

Decease of R. W. Bro. Austin.

It is our painful duty to announce the decease on Dec. 8rd, at New York, of R. W. Bro. J. H. Austin, Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of New York, a position he has occupied with marked ability since 1858. He was born at Salem, N. Y., 1813. The following is a brief summary of his Masonic career taken from the New York *Dispatch*:—

Made a Mason in Phenix Lodge, No. 58, at Lansingburg, he passed through its various offices and became its Master. Subsequently he united with others in the formation of Clinton Lodge, No. 140, at Waterford, being its first Master. In 1853 he removed to New York city, where he affiliated with Mariner's Lodge, No. 67, and continued therein until the revival of Howard Lodge, No. 35, with which he became associated and of which he died a member. The degrees of Capitular Masonry having been conferred upon him in 1849 in Phenix Chapter, No. 133, at Lansingburg, upon his removal to this city he joined Phenix, No. 2, and subsequently Orient, No. 138, of which he was High Priest for two years. In 1862 he joined Jerusalem Chapter, No. 8, in which death has just severed his membership. In 1859, having already served as Deputy, he was elected Grand High Priest of our Grand Chapter. At the triennial convocation of the General Grand Chapter held in St. Louis in 1868, he was elected its presiding officer, and served the term with great distinction, his address at the end of the official period ranking with any paper ever before or since presented to that august body.

He received the Cryptic Degrees in Adelpic Chapter, No. 7, and the Knightly orders in Morton Commandery, both of this city, but never held office in either.

In 1856 he received the degrees of the Ancient and Accepted Rite up to and including the 32°, and ten years later was advanced to the 33°, and enrolled as an honorary member of the Supreme Council for the Northern Jurisdiction.

He was one of the founders of the Association of Masonic Veterans, and served three years as President thereof with great acceptability.

The M. W. Grand Master of New York has been pleased to appoint R. W. Bro. Edward M. L. Ehlers, Grand Secretary *ad interim*.

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Jurisprudence Department.

EDITED BY R. W. BRO. HENRY ROBERTSON,
P. D. D. G. M.

QUERY—Would you kindly inform me as to the privilege a brother may claim in regard to getting his degrees. In the instance of a brother who has been initiated at our regular meeting, can he be debarred from obtaining the Fellow Craft degree if properly qualified at the next regular meeting, because there was no notice given in the summons?

Answer—The control of the work is entirely in the hands of the Master of the Lodge. He may give or refuse to give the degrees, just as he chooses, observing, of course, the requirements of the Constitution. It is not essential that the summons should contain notice of conferring the second or third degree, and the absence of this notice would not, in our opinion, be any ground for refusing to advance a brother. A brother who has passed a satisfactory examination, is entitled to advancement at the next regular meeting held four weeks after his initiation, unless there is some good reason to the contrary.

Q.—Can charges be preferred against the W. M. of a Lodge? If so, who should the charges be sent to—who would try the case, and who would rule the Lodge in case the W. M. was suspended or expelled?

A.—The charges must be sent to the Grand Secretary, who forwards them to the Grand Master. The trial takes place before a Commission of Masters or Past Masters, appointed by the Grand Master. (See Robertson's Digest, page 158.) If the Master is removed, the Senior Warden acts as Master in summoning the Lodge until the next election of officers. He may rule the Lodge, and any Past Master can confer the degrees.

Q.—On page 77 of R. W. Bro. Henry Robertson's "Digest of Masonic Jurisprudence," referring to candidates eligible for D.D.G.M., I observe the following:—

"Those who are eligible for election as D.D.G.M. must be P. M.'s in good standing,