

doubtful compliment of electing companions, and especially local companions, honorary members, who had not first been ordinary members, and who are therefore ineligible to accept office, and make the talents which marked them out for honor available, if subsequently desired for the advancement of the chapter.

A third matter of constitutional reference has arisen in the course of examination of by-laws of chapters referred for approval. It relates to the question of fees to be charged on conferring chapter degrees. I place in parallel columns the article of the Constitution and the By-law that has given cause for question as to its interpretation

CONSTITUTION.

ON SUBORDINATE CHAPTERS.

XVIII. No Chapter shall confer the degree of Mark Master, Past Master, Most Excellent Master, and Royal Arch upon any brother for a less sum than \$20, which sum must be paid before any of the degrees are conferred, and may include the fees to the Grand Chapter for registry and certificate. The Companion who proposes a Candidate is responsible to the Chapter for all fees payable by him, payment of which must not on any pretence be deferred, nor any part of them.

XIX. When any Companion from without the jurisdiction of the Grand Chapter of Canada, presents himself as a Royal Arch Mason, and produces satisfactory proof of his having been exalted to that degree, each and every Chapter shall have liberty and may confer the degrees of Mark Master, Past Master, and Most Excellent Master on such Companions who have not heretofore received them, free of charge, except a fee to Grand Chapter for registry and certificate.

PRIVATE CHAPTER.

BY-LAW ON FEES AND DUES.

1st. The Fee for Exaltation and the subordinate degrees, shall be twenty dollars, payable in advance, which shall include the cost of registration and Grand Chapter certificate.

2nd. A Candidate who has taken one or more of the subordinate degrees in another chapter shall be entitled to a reduction of two dollars and fifty cents for each subordinate degree so taken.

The question that has presented itself is whether the words of the Constitution "which sum of \$20 must be paid before any of the degrees are conferred," does not prohibit its being applied distributively as proposed by the By-law. At the same time the latter is based on the supposition that the \$20 having been paid in one chapter, and the candidate after taking one or more of the subordinate degrees therein having had unexpectedly to remove his domicile to another, perhaps distant part of the jurisdiction, where he desires to obtain the remainder in another chapter there situate the latter chapter should, as an act of justice, make some reduction, in the absence of which the companion suffers a hardship from a contingency beyond his control, while *the Order gets a full duplicate payment*. It may be also argued that the first chapter should be as liable on the ground of justice to make a refund, as the latter to make a reduction. In the charge or address of my worthy predecessor in 1869 (see page 293) he alluded to the subject in the following manner:

"I would bring likewise to your notice the fact, that although the Constitutions fix a minimum fee for the conferring the intermediate degrees and exaltation to the Royal Arch, and provides for the case of a Royal Arch Mason presenting himself from without the jurisdiction of this Grand Chapter, and not in possession of these intermediate degrees, yet it is silent as to a brother who has paid for and is in possession of some or all of them, and who, from good cause shown, may be under the necessity of seeking exaltation in some other Chapter. A supplementary clause might be introduced covering this defect, and determining the fee to be paid in every such instance. My opinion has been asked in this matter."

To which charge the Executive Committee (see page 368) replied as follows:—

"The remarks of the M. E. G. Z. regarding brothers who have taken part only of the intermediate degrees, as to the necessity of legislation calculated to remove the grievance in question, are well 'worthy of the attention of Grand Chapter.'"

It does not appear, however, that beyond these references the matter has been considered, and having in the case of a set of By-Laws submitted to me, reserved the point for the opinion of Grand Chapter, I ask attention to the same, merely adding, that unless Grand Chapter is prepared to pronounce a definite interpretation by way of ruling in the premises, any recommendation of change or amendment, if such be deemed expedient, will have to be given in the shape of a notice to be dealt with at the ensuing session.