

that he might not be offered any badge of mourning whatever, the custom we have alluded to, would become extinct in six months. F.

THE ODD FELLOWS' RECORD.

MONTREAL, JUNE, 1846.

HISTORY OF THE ORDER.*

III.—ESTABLISHMENT IN AMERICA.

CONNECTICUT claims to be the first State of the American Union, in which Odd Fellowship found a footing; but the evidence of the existence of the Lodge, said to have been established there in 1799, is so equivocal, that no reliance can be placed upon it. That in favour of the Lodge, alleged to have been formed at Baltimore in the year 1802, rests on an equally slender foundation; and the earliest authentic record is that of the "Shakspeare Grand Lodge, No. 1," which was established at New York on the 23rd December, 1806. This Lodge, whose title of "Grand" seems to have been merely arbitrary, like that of the "Abercrombie Grand Lodge," of Manchester, worked for about six years with varying success, during which period its location was shifted several times. It seems to have ceased working in 1812, at which period its meetings were held at the house of Brother Moore, in Cedar Street, and from this time till the year 1818, the only trace of it is to be found in the following advertisement, which appeared in a New York newspaper, the *Columbian*, of 20th September, 1813:—

"ODD FELLOWS,

"*You are requested to attend in your Lodge Room, on TUESDAY night, the 21st instant, without fail, at Bro. Moore's, P. N. G., at SEVEN o'clock precisely, for the election of Officers and other business. Per order of Committee.*

"* * * Stranger Odd Fellows are invited."

On the 23rd December, 1818, the Shakspeare Grand Lodge was re-organised on the same principle as at first—that of independent self-institution; but its proceedings were never characterised by much vigour, nor did its numbers greatly increase.

About this time, THOMAS WILDEY, who had been initiated in the Union Order of Odd Fellows in England, and had since then emigrated to Baltimore, was making every exertion to establish a Lodge of the Order in that city. He at length succeeded in getting together a sufficient number of brethren, and on the 26th April, 1819, Washington Lodge, No. 1, was established, the original members of which were Thomas Wildey, N. G., John Welch, V. G., John Duncan, John Cheatham, and Richard Rushworth. This Lodge was organised on the ancient principle of self-institution, and at first adopted the work of the London Unity, or Union Order of Odd Fellows. At an early period

of its existence, however, the work was changed to that of the Independent Order, and application for a Charter was made in consequence to several of the Lodges in England.* In accordance with this request, a Dispensation in favor of Washington Lodge, was issued by the Abercrombie Grand Lodge of Manchester, in January, 1820, which seems never to have reached the former Lodge. Another from the Duke of York's Lodge, Preston, issued on the 1st of February following, was more successful, and under it Washington Lodge henceforth worked. In this instrument it was hailed by the title of "No. 1, Washington Lodge, the Grand Lodge of Maryland, and of the United States of America."

Under this organisation, the superintending body was a "Committee of Past Grands," whose powers were very imperfectly defined, and whose decisions on matters of appeal were mere recommendations, without any authority to enforce them. The defects of this system were very soon apparent, and an almost unanimous agreement was come to, to separate the legislative from the operative portion of the Order. In pursuance of this plan, the Past Grands of Washington Lodge, No. 1, and Franklin Lodge, No. 2,† at a preliminary meeting held on 7th February, 1821, requested Washington Lodge to surrender into their hands the Charter under which it worked. This was readily complied with, and the Committee of Past Grands, having met on the 22nd of the same month, were organised as the "Grand Lodge of Maryland and of the United States." Thomas Wildey was chosen Grand Master, John P. Entwisle, Deputy Grand Master, and John Welch, Grand Secretary. Charters were immediately issued to Washington and Franklin Lodges, and at the Quarterly Session in November, a Constitution, framed by a Committee previously appointed, was adopted.

On the 26th March, 1820, Massachusetts Lodge, No. 1, had been organised at Boston, on the principle of self-institution, but in the year 1822, a correspondence was opened with the brethren at Baltimore, which resulted in an application to the Grand Lodge at the latter city, for a Charter as a Subordinate Lodge, and also for a Charter to its Past Grands, as the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts. Both these were granted in April, 1823, and on the 9th June following, the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts was formally instituted at Boston by G. M. Wildey.

In the city of New York, Franklin Lodge, No. 2, and Washington Lodge, No. 3, had been successively established by Brothers of the Shakspeare Lodge previously mentioned, but meeting with comparatively little success, had both, as well as their common parent, ceased to exist before this period. A third offspring of the Shakspeare Lodge, Columbia Lodge, No. 4, established at Brooklyn, met with a better fate. A Dispensation in its behalf had been applied for and re-

* The Grand Committee, the governing body of the Independent Order at this time, issued no Charters or Dispensations, a power which was left entirely in the hands of the Subordinate Lodges.

† Franklin Lodge, No. 2, was established by some Brothers from Washington Lodge, on 9th November, 1819.