

ness has been "marked," and we hope he will exert his influence to infuse a little honor and dignity into the Grand Mark Lodge.—EDITOR CRAFTSMAN.]

### GRAND ORIENT OF FRANCE.

It has been thought well to give to our readers an account of this important body, now so near our shores, and in which the good feelings of English Freemasons are interested, despite recent untoward proceedings and regrettable changes. The position of the French Grand Orient is a very serious one. Without intercommunication with two-thirds of contemporary Freemasonry, it seems determined, despite all the reticence that prudence might suggest and comity dictate, to adhere to those new ideas and dangerous dogmata which have nearly brought about for it such an entire uprooting of its old *entente cordiale* with England, America, etc.

We think it right to say this, as we note in Bro. Cousin's report for 1882-83 that he holds out the hope of renewing "alliances" and kindly connections, which have been broken up through a "misunderstanding," "mal entendu," as he says. Alas! we fear he deceives himself and the Grand Orient greatly as regards English and American views on the subject. Indeed, every new step taken by the authorities of the Grand Orient seem to render any prospect of reconciliation and approximation harder to arrange and more impossible to effect. A short time ago, with a "revolution" which startled the Masonic world, they gave up old landmarks and cosmopolitan principles for "fads" and theories of a purely unbelieving school, and mixed up in a most wonderful manner, almost inexplicably so, their abnegation of any religious belief with an avowal of social-political terminology alarming to the true Freemason, who utterly despises the "shibboleths" of party and the

cries of passing factions. But this new constitution is again to be altered, and in September next the "Council of the Order" is to present a fresh revision. But to our facts.

In 1882, the French Grand Orient 323 "ateliers," or "workshops," composed of 276 lodges, twenty five chapters, twelve councils, one consistory, and the Grand College of Rites, under its jurisdiction. In September, 1883, the Grand Orient numbered 329 "ateliers," twenty-seven lodges had been constituted (though we do not profess to square the figures), three lodges and one chapter revived, three lodges, two chapters, and one council suspended, eight members were suspended, and 303 struck off the books.

If any one was asked "outside the situation" what was the distinguishing feature of French Freemasonry just now, he might fairly answer that elaborate system of criminal jurisprudence so systematically carried out, which betrays alike the weakness of the position and points a moral as to the entire perversion of the Masonic idea which now dominates French Freemasonry.

For "charity," as will be later seen, the Grand Orient does practically nothing, and when its annual budget is analyzed it will be further seen how unsatisfactory is its state in every respect, financial and otherwise. To read the financial report to the "Convent" you would expect a great financial success. a "large balance at their bankers." But no, the "cash balance" in favor of the Grand Orient at the end of twelve months is thirty francs forty centimes, not one pound ten shillings; and if the anticipations of the "budget" for 1884 be realized, in February, 1884, it will be the fortunate possessor of a balance of seventy-nine francs fifty-five centimes, or not three pounds ten shillings. Its whole income amounts to 123,355 francs forty-five centimes, or not £5,000 in round numbers, and its expenses to 127,257 francs and eighty