

DISPENSATIONS GRANTED.

I have been called upon during the year to grant a number of dispensations for various purposes. Such dispensations as I deemed advisable and proper were granted; and the Grand Secretary, from whose office they were issued, will present you with a detailed list.

Some of the applications I was compelled to refuse. The Brethren should remember that while the powers of the Grand Master in this respect is unlimited, still, he is pledged to govern the Craft in accordance with the Constitution of this Grand Lodge, and must be guided in the exercise of his privileges by the regulations of that Constitution.

While declining some of the applications, I have deemed the claims on which they were based to be of such general importance that I have caused them to be referred to the Committee on Jurisprudence, so that their report thereon will act as a guide to the Brethren when similar cases shall arise in the future.

DECISIONS.

One of the privileges of the Grand Master is defined by our Constitution to be "To decide all questions of usage, order, and Masonic law," but it must be apparent that it is not expedient to call for such decisions, except in cases of special importance.

The Brethren have honored me during my term of office by many and frequent applications for my decision on subjects which do not come under this head and which should not have been referred to the Grand Master.

I have been obliged to recommend to even such high and distinguished officers as District Deputy Grand Masters, the careful study of the Constitution which contains full and detailed regulations for almost every question of a general nature which can arise in the government of the Craft, and which is placed in the hands of every Brother for his guidance. In nearly every instance in which my decision was asked for, I was able to refer the Brethren to the article in the Constitution containing the regulation for such cases. On some matters, however, the meaning of the Constitution is not very clear, and on one such subject at least, the Grand Lodge will be called upon at this communication to exercise its judgment.