

SUPREME LODGE KNIGHTS OF PYTHIAS.

Office of the Supreme Chancellor,
Allegheny, Pa., Dec. 29, 1898.

To the Order Universal, Greeting:

Within the past two months the attention of the Supreme Chancellor has been called to the fact that, in certain portions of the supreme domain, a studied and determined effort has been made and is being made to interfere with the organizers of the Endowment Rank. This action on the part of officers or members of the Supreme Lodge, officers or members of the various grand lodges, or officers or members of any subordinate lodge, is in direct conflict with the spirit and language of the supreme constitution and supreme statutes, and must at once cease.

At the recent convention of the Supreme Lodge in Indianapolis, the Board of Control submitted the following, which is found on pages 28 and 29 of their report:

OUTSIDE ORGANIZATIONS.

We now approach a subject that has become of grave import to the interest of the Endowment Rank. We refer to the large number of prominent members of the Knights of Pythias who are working for and endorsing different fraternal orders and old-line companies that make a specialty of life insurance. The right of members of this order to engage in any occupation for a livelihood, not positively interdicted by our law, is undoubted; but the right of such members to use the honors that you have bestowed upon them, to the injury and detriment of the Endowment Rank, is emphatically disputed and denied. When the stationery of this order is used, and its official titles are printed on literature which is distributed among Pythians, in the interest of these outside fraternal insurance associations and companies, it is time that you should speak out. Frequently, as soon as some of our members are honored with an official title, there service is sought by some other organization in the business of fraternal life insurance—they are sought because of the standing, force and influence which their honors bring, enabling them not only to cross the threshold of Pythian knighthood, but there to undermine the interests of the Endowment Rank. We desire to make no harsh comments, nor do we wish to appear in anywise severe—we speak only as the great and important trust, in which we take a profound interest—what we say is only for the benefit and perpetuity of the Endowment Rank, and we believe that we would fail in our duty to you, our duty to the nearly fifty-four thousand members of the Insurance Branch, and our duty to the order, did we shirk the responsibility of bringing to your notice at this time that which has gradually become a great and growing evil. At this convention the Supreme Lodge should declare that the business of any other association, of which life insurance is the special purpose, must not, directly or indirectly, be transacted in an office used for the business of the order, nor the stationery of the Knights of Pythias be used for the purpose of advertising any of these fraternities above referred to; and further, that the question of life insurance shall not be discussed on the floor

of any subordinate or grand lodge of this order, except from the standpoint of the Endowment Rank.

We earnestly hope, therefore, that you will direct that such an edict shall be issued on this question as will be plain, emphatic and mandatory. Let it correct as well as warn. Let it tell the membership, in no uncertain tones, that Pythians, as such, may not lawfully represent insurance organizations other than the Endowment Rank.

The above subject was referred to the committee on Endowment Rank, which reported:

We heartily approve the recommendation of the Board of Control, found on pages 28 and 29 of the report, relating to the discussion of insurance matters on the floor of grand and subordinate lodges, other than of the Endowment Rank.

The Supreme Lodge adopted the report of this committee, and while it simply confirms the laws already in force, the duty devolves upon the Supreme Chancellor of directly calling the attention of the membership to this very important subject. As members of the Knights of Pythias, we must be loyal to all departments of the order. If, however, any Pythian believes that another fraternity has a better system of life insurance than the Endowment Rank offers, and he cannot fully endorse all departments of this order as an honorable man he should surrender his membership with the Knights of Pythias, and cast his lot with that fraternity; but because he has been honored by his brethren in this order with official position, that fact does not carry with it the divine right to stifle and destroy the Endowment Rank, which has added and is adding so much to the glory, strength and influence of our fraternity.

All Supreme Lodge officers and representatives, grand lodge officers and representatives, and subordinate lodge officers and members will therefore understand that in the future organizers for the Endowment Rank must be extended every courtesy and assistance possible in the

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