

of Grand Lodges. In many respects there is a perfect parallel between Grand Lodges and civil governments in nations.

"It is essential," says Vattel, 'to every civil society, that each member have resigned a part of his right to the body of the society, and that there exist in it an authority capable of commanding all the members, of giving them laws, and of compelling those who refuse to obey.'

"Grand Lodges perform for the fraternity what civil governments perform for their nations. The civil government makes civil laws, judges concerning violations of them, and executes them upon its members and those under its authority. A Grand Lodge makes masonic laws, judges in the last resort concerning violations of them, and executes them upon its members, and those under its authority. Grand Lodges with subordinates and their members are masonic nations. All nations agree that

"Nations or states are bodies politic, societies of men united together for the purpose of promoting their mutual safety and advantage by the joint effects of their combined strength.'

"What, from the history and objects of Grand Lodges, are their relations to each other?

"The same question has arisen in reference to nations. With nations, as with Grand Lodges, there is no superior tribunal by which questions between them can be authoritatively decided. But there is a 'Law of Nations' applicable to civil governments to determine their relations to each other.

"But the origin and object of Grand Lodges being so similar to the origin and objects of civil government in nations, we may learn something of the relations of Grand Lodges to each other, by considering what, by the Law of Nations, the relations of nations are to each other.

"It is held by all writers on International Law, that in addition to the voluntary laws of nations, arising from their presumed consent—the conventional, arising from an express

consent—and the customary, arising from a tacit consent—there is besides the necessary law of nations, which is the law of nature applied to States.

"We call that, the necessary law of nations, which consists in the application of the law of nature to nations. It is necessary because nations are absolutely bound to observe it.'

"If the law of nature itself imposes certain duties upon nations in regard to each other, certainly the masonic law and law of nature impose no less on Grand Lodges in their relations to each other.

"One of these 'necessary laws of nations' is, that all nations are naturally equal, free and independent of each other.

"Since men are naturally equal and a perfect equality prevails in their rights and obligations as equally proceeding from nature, nations composed of men and considered as so many free persons living together in a state of nature, are naturally equal, and inherit from nature the same obligations and rights.'

"It cannot be doubted that for similar reasons Grand Lodges are equal, free and independent of each other. The Grand Lodge of Delaware, with her few subordinates, is the equal, as a Grand Lodge, of the Grand Lodge of New York with her hundreds of subordinates. The Grand Lodge of Kansas, yet scarcely three years old, is the equal of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, which has diffused masonic light for nearly a century.

"It is also a 'necessary law of nations,' that each nation should be left in the peaceable enjoyment of that liberty which she inherits from nature.

"Nations being free and independent of each other, in the same manner as men are naturally free and independent, the second general law of their society is, that each nation should be left in the peaceable enjoyment of that liberty which she inherits from nature. The natural society of nations cannot subsist, unless the natural rights of each be duly respected.'

"It requires no argument to prove that if nature imposes this law on nations, the principles on which Ma-