

rule so explicitly and clearly as to preclude any rational misunderstanding or difference of opinion upon the subject."

The question thus raised was referred by resolution to the committee on masonic jurisprudence.

The subjoined extract from the report of a previously appointed Commission (presented by the representative from the Grand Lodge of West Virginia) is self-explanatory :

To the M. W. the Grand Lodge of West Virginia—

"Your Commissioners, appointed by the M. W. Grand Master, charged with the powers and duties conveyed by the resolutions of the Grand Lodge, adopted at its last Annual Communication, upon the subject of the relations of this Grand Lodge to the M. W. Grand Lodge of Virginia, respectfully report that they visited the Grand Lodge of Virginia at its last Annual Communication, and succeeded in making an amicable and masonic adjustment of the questions in controversy.

We most heartily congratulate the Grand Lodge upon the adjustment of the questions at issue, and upon the good will and fraternal feeling which exist between the brethren of both jurisdictions."

On the second day the Committee, to whom was referred the Grand Master's address, reported, *inter alia*, as under :

"In the matter of recognition of persons claiming to be colored Masons, we have to report that a memorial, respectful in tone and unexceptionable in spirit, has been presented to this Grand Body by a committee claiming to act in behalf of the Grand Lodge of Virginia (colored), asking fraternal recognition and representation in this Grand Body, and setting forth various reasons why such request should be granted. But it is clear, from their own memorial, that if Masons at all, these parties can occupy no status other than that of *illegally made Masons*. They claim to have received the degrees in a Lodge within our jurisdiction, chartered by a foreign Grand Lodge, clearly in violation of well understood and universally acknowledged masonic law and usage. It is, therefore, manifestly impossible that this Grand Body can entertain any proposition of affiliation or recognition. The feverish and excited condition of the public mind, in reference to this subject, furnishes an additional reason why this Grand Lodge should carefully avoid any action which might tend to introduce confusion and disorder where all is now harmony and peace. * * * We therefore recommend the adoption of the following resolutions :

Resolved, That this Grand Lodge decline to recognize or affiliate, as Masons, with the memorialists claiming to represent a colored Grand Lodge in Virginia.

Resolved, That this Grand Body approve and sustain the action of the Grand Lodge of Louisiana in cutting off from masonic intercourse all Masons belonging to the jurisdiction of the Grand Orient of France."

The resolutions were adopted.

On the third day the Committee on Jurisprudence reported as follows, in regard to Sidney Lodge :

"That the Book of Constitution (chapter 1, section 3,) declares that every one who desires to be admitted into Masonry must be 'upright in body, not deformed or dismembered at the time of making, but of hale and entire limbs, as a man ought to be;' and again, (in chapter 2, section 5,) that 'the Master shall take care that no Apprentice or Fellow be taken into his Lodge,' unless (amongst other designated qualifications) he finds him to be 'without main or defect in body.' Regarding this as our Supreme Law, the Committee are of opinion that the Worshipful Master of Sidney Lodge violated its injunctions in initiating the candidate mentioned in the Address and other papers submitted with it. But we believe said action on his part does not appear to have proceeded from any improper purpose, and was probably induced by his looking alone to the phraseology employed on this subject in the Methodical Digest of the laws of this Grand Lodge; therefore,

Resolved, That the order of suspension issued against said Lodge, be, and the same is hereby removed."