

reasoning may often be fairly applied to both cases. Many thus obtain preferment without knowledge,—many use the Craft abroad for private purposes,—many return to the Country to pursue their old course of indifference to Masonry. I conceive Masonry was not intended for such persons or purposes. There are, no doubt, often very honorable exceptions, and sometimes even these may be unhappily deprived of the many legitimate advantages of Masonry but, it will be conceded that the fault is their own, and that it is better the time honored Constitutional paths so preferment be followed than that the door be thrown open to admit many, among whom some may be found worthy. I find, that throughout other jurisdictions this abuse of the power of Dispensation has been loudly condemned. When a candidate proposes but a short absence from home, I have withheld the dispensation; when the candidate is about to remove abroad for permanent residence, I have ordered that Dispensation issue, all other things being satisfactory. Thus the danger of too frequent relaxation of our rules is avoided,—the persons who return, if worthily seeking admission, avail themselves of the earliest opportunity of proposal,—the privileges thus gained are enhanced in value in their estimation,—and Craft and Candidate are equally gainers, while the latter after all only suffers the trifling inconvenience of a temporary delay.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Among the Letters of Correspondence during the year with this office were the following, which were immediately remitted to the Board of General Purposes, and will be found on the Table of the V. W. The Grand Secretary, for your consideration:

Letters from the Grand Lodge of British Columbia, the Grand Lodge of Utah, and the Grand Orient of Brazil, severally desiring to enter into fraternal relations with, and to appoint representatives near, Grand Lodge;

Letters from the M. W. The Grand Master of Louisiana, complaining of the invasion of the territory within the Jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of that State; and

Letters from the M. W. The Grand Masters of Michigan, New Jersey and Massachusetts, each complaining of the erection of Clandestine Lodges and the making of Masons unlawfully.

I felt it my duty also, from unofficial information which came to my knowledge, to direct the V. W. the Grand Secretary to bring under the consideration of the M. W. the Grand Master of Nova Scotia, an alleged interference by the Union Lodge, No. 18, of that Province, with the rights of this Jurisdiction in the initiation therein of persons permanently residing in the City of St. John. I have now much pleasure in reporting that the earliest investigation was most cheerfully made by the Grand officers of Nova Scotia, and, finding my complaint well founded, a very hearty expression of regret was received from that Jurisdiction, and notice that the objectionable course would not be continued in future. I am very glad that the Executive officers of the Craft in the Sister Province have acted with that promptness and good feeling which cannot fail to bind the Masons of the respective Jurisdictions most cordially together in the bonds of our Exalted Fellowship.

DECISIONS AND APPEALS.

A more than usual number of applications have been made to this office for information and decision on Constitutional questions. For the most part they have been of a merely routine character. I may say, however, that application was made for information whether a Dispensation would issue for the burial with Masonic ceremonies of an unaffiliated Mason. To this the V. W. The Grand Secretary was directed to reply in the negative.

Notwithstanding the former decision of this office that a Dispensation could not be issued for the making a Mason of a person who had lost an arm, application was made for authority to initiate a Candidate who had been unfortunately deprived of a foot. Feeling the importance of the question raised, I asked the Board of General Purposes to consider the matter, and afford me the valuable assistance of its counsel. The opinion of the Board will, no doubt, be submitted to you, but in consequence of the ground taken by that Body I, with greater confidence, again declined to order a Dispensation to issue.

In the examination of By-Laws submitted for the sanction of this office, I have noticed frequently that a Section of the Constitution has been imported into the By-Laws or Regulations materially altered in effect, by the omission of certain parts of the Section or by the transposition of it in such a way as to make the meaning of it at least ambiguous when read in connection with the provision of the Constitution