

ADDRESS
OF THE
SOV.: GRAND COMMANDER
OF THE
SUPREME COUNCIL OF S.: G.: I.: G.:
FOR THE

SOUTHERN JURISDICTION OF THE UNITED STATES,
RELATING TO DIFFICULTIES IN NORTHERN JURISDICTION,

Delivered at Washington, D. C. April 19, 1866.

THE NORTHERN JURISDICTION.

THE Grand Commander of the united body in New York has resigned, and been succeeded by Ill.: Bro.: SIMON ROBINSON. I do not learn that there is any prospect of an amicable adjustment; and it seems to me an inexorable necessity that we should take some action in the matter.

In presenting for your consideration the facts connected with that feud, and my opinions, frankly and impartially expressed upon the questions involved, at the beginning of this session, I laid before you the fraternal letter which I had in July addressed to such of the two parties as claimed to be Sovereign or Deputy Grand Inspectors General, urging them to adopt measures of reconciliation, and to relieve us of the unwelcome necessity of deciding the dispute.

I do not think that any right-minded and unprejudiced *true* Scottish Mason could reasonably find in that letter anything that it was not proper for me to say. I am sorry that it has been deemed objectionable, or rather has been represented as being so, by some of the leaders among our northern brethren, and by periodicals in their interest. I wish I could, even in charity, say that they have *misunderstood* it. They stigmatize it as dictatorial, as an unwarrantable interference, and as written with evil motives; and in doing so have indulged in language that not only offends against the principles of Masonic kindness and charity, but also against those of ordinary courtesy and the decencies of discussion even among the profane.

I shall easily relieve you and myself from all imputation of dictation or even unsolicited interference, by appending to this address and publishing certain letters addressed to me in 1861 by Ill.: Bros.: CHARLES W. MOORE, KILLIAN H. VAN RENSSELAER and WILLIAM B. HUBBARD, invoking my intervention, and expressing a willingness to submit the matter to our arbitrament.

As far as concerns myself, I shall be quite content with doing this, without further response to the charge of dictation. The ebullitions of an anger that is both unprovoked and impotent are fit only to provoke a smile. *Vindico me ab illis solo contemptu.* It was well said once, '*Regium est cum bene feceris malé audire.*' To be severe, invective must be *true*; and women, not men, should scold.

Why should *not* our brethren have been willing to submit the matter to *us*? Is it that we are not qualified to investigate the matter, or that we have not the means of information, or that we are not impartial? We know all

the facts; the law is plain; we are utterly indifferent between the parties. Is it, then, that we have no jurisdiction to decide? I shall not argue that. When two Powers, in one country, claim to be the legitimate Sovereigns, each of the whole, and each demands recognition by other Powers, each other must necessarily decide which of them he will recognize, and with which maintain friendly relations. If I had not convened you, I should have examined and decided the question; for, being Sovereign Grand Commander, it is for me, in your vacation, to establish diplomatic relations with other Supreme Councils, and to direct all Masons of our obedience what authority, in any other country, they are to recognize as legitimate. It is my prerogative. If I had exercised it, I should have endeavored so to decide upon the facts and the law as to have commanded the assent of our Peers. When *you* decide, I do not doubt that your decision will be confirmed by all the Supreme Councils; and I have thought it most proper to await your action.

I am sorry to have seen it said, in a Masonic paper of large circulation, that '*the threats of Rebels*' will have no effect in one quarter; that our decision will be defied, that this body is dissolved, or only the wreck of what it once was; with other things insolently enough said, which one cares not to notice.

It is not at all likely that your decision will have any the less weight with foreign bodies because the fortunes of war subject some of us to the epithets '*Rebels*' and '*Traitors*.' The principles of Freemasonry are not forgotten or set at nought with deliberation *everywhere*. *These epithets are not allowable from Mason to Mason*. Whether they are properly or justly applied *elsewhere* is not to be argued *here* or in any other *Masonic* body. Nor is it necessary. *Nondum omnium dierum soles occiderunt*. What we decide will stand or fall, according as it is or is not sustained by Masonic law and sound reason.

But I do not fear to say that nothing is clearer than that it has been a grave violation of Masonic duty, and Masonic *obligation* too, for one Mason to reproach another, especially in print or in the hearing of the profane, with the course he took in the late civil war. No one is *in any wise* amenable for that to Masonry. If one can be charged, or taunted or reproached, he must of right be heard to justify himself; but this he cannot, because the discussion is not permissible in the sanctuary; and it is a base act to strike one who cannot resist.

Masonry is far above all political disturbances of States and Nations. If not, it has sunken greatly below its old and glorious estate. To me it seems that all denunciation of Masons by Masons, as rebels or traitors, is indefensible, and contrary not only to the spirit of Freemasonry, but to its positive law; and that so it ought to be solemnly adjudged by Masons at home and abroad; that it may hereafter be known and remembered that Masons cannot without becoming unworthy so bring railing accusations against each other; that Masons on and off the field of battle may not again be thus advised by rash men to forget and violate their solemn oaths, and that the error of a few may not become a precedent hereafter for the many.

I do not speak this out of any personal feeling of grievance, nor with the least passion or anger. I speak only the words of truth and soberness.

VISITATION IN THE NORTHERN JURISDICTION.

Whether the Masons of our obedience are to be allowed to visit the bodies of the Ancient and Accepted rite in the northern jurisdiction is a grave question for your decision. My opinion upon it has already been officially made known.

While I was in New York during a part of the last Summer and Autumn, I visited the Lodge of Perfection and Chapter of Rose Croix in that city, holding letters-patent of Constitution from the Supreme Council for the northern jurisdiction, granted before the unfortunate separation of that body into two hostile organizations. The bodies which I so visited had taken no new letters-patent, though acknowledging the sovereignty of one of the rival bodies. If I had been in Boston, and the brethren there, of the other obedience, had done me the honor to wish it, I should have visited any subordinate body there, holding letters-patent equally authentic on their face; although I did not visit the body claiming to be a Supreme Council in New York, nor should have visited that of Boston, nor meant to recognize either as legitimate.

In such controversies as that which yet exists in the northern jurisdiction, it is usual for one body to declare the other spurious or illegitimate, and for each to expel from the Order those of the hostile camp. But it is *not* usual where Masons do not forget that they ought to be gentlemen