

may wish to make alterations in those laws I can readily conceive, but I do ask the Grand Lodge to support its own dignity, and not to stultify itself by admitting, by a side wind, alterations in its constitutions. If alterations are to be made, let them be made legally and manfully. [Cheers.] The Rev. Brother said the Grand Master refused to let us discuss our own jurisdiction. I am surprised at such an observation coming from such a quarter. The Grand Master has laid down what he considers the existing state of the law, and the Grand Lodge has the power to alter that law, but such alteration must be made regularly appointed manner. You cannot do it by a side wind. [Hear.] I hope, for the honour of the chair and credit of Masonry, that the Brethren will support the chair. The law laid down by the chair must be respected, however erroneous it may be. To our Grand Master we have confined our sovereignty; he is the king of the Craft, and he cannot put such an amendment as Bro. Portal's.

Bro. Binckes rose to order, on the ground that the Grand Master was allowing that very discussion on the part of those who thought with him, which he denied to those who entertained opposite views. [Loud cheering.]

Bro. Roxburgh: "It is very evident that the Brother who last spoke did not hear what it was I said [laughter]; I was not arguing the propriety of the decision at which the Grand Master has arrived. [Loud cries of 'Question, question!'] I am speaking to the question, and I say, so long as the Grand Master is in the chair, his decision, whether right or wrong, must be respected. [Hear, hear.] It should not be controverted by a motion like this, which would reverse the decision."

Bro. Harrison [P.M. of the Royal York]: "In September last your lordship, not being present, was represented by a Deputy and—"

Grand Master: "Order, Brother." [Laughter.]

Bro. Harrison: Most Worshipful Sir, you are proceeding contrary to the Book of Constitutions." [Loud cheers, and laughter.]

The Grand Master then read the amendment of Bro. Portal.

Bro. the Earl of Carnarvon: "Most Worshipful Sir, before you put the amendment, I should be glad to have an opportunity of saying a few words upon it."

The Grand Master: "You shall speak after I have read the amendment."

The Grand Master then read the amendment, and decided that it was to call in question his decision and that therefore he would not put it.

Bro. the Earl of Carnarvon: "In accordance with the permission of the Most Worshipful the Grand Master, I shall make one or two observations. You, Sir, this evening, have said something of the House of Commons, and you have referred to some of our customs as corresponding with theirs; but whenever the government or any private individual is called in question for any act or policy, so far from stopping the discussion, the government or individual is the first to invite it. [Loud Applause.] Allow me to say, that it does come with an ill grace.—I speak with the deepest respect, my lord, of you personally, and of your office; but I must speak with that freedom which characterizes gentlemen and Freemasons; and I now must say, that it does come with an ill grace from the dais, when we consider the circumstances of the case. Grand Lodge was adjourned in September without a word of opposition from those who were in authority upon that occasion; and it was opened upon that adjournment on the 1st of October with the sanction of those who were then in authority, having been summoned together by official circulars from the Gr. Secretary's office."

[Loud Applause.]

The Grand Master: "I must call my noble friend and Brother to order, because he is now entering upon a course of argument which I have decided to be disorderly."

The Earl of Carnarvon: "I see how difficult a course they have to pursue who do not bask in the smiles of your favour and approval [loud cheers]; but, Sir, whether that right do exist, or

whether it do not exist, to which I lay claim—I will not say it does exist under the circumstances of the case—but whether it does or does not exist, we claim it as an inherent right. [Loud cries of 'Question, question!'] Whether right or wrong, I say that there is an inherent right in every representative assembly, and we claim it because Grand Lodge should be inherently supreme; and we demand the acknowledgement of that supremacy as our safeguard against intrigue, and our guarantee for the preservation of our liberties and our—" [The remainder of the sentence was drowned in applause and cries of "Order, order!"]

Bro. H. G. Warren: "We have nothing before us but the motion of our worthy Bro. Col. Burlington, on which I shall move an amendment, and I shall do so in a few words. I disagree with the noble lord in his application of the practice of the House of Commons to the practice of Grand Lodge; and I know something of the House of Commons from my experience in the gallery. I feel strongly on this subject; as we have already decided the question which is now before us, I think it is only a waste of time to go over the ground again, and I shall therefore now move that this Grand Lodge be closed." [Loud cheers, laughter, and cries of "Oh, oh!" from the dais.]

Bro. Binckes seconded the motion amidst loud cheers and uproarious demonstrations of angry feeling, on the dais.

