

and emphatically given in the negative. Treason, murder, robbery, theft, and arson are offenses against the criminal laws, punishable by imprisonment or death. Should a Mason offend in either of these, or in any other of like character, he, by the act, severs the tie which imposes the duty upon his fellows to succor him in cases requiring personal intervention. So far from its being the duty of a Mason to divert the ends of justice by screening a brother from the consequences of his guilt, and thus become a *particeps criminis* to the act, subject to the same punishment under the law, and exclusion from the privileges and sympathies of the institution, it is his duty to suffer the law to take its course, untrammelled by his interference, be the consequences what they may.

As treason is enumerated among the penal offences, and possesses elements of various modifications, we may properly pause here a moment, to dwell upon its different phases in this connection. Treason may be fostered in a conspiracy against the life of a monarch, simply to transfer the ruling power from one individual to another, without intending thereby to effect any change in the principles of the government itself; or by betraying the state into the hands of a foreign power. In either case, should such a conspiracy be participated in to favor a party or friend, with no political end in view, it may properly be classed as criminal treason, and as such, subjects the perpetrators to capital punishment. On the contrary, should such a design be executed to rid the people of a despotic oppression, and to effect a modification in the principles of government, it may be safely placed under the political head, and as such, afford a brother the right of extending to another the benefits of the institution. Indeed, the later phase of the subject bears so close identity to rebellion, that it is scarcely possible to distinguish between them. This being the case, the subject is rendered still more difficult of solution. Political revolutions are held as justifiable by the enlightened portions of the world, and rebellion held as admissible, by the fraternity of Masons. They seem to be one and the same thing in kingly and imperial governments, and differ only in terms in popular government, where the sovereign power rests in the people. Strictly speaking, the term rebellion can scarcely be appropriately used when applied to a revolution in a federal or confederate government. If there is a difference between revolution and rebellion, an æsthetical student may possibly discover the line separating the two political positions; but a benevolent heart would scarcely pause to thread the labyrinth of such an investigation, were a hunted brother accused of either offense, to approach him, seeking protection. He would at once, with open arms, take him to his bosom, and shelter him from heartless pursuers. In this act a Mason would be perfectly justifiable, under the following old regulation: "That, if a brother should be a rebel against the state, he is not to be countenanced in his rebellion, however he may be pitied as an unhappy man; and, if convicted of no other crime, though the loyal brotherhood must and ought to disown his rebellion, and give no umbrage or ground of political jealousy to the government for the time being, they cannot expel him from the lodge, and his relations to it remain infeasible." So, likewise, should a Mason shield a brother fleeing to him for refuge from the fanatical persecutions of any religious sect or society, whether such persecutions be sustained by a popular cry, or state laws, or not.