

masonry, because by some possibility, a young and new and active lodge may impinge on the prior claims of some old-established body, or in the slightest degree withdraw from its ranks or candidature, some who might otherwise have sought to be initiated in or affiliated to it. We therefore heartily approve of the fair and clear and truly Masonic principles, on which our Grand Lodge authorities are so happily acting with regard to the granting of new warrants and new lodges to-day.

DIMITS.

By R. W. Bro. Otto Klotz.

THE nature of Dimits, the mode of issuing the same, and whether the brother to whom a dimit is granted, or the lodge to which it is presented by him on application for membership, is to be the custodian thereof, have formed subjects for discussion in various lodges and among individual brethren, resulting, however, not by any means in an unanimous opinion; it may, therefore, not be out of place to make some enquiry into the same.

The word "Dimit" does not appear in the Constitution of the Grand Lodge of Canada, it nevertheless is an expression frequently used by the Craft, and its meaning understood to be a certificate granted to a brother on his resignation as member of the lodge, issuing the same, and showing his standing in that lodge at the time of his resignation. The verb "dimit" signifies "to permit to go," and the noun "dimit" (though not generally given in dictionaries) is in Masonic meaning synonymous with "dismission" or "leave to part."

By our Constitution (clause 6 of Members and their duty) a member of a lodge may resign, and if he requires it, he shall be furnished with a "certificate of his standing," this certificate of his standing is frequently termed a dimit. The Constitution, however, does not explain what is meant by "standing," whether Masonically as to rank, or financially as to dues, or morally as to character, or whether explanation on all these subjects requires to be given in order to define such a brother's "standing." Some lodges have a by-law which provides that a member before he be permitted to withdraw must pay his dues to that lodge, and refuse to grant him upon his resignation a "certificate of his standing" until he has paid his dues. The authority for passing such a By-law and such subsequent refusal to grant the certificate of standing before the dues are paid, are sought in another part of said clause 6, which provides that a member who shall withdraw himself from his lodge without having complied with its by-laws, shall not be eligible for admission to any other lodge; however, since the Constitution does not lay down any restriction to resignation, nor make it conditional or permissive only upon the fulfillment of any duty whether payment of dues or otherwise, nor directly authorizes private lodges to pass restrictive by-laws regarding the right to resign and the power to withhold a "certificate of his standing" to the brother who has resigned and has required the same, and which certificate shall be furnished to him, even free of charge; it appears rather questionable whether a Private Lodge has the right to pass a by-law whereby the right to resign or the right to procure such a certificate of standing is in any way restricted. The terms to withdraw and to resign are by no means synonymous, a person may withdraw from the lodge of which he is a member by staying away from its meetings, and by discontinuing to pay his dues; he may in consequence of such non-payment of dues be suspended, but he does not, therefore, cease to be a member of that lodge, in fact, his lodge will have to pay for him the Grand Lodge dues during his suspension as well as if he were a regular paying member, and he has it in his own power to remove that suspension and be reinstated into all his former privileges before such suspension, merely by paying up his arrears of dues; if, however, he resigns his membership, he ceases to be a member, and can only be re-admitted as such by the process of a regular ballot.

That same clause 6 also provides that such certificate is to be produced to any other lodge of which he is proposed to be admitted a member, previous to the ballot being taken. Such a certificate may be to the following effect:

This is to certify that Brother _____ was on the day of his resignation, being the _____ day of _____, A. L. 5874, a Past Senior Warden of Lodge, No. _____, on the Register of the Grand Lodge of Canada, that he bears a good moral character and is Two Dollars and fifty cents in arrears for members arrears.

This certificate is furnished at his request and free of charge, in conformity with the Constitution and under the Seal of the Lodge.

Dated this _____

Signed,
Signed,

W. M.
Sec'y.

{ L. S. }