

adopted it without thought, but with ardour; and soon it became with them a play-thing on account of certain pomps; they surrounded it with the cloak of chivalry; they loaded it with multi-colored ribands or ultra-antique ceremonies; and if we seek the deepest and most serious signification of these usages, we only meet with means conducing to *external* culture; whilst the English and Germans have at all times regarded Masonry as a means to perfect *the spirit and the heart*; this is why it has degenerated in France. In that country Lodges sprout up like mushrooms, but they die out as quickly."¹

A general Masonic Congress was projected for December 8 in reply to the Œcumenical Council at Rome in 1869, but it was first delayed, and then rendered impossible by the Franco-German war of 1870.

1871.—September 16.—Ten Paris Lodges published a most ridiculous circular, citing the German Emperor and Crown Prince to appear before them and answer to a Masonic charge of perjury! In November, another Paris Lodge summoned a convent of impartial Masons to meet on March 15, 1871, at Lausanne, in Switzerland, and try their cause of complaint against Brothers William and Frederick of Hohenzollern, *i.e.*, the Emperor and Crown Prince. All the Grand Lodges of Europe and America, those of Germany expected, were invited to attend, and in case of the non-appearance of the accused they were threatened with divers pains and penalties. It is surprising that the Grand Lodge "Alpina" of Switzerland, should have even deigned to protest, and of course nothing else was ever heard of this insane project. During the time of the Commune, many Paris Lodges united in a public demonstration against the French Government; and after the war many Lodges throughout the country excluded all Germans from their membership: even the *Loge l'Anglais*, No. 204, of Bordeaux, descended to this miserable exhibition of malevolence. The number of Lodges under the Grand Orient was considerably reduced at this time by the loss of Alsace and Lorraine, and the formation of a Grand Orient in Hungary, where many French Lodges existed.

1873.—September 22.—The Grand Orient held its centenary festival. On this occasion the high degrees *as such* were refused participation by 111 votes against 99. The Chapters, etc., threatened to secede from the Grand Orient in consequence, but few really did so. The war had very much thinned their ranks and reduced their importance.

1875.—In this year the veteran academician Littré was initiated; his reception was considered in the Craft as an anti-clerical demonstration, and awakened much satisfaction in consequence. Our volatile French brethren have always had an affection for initiating men of advanced years, of which I have given a few examples in the course of these pages.²

1877.—September 10.—The Grand Orient resolved to alter the first article of the Constitutions of 1849. I have already pointed out³ that on August 10, 1849, for the first time in French Masonry, it was distinctly formulated "that the basis of Freemasonry is a belief in God and in the immortality of the soul, and the solidarity of Humanity." With the consent of two-thirds of the Lodges, this now reads, "Its basis is absolute liberty of Conscience and the solidarity of Humanity." The rituals were then changed in conformity; all allusions to the Great Architect of the Universe being everywhere eliminated. In consequence of this measure, the Grand Lodges of England,⁴ Scotland, Ireland, Canada, and in most of the United States ceased to be in communion with the French Craft. Not that the relations between England and the Grand Orient had ever been very close. The

¹ Quoted by Rebold, p. 412, from the German. ² *Ante*, pp. 373, 412, 434. ³ *Ibid.*, p. 437.

⁴ *Ante*, p. 280.