded territory,—is both as unwarrantable and uncalled for as it is unlawful and unjust. Strong words, perhaps, nevertheless true ones.

Were one to violate any civil law of Quebec he must answer for his crime agreeable to the civil laws of Quebec, not those of England, or any other country. Very well, then. The Masons within the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Quebec are subject to the laws, edicts and customs of the Grand Lodge of Quebec, not those of England, or any other jurisdiction.

I am well aware that England does not recognize the law of Exclusive Grand Lodge Sovereignty, but supposing that she does not, that does not give her a right to openly and vindictively violate any one of the laws of the Grand Lodge of Quebec, any more than she would have a right to come within the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Vermont, to put into force her laws over the Masons of Vermont.

The Grand Chapter of Quebec is a legally formed Grand Chapter, and is so recognized by nearly every Grand Chapter in the world. I find that the