

1862.—January 11.—At last the Emperor took the matter into his own hands:—“Napoleon, by the grace of God, . . . whereas, etc. Art. 1. The Grand Master of Freemasonry in France, hitherto elected every three years according to the statutes of the Order, is now appointed directly by me for the same period. Art. 2. His Excellency, Marshal Magnan, is appointed Grand Master of the Grand Orient of France. Art. 3. Our Minister of the Interior is charged with the execution of this decree. Given at our palace of the Tuileries, 11 Jan. 1862. Napoléon.”

January 12.—Rexès waited upon Magnan to receive *instructions* for his initiation. This took place on the following day, Rexès and four others conferring upon him from the 1° to the 33° at one sitting! This of course was exceedingly irregular, and Blanche and Sauley told the Marshal so the day succeeding, when they in turn came to make arrangements. Their conversation with the new Grand Master resulted in Rexès' immediate impeachment, trial, and degradation from his office.

It will scarcely be expected that the Craft should have prospered during these troublous times. According to Reboll's lists, the Grand Orient constituted Lodges and Chapters, etc., in 1848, 7; 1849, 8; 1850, 9; 1851, 4; 1852, 4; 1853, 2; 1854, 2; 1855, 0 [about 10 had become dormant this year; the total number of Craft Lodges was only 180 active, as against 255 in 1847]; 1856, 2; 1857, 5 [and 5 relieved from suspension]; 1858, 12; 1859, 7 [and 3 reinstated]; 1860, 9 [and 7 reinstated]; 1861, 5 [and 3 reinstated].

In 1852, at the election of Murat, the *budget* book of the Grand Orient showed a credit to the amount of over 50,000 francs (£2000); at the close of his term, October 31, 1861, it presented a deficit of 68,446 francs.

One more and last fact to show the decadence which had overtaken the spirit of Masonry during the past lamentable period. In order to provide funds for the continually increasing needs of the Grand Orient, the Grand Master's Council had hired out a part of its premises, within the very walls of its own hotel, to serve as a ballroom for the use of the *demi-monde*. Need we wonder that thoughtful and earnest Masons, meeting within the same walls, should have grown indignant at this forced proximity of a “school of morals” to a *rendezvous* of immorality, and that, in their own corridors, the sons of light should jostle the modern representatives of Phryne and the *Bacchantes*.

At the entrance of Magnan on the scene the position of the rival jurisdictions was, as nearly as can be estimated: Grand Orient—France, 158 Lodges and 59 Chapters, Councils, etc.; Algeria, 11 Lodges and 7 Chapters; Colonies and abroad, 20 Lodges and 14 Chapters; in all, 189 Lodges, 80 Chapters. A. and A. S.R. 33°—France, 41 Lodges and 10 Chapters; Algeria, Colonies, and abroad, 9 Lodges and 5 Chapters; in all, 50 Lodges and 15 Chapters. Rite of Misraim—5 Lodges. Grand total of French Freemasonry:—244 Lodges practising degrees of the Craft, and 95 bodies—composed of Masons—playing at philosophy!

January 15.—Magnan presided over the G.O. for the first time, and appointed as his Deputy Grand Masters, Doumet and Heuillant. He was installed on the 8th February. His speeches on these occasions foreshadowed his subsequent conduct. He admitted, in so many words, that his appointment by the Emperor was an infraction of the Landmarks, but he promised to rule constitutionally, and to obtain, as soon as possible, the restoration to the Grand Orient of its privileges, and observed, “Your Grand Master is but one brother the more—*primus inter pares*.” Of this Latin phrase he was very fond, often using it to define his position. Under his sway order and regularity were soon restored, and the arbitrary character of Murat's administration considerably amended. Magnan, however,