

INFRINGEMENT OF COPYRIGHT.

It having been brought to the notice of my predecessor that the Order in some of the jurisdictions were using odes supplied by private parties other than those published and furnished by the G. L. of the U. S., and regarding it as an infringement of the copyright, and tending ultimately, if persisted in, to interfere seriously with the revenue, he issued special notices to the Grand Authorities complained of, for their suppression. Finding, upon my induction into office, that there were parties still engaged in the printing, distribution and sale of these illegal odes, I deemed it to be my duty, as well as absolutely necessary for the protection of the revenue of the Grand Lodge, which was beginning to feel the effects of the interference, to issue a circular letter directed to the M. W. Grand Masters and Grand Patriarchs of the different jurisdictions requiring them to forbid the use of all odes other than those issued by the authority of the G. L. of the U. S., a copy of which is herewith submitted.

Responses to this circular have been received from many of the Grand Authorities, giving assurances of a willingness and determination to sustain the effort to stop the unlawful interference with the sale of supplies and the revenue of the Grand Lodge, and at the same time disclosing the existence of a variety of odes or poems differing altogether from the prescribed formula in the work of the Order, and which have been substituted for the regular odes, thus changing the work in violation of Article twenty, By-Laws of the G. L. of the U. S., a notice of which confronts every officer of a Subordinate Lodge that opens a charge book.

I would respectfully submit, in connection with this subject, that there is an evident desire in many localities to have the various odes of the Order set to appropriate music, something altogether different and better than has been hitherto supplied, and would suggest that this is the proper time to meet this manifest want of the Order in that direction, or to surrender it altogether to private enterprise or to the local jurisdictions.

All of the information upon this subject that has come to my notice, has been given to the Committee on Printing Supplies, who will, I am advised, submit for your consideration a remedy for the evil complained of, and for which I ask your favorable consideration.

There is also somewhat connected with this subject, though not probably in violation of any copyright, an individual enterprise that is flooding the Order, and ornamenting Lodge-rooms with maps, charts, diplomas and certificates of membership containing a great variety of figures, emblems and mottoes, a large number of which are not to be found in the classified and recognized symbols of our Order, and I most respectfully submit for the consideration of this Grand Lodge whether this privilege or license should not be subject to some regulation or supervision of this Body, which shall at least limit the display of what purports to be emblems of the Order in our Lodge-rooms, to those only that have their proper and recognized significance, and in the event of our ultimate success in that direction, to make these charts what they purport to be—standard works that can be utilized by Encampments, Lodges and Degree Lodges in the exemplification of the ritual.

CANADA.

The Order in the British Provinces of Ontario, Quebec and the Lower Provinces, being an integral part of this R. W. Body, with their Representatives annually with us, holding the same relation as our home jurisdiction, have become so nearly allied to us in interest and feeling, as it is contiguous in territory, that it is no longer referred to amongst us as a foreign country into which the Order has been introduced, but I may be permitted to add