The Grand Master: "I must appeal to the Grand Lodge to support me. [Applause.] I do trust the Grand Lodge is not becoming a mere debating club. I do hope that resolutions will not be brought forward which have neither sense nor meaning; such as the proposition that the Grand Lodge be now closed. [Hear, hear.] Why the fact is, the Grand Lodge cannot be closed except by the Grand Master. I am sorry to have heard the observations which have fallen from my noble friend and Brother who has just addressed Grand Lodge respecting his not finding favour with the Grand Master. I can assure my noble friend and Brother that there is no member of Grand Lodge for whom I entertain a higher respect. [Cheers.] I have known him from his infancy, and I have been intimate with his family all my life, and not one word would I say to him which would give him offence. But I must administer the law, according to the oath I have taken, to the best of my judgment and ability, and I regret that such remarks should have fallen from the noble lord. I was for twenty-five years a member of the House of Commons, and therefore I can neither bow to the opinion of the noble lord nor to that of the worthy gentleman who says he has occupied a place in the gallery." [Laughter.]

Bro. the Earl of Carnarvon said: "Most worshipful Sir, I beg to disclaim on my part all intentional discourtesy. You have said that you have a duty to perform to the best of your ability; and believe me that I should not have expressed the views to which I have given utterance upon the present occasion, had I not felt that if I did not express my opinion I should be a traitor to the cause I have at heart."

Bro. Purton Cooper wished to bring the unhappy discussions to a close, he said, but his observations were received with cries of "Question" and a variety of demonstrations of impatience. "The Brethren," he said, "must have heard with delight and satisfaction the interchange of friendly sentiments between the Grand Master and the Earl of Carnarvon. [Hear, hear.] I have no intention to take up your time, but you will allow me, perhaps, to say that I also have very strong opinions on this question of the power of adjournment, and"—

Bro. Portal: "I rise to order." [Hear, hear, and laughter.]

Bro. Purton Cooper: "My opinion on the subject is"—[Order, order.]

Bro. Bagshaw: "There are many Brethren with strong opinions who feel deeply on this subject, and would like to have it decided by Grand Lodge."

A Brother whose name we could not learn, but who was said to be a Prov. Gr. Officer for Hampshire, said he wished to make a few observations;

and as he considered that the Grand Master had decided quite right, he could not be regarded as rising with any vexatious motive. He thought it would be impossible for the Grand Lodge to proceed with the resolution which was before it till the point as to the power of adjournment was decided.

The Brother was about to give his reasons for so thinking, when he was called to order by the Grand Master, who begged the Brethren to proceed to the business of the evening. The Brother said it was very desirable that Grand Lodge should meet to make an alteration in its law before proceeding with any other business. This assertion was received with mingled applause and demonstrations of disapprobation. The Grand Master said that Grand Lodge was wasting its time; and that if they wished to alter their laws, they must take the proper legal mode of doing so, by giving due notice of the proposed alterations to the Board of Masters, who met that day fortnight; till then, nothing could be done.

The first clause was then put, and Brother Aria rose to make a statement of the causes which had led to the appointment of the Committee, which have been fully detailed both in communication from the colonies and in reports of speeches in Grand Lodge. Amongst other things he stated that he sent a letter of very great importance to the Grand Master from Jamaica, in 1847, and he left the island in 1853, and up to that date no answer whatever had been received. This announcement was received with loud cries of "Shame!" and other expressions of disapprobation. He said he knew there could be no mistake about the matter; for the communication had been put into the Grand Secretary's own hands. [Renewed disapprobation.] He would have read some documents in proof of his assertions, but was called to order by the Rev. Bro. Cox. The Grand Master also said that such charges deserved a separate motion, and should not be introduced incidentally; and Bro. Dobie said these statements should be made to the Committee appointed to consider the question.

Bro. Burlington said it was largely on Bro. Aria's evidence that the Board was appointed, and it was a waste of time to go into details then.

It was now twenty minutes to ten o'clock, when the first clause,— "That it is expedient that a board be formed, to be called 'The Colonial Board,' to consist of ten members of Grand Lodge, five of whom shall be a quorum,"—was put and carried unanimously; the hour and forty minutes having been devoted principally to the discussion of the adjournment question, and to assertions on the part of the Grand Master that the question, should not be discussed.

Clause II., "That the said board shall, after the first instance, be nominated and elected at the same time and in the same manner as the Board of General Purposes, with the exceptions hereinafter specified," was read, put, and carried.

Clause III., "That, when practicable, three of the above board shall be Past Masters of Colonial Lodges, members of Grand Lodge," was read, put, and carried, when Bro. Hall rose to address Grand Lodge on it.

There were loud cries of "It's carried, it's carried," from all parts of Grand Lodge, but the Grand Master ruled that, not having put "the centenary," the question could not be carried in the sense of preventing Bro. Hall from speaking upon it.

Bro. Hall objected to the words "when practicable," as being too vague and indefinite.

The Rev. Bro. Portal said, if the Grand Lodge was not to be turned into a debating society, neither should it become a court of *msi prius*. [Loud laughter, and cheers.]

The clause was at length carried.

On Clause IV., "That the said board shall have similar powers, as regards the colonies, to those at present exercised by the Board of General Purposes,"

Bro. Dobie contended that this clause appointed a board which took some of powers of the Board of General Purposes away from it; they should not have a separate jurisdiction. This clause was an alteration of the law, and as such could not be