

ledging that his personal feelings prompted him not to appear as a witness, stated that it was impossible for him to disobey the summons, as, if he did so, he would be court-martialled, and eventually lose his situation and be deprived of the means of providing for himself and family.

Upon the hearing of the case, and the finding of the court of enquiry, Hake was adjudged guilty of fraud and embezzlement, and dismissed from the service. He subsequently brought his case before the lodge, under the plea that Bro. Sinnott, as a mason, and especially as master of the lodge, was bound by his masonic ties to conceal the acts of a brother mason, no matter how flagrant their character; that, instead of acting a brotherly part, he had betrayed his (Hake's) secrets, and in this manner had done him a grievous wrong. The members of the lodge generally sided with Hake. Considerable ill feeling was engendered, eventually culminating in the suspension of Sinnott, his deposition from the office of worshipful master, and the presentation of a memorial to the provincial grand lodge asking for his expulsion from freemasonry.

This high-handed and unmasonic treatment of a brother while occupying the chair of the lodge was reported to R.W. Brother John Selby, grand secretary, by letter signed by the past masters of the lodge under date August 1st, 1793, in the following words:

"We are requested by the body of Hiram Lodge, No. 17, to acquaint the right worshipful the grand lodge of the suspension of our Bro. John Sinnott from the duties of his office as master, and that he is excluded from the benefits of communication with any of the members of this, or those of our sister lodges in this province, for the most vile and unprecedented violation of every masonic duty, which has not only been already fatal in its consequences to an aged, infirm and deserving brother, but also tends in every possible degree to become more so to the craft in general."

Upon this report considerable correspondence ensued between the provincial grand lodge, Hiram Lodge, and Bro. Sinnott. The letters of the latter were explicit and well written; he stated his case fairly and in good temper, and throughout the discussion, which was protracted and lengthy, he exhibited a becoming and proper masonic spirit.

Having heard the statements of each party in the controversy, and having made a careful investigation of the whole question, the provincial grand lodge decided, first, that the lodge went beyond its powers in arraigning and suspending its masters; secondly, that even if it possessed such authority, there was no just cause why Bro. Sinnott should be subject to masonic judgment and discipline for appearing and giving evidence in a court of law, under a summons which he was bound to obey, against a brother who had unfortunately betrayed a public trust; and thirdly, had Bro. Sinnott refused to do so, he would have laid himself liable to be court-martialled and dismissed from the imperial service, and would likewise have violated his masonic engagements, which required him to be subject to the higher powers and to cheerfully conform to every lawful authority. Grand Lodge having so decided, directed the lodge to restore him to membership and all other masonic privileges.

The lodge disobeyed the mandate of grand lodge and declined to reinstate him, giving as a reason "that they had just cause to deal with Sinnott as they did, because they were unwilling to sit with him in lodge or to consider him worthy of the privileges and benefits of masonry."

For this perverseness the provincial grand lodge, at a communication held March 4th, 1795, adopted the following order:

*Resolved*, That unless Hiram Lodge, No. 17, do make such ample apology to this right worshipful body, as may be to the entire satisfaction thereof, their warrant to continue no longer in force, and the same to be reported to