

ized there in 1780; although Masonry had existed there since 1789. In other words, forty-seven years after its introduction into Boston, Masonry had there a Grand Lodge, and through which it undertook to govern the Craft in Massachusetts and Providence Plantations, otherwise Rhode Island, and did so until the latter organized a Grand Lodge for the Masons within its limits. From this time until 1840 this Grand Lodge for Massachusetts got along very well without possessing any real property. Then, however, having pulled itself together after the exhaustion of the Morgan excitement of the previous fourteen years had thoroughly subsided, it resolved on building a temple, or becoming possessed of real property. To do this it must, as the first thing, necessarily be incorporated by the General Court, as the Legislature is called in Massachusetts. But here arose a difficulty, and there were enough believers in John Quincy Adams, and his anti-masonic writings, in the General Court to make the most of it: As what should this organization be incorporated to do. It was not a religious nor manufacturing association. Called Masons, they erected no buildings, nor as such, conducted any business of any kind. It is true that as the representative body of its members it had accumulated considerable money in its treasury. The subject became more lucid. What was the object of collecting this money? Some one allowed that if there was any it must be a charitable object. Eureka! Incorporate it as a charitable organization, with a capital of—the amount of money in its treasury—to sue and be sued, to have a common seal, and the same to change, alter and amend, at its pleasure, &c., so and so, so and so, and so and so, to the number of a dozen or more, the then officers of the body, to be its corporators.

This, I believe, was the first public idea of charity, in connection with a body of Freemasons, known in

America. But how long did it last? This charity fund of \$50,000, or whatever the exact amount, was, within three years, sunk in the first Boston Masonic temple, built on the corner of Tremont street and Temple place, (and from which the latter took its name, although it is not a "place" at all, but a street, as much as West, or Winter, or Bromfield streets are.) That is the way the charity fund, that by the possession of which the first Grand Lodge that ever existed in America was enabled to be incorporated by the General Court of the State, was invested; and that is the way every other charity fund, so mis-called, that ever since has been accumulated by a Grand Lodge of Masons in America has gone, and will be going as long as the present organization of Freemasonry in America exists.

If Bro. Ramsay, or any other governmental Masonic iconoclast, does not like it, let him begin at the beginning, and by his advocacy bring about a revolution in the objects of Freemasonry as represented by the Lodge—not by the individual obligated brother. His duty is plain and clear enough, and he is quite sufficiently obligated. When the obligations of the individual brother are properly recognized, and in kind similarly by the Lodge, there will be a fund accumulated by the Lodge to make good its obligations; and no Grand Master's edict, to build a temple, or pay for the building of a temple, to cater to the grandeur and pride of the Brethren of some favored spot in a given Grand Lodge jurisdiction, will be competent to rob the Lodges, as has been done in Massachusetts, of their treasury recognized by that fund aggregated and segregated to meet the individual Lodges' obligations. As it is, nobody knows what a Lodge treasury is for, and the bigger it is the more easy it becomes a prey to "the city fellows" who hesitate not to divert it to their purpose.