

legally be excluded by Grand Lodges. Directly, however, any of their ceremonies are introduced into a Craft Lodge, their clothing worn, or any of their customs exposed at a procession of Craft Masons, it would then be competent for the Grand Lodge to interfere; but without an actual breach of the Constitutions, we contend that a Grand Lodge has no power to prohibit its members from joining or taking office in other so-called Masonic degrees, though, of course, it might use its utmost endeavors to induce Brethren not to patronize any of the "higher degrees."

As might be expected, the Grand Chapter objected to these uncalled-for resolutions, and the following is a copy of the letter forwarded by the Three Grand Principals to the Grand Lodge of Scotland. We give it entire, because it is rarely met with now, and we have only seen but one impression of it as printed at the time referred to:

SUPREME GRAND R. A. CHAPTER OF SCOTLAND, }
EDINBURGH, 20th July, 1818.

Most Worshipful Grand Master and Brethren of the Grand Lodge of Scotland :

It is with surprise we hear that a law has been passed by the Grand Lodge of Scotland, excluding from the right of sitting or voting in that Body all Masons who may hold offices in Masonry that acknowledge a higher degree than the three first. We conceive this Law must have been inconsiderately passed, because it is in opposition to every principle of that Brotherly love and affection which ought to exist among all men, and which Masons profess to be the basis and chief object of their institution. To render this disposition more pure and beneficial, toleration has ever been permitted to an unbounded extent; and be he of whatsoever religion, sect or order he may, if a man is once admitted a Brother, and conducts himself as such, he never can be disfranchised. The feelings of charity and benevolence, which we inculcate, know no distinction in the religion, country or color of a brother; and in that genuine disposition consists true Masonry, because true Masonry is universal good-will to all men—brotherly love, affection, charity and benevolence to all Masons under the sun.

Notwithstanding our disapproval of that law, generally, even when it did pass, we never imagined it was meant to apply to us until a Master of a Lodge, holding of the Grand Lodge, was excluded from their Quarterly Meeting for no other reason than because he held an office in the Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Scotland. We are therefore desirous to be better informed of the views of the Grand Lodge, for although the fact be true, we must imagine this treatment to have arisen from mistake in the meaning of the law, which strikes only at those degrees that are higher than St. John's Masonry, which the Royal Arch is not. We do profess to be better, further and better informed than Master Masons, in the ordinary acceptance of the term; but the Royal Arch is truly a real and intrinsic part of Master Masonry, without which no Grand Lodge can be complete.

Our desire is to conciliate, and therefore we do not repeat any conduct of the Grand Lodge of which we might complain; but, on the contrary, we lament that anything like discordance should have existed, which we have always endeavored to avoid, and have uniformly paid every attention to the Grand Lodge. Continuing in the same disposition, we now declare our anxiety to assist you to our utmost in everything that is for the good of the Craft, to which nothing would be more conducive than the existence of a proper understanding and union between the Grand Lodge and Royal Arch Masons, upon the same principles as those which have been established in England.* This union we offer you. Let us, therefore, unite in requesting the aid of our Brethren of England, who in the fullness of their brotherly regard have tendered their assistance. We feel confident you will join us in promoting these good objects, to attain which, we propose that Lodges of Intelligence be mutually chosen by the Grand Lodge and Supreme Royal Arch Chapter, to meet and confer on this important subject, and to draw up Articles of a Union similar to those of England, and with power to appeal to His Royal Highness the Duke of Sussex, or a Lodge of Intelligence formed under his authority, to determine all points in which there may be a difference of opinion.

We are, Most Worshipful Grand Master and Brethren of the Grand Lodge, your faithful and obedient Brethren.

MORAY, First Grand Principal.

PATTO WALKER, Second Grand Principal.

ABOYNE, Third Grand Principal.

In answer to this admirable epistle—a model of its kind—the Grand Recorder received a curt reply from the Grand Secretary, Bro. Alexander Lawrie, inclosing an extract from the Minute of the Grand Loage of Scotland of the 3rd of August, 1818.

*In England, from A. D. 1813, the Grand Lodge "has declared and pronounced that pure ancient Masonry consists of three degrees and no more, viz.: those of the Entered Apprentice, the Fellow Craft, and the Master Masons, including the Supreme Order of the Holy Royal Arch." Before the "Union of A. D. 1813," the Grand Lodge of A. D. 1717 ignored the Arch.