

each Province is similar to the Legislature of each State of the same, and the Dominion Parliament is somewhat analogous to the Federal Congress of the United States.

It will be perceived from the above that the great question underlying all others in relation to the regularity of this Grand Lodge is this: When a portion of the territory in which a Grand Lodge has exclusive jurisdiction, is erected by the civil government into an independent State or Province, do the lodges therein possess the *right* to form an independent Grand Lodge? This question was, until comparatively recently, considered to be settled. It was universally conceded that the lodges do have such right. But unfortunately the question arose lately in such manner as to be connected with a political question, and of course did not receive that calm and dispassionate consideration in some quarters which masonic questions should receive, and the law, which had been well settled, was questioned. We propose, therefore, to refer to some of the precedents and the law as established by the fathers, which some of their sons would now annul.

After the revolution, it was deemed proper and necessary that, inasmuch as independent *civil* government had been established in this country, independent *masonic* governments should also be established; and the principle was then asserted that every independent State, &c., is entitled *as of right* to its own Grand Lodge, which should have exclusive jurisdiction in its own territory. Accordingly independent Grand Lodges were erected soon after the Declaration of Independence or the close of the war in all of the original States save Delaware, and in that in 1810. The principle was laid down broadly that the masons of any independent State ought not to be under the masonic government in any other State. And as States and Territories have been organized since, the same rule has in every case been applied.

As we have seen it erroneously stated that the case of West Virginia was the first in which an independent Grand Lodge has been established in territory once under the exclusive jurisdiction of another Grand Lodge without its consent, we propose to refer to some of the more prominent cases.

We learn from a history of masonry in New Hampshire, written in 1811, by the Grand Secretary, that the two Massachusetts Grand Lodges and their Grand Masters exercised jurisdiction over the lodges in that State until July 8, 1780, when deputies from the several lodges met and voted "that there be a Grand Lodge established in the State of New Hampshire, upon principles consistent with, and subordinate to the general regulations and ancient constitutions of freemasonry." No consent was asked or deemed necessary.

In 1788 and 1789 Maryland and Virginia, respectively, ceded to the United States portions of their territory to form the District of Columbia. These cessions were accepted in 1790, and in 1800 the capital was established there. In 1810 the Grand Lodge of Maryland had four lodges upon the territory ceded by Maryland, and the Grand Lodge of Virginia two lodges upon that ceded by Virginia. In December, 1810, delegates from five of these lodges met in convention and unanimously resolved "that it is right and expedient to establish and organize a Grand Lodge in and for the District of Columbia;" and on the eighth day of January following, the Grand Lodge was established, and on the nineteenth day of February, organized. All this was done without the consent or knowledge of the mother Grand Lodges. The proceedings, however, were forwarded to these Grand Lodges with a letter, in which it was said that the reasons for such proceedings would be more fully communicated after the next meeting of the convention: but it was stated they were not actuated by unfriendly motives, "but from considerations resulting from the assumption of the jurisdiction by Congress over the District of Columbia," &c. The promised communication to the mother Grand Lodges was forwarded, and we extract from it the following:

"The right and expediency of establishing a Grand Lodge in this District had for a considerable time engaged the attention of the most experienced Masons of this place. Not willing, however, to confide implicitly in their own judgments, in a matter of so much importance, *experienced masons from various parts of the United States were consulted, from the decisive nature of whose opinion the practicability of the measure appeared manifest.* And at a meeting in convention of deputies from five lodges, after mature consideration, the right and expediency was unanimously declared." \* \* \* \* \* "The propriety of the measure taken was confirmed by a reference to historic facts." \* \* \* \* \* "Our brethren of the Eastern States, who organized Grand Lodges previous to our revolution, under the authority of charters granted from some one of the Grand Lodges in Great Britain—after which they saw the impropriety of working under authority derived from a country having different laws, governments and interests from their own, and accordingly gave up the authority under which they had before acted.