

The committee close their report by recommending the adoption of the following resolution:

*"Resolved, By the 'Grand Lodge of the Most Ancient and Honorable Fraternity of Free and Accepted Masons of the State of Ohio,' that this Grand Body will recognize the so-called Grand Lodge of Colored Freemasons of the State of Ohio as a legitimate and independent Grand Lodge, on condition that the so-called Colored Grand Lodge shall change its constitutional title, so that it shall read as follows: 'The African Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the State of Ohio.' And if the said so-called Colored Grand Lodge shall accept this recognition and make the suggested change in its constitutional title, then, and in that case, upon said action being reported to the M. W. Grand Master of this Grand Lodge, under the seal of said body, then the M. W. Grand Master is hereby authorized and instructed to issue his proclamation to the subordinates to this Grand Lodge and to the Grand Lodges throughout the world, with which we are in fraternal correspondence, recognizing the said so-called Colored Grand Lodge as an Independent Grand Lodge in the State of Ohio, under the title of 'The African Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the State of Ohio.'"*

Let us see whether this panacea recommended for the removal of all the evils connected with the "so-called Colored Freemasons" of Ohio, will really have the effect intended by those who have prescribed it.

1. In the first place it proposes that the Grand Lodge of Ohio shall, on certain conditions, recognize the "so-called Colored Grand Lodge of the State of Ohio" as a legitimate and independent Grand Lodge.

But the evil complained of by the Grand Master was "the anomaly of two Grand Lodges," and he recommended that an attempt should be made "to bring about, by proper means in a legal manner, a union of these two Grand Lodges."

The committee meet the recommendation by proposing the establishment forever of two independent Grand Lodges in the State. Now if there is any one well recognized principle of Masonic law and usage in all English speaking countries, it is that two independent Grand Lodges cannot lawfully exist within the same jurisdiction. Attempts have been made in England, and in this country in Massachusetts, South Carolina, New York and Louisiana, to establish two independent Grand Lodges in the same jurisdiction. But these attempts have always failed—the two Grand Lodges remained in antagonism to each other—neither ever recognized the other—intercommunication between the members of each was prohibited under severe penalties—and the result, without exception, was that one of the two was obliged to recede from its position, and either to become extinct or unite with the other. There is no dispute about this as a matter of history or of law. The principle that there can be but one supreme authority in each jurisdiction has been so indelibly impressed on all English and American Masons, that the bare thought of tampering with it is repugnant to the Masonic sense of right. It is "passing strange" that any intelligent American Mason should be found willing to subvert this great dogma of our law.

2. The committee propose that this new and independent Grand Lodge shall assume the title of "The African Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the State of Ohio."

But the Grand Master had complained that the Grand Lodge made a distinction founded on color, and he recommended that the Grand Lodge should take some action by which it would declare "the equality of all men without regard to race or previous condition."

This recommendation the committee have completely ignored. Instead of abolishing the distinction of color, they seek to perpetuate it by the recognition of two Grand Lodges in Ohio, one of white men to be called "The Grand Lodge of the Most Ancient and Honorable Fraternity of Free and Accepted Masons," and the other to be composed exclusively of colored men to be called "The African Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons."

Queer ideas the committee appear to have of the right way to abolish distinction of color, when they propose to perpetuate that distinction by the adoption of what cannot but be deemed offensive by those to whom it is applied.

Why call it an "African Grand Lodge" when there will not be a single African in it. The colored men of this country, whatever may have been their descent, are not now Africans. They call themselves Americans, and claim to be American citizens and are accorded the rights and privileges of American citizenship by law.

But this title is altogether opposed to the current idea that Masonry is universal. In Ohio alone, we are to have two kinds of Masonry—a white man's Masonry, represented by "The Grand Lodge of the Most Ancient and Honorable Fraternity," and a colored man's Masonry, represented by "The African Grand Lodge."

We much doubt whether the "so-called Colored Masons" will accept the invidious distinction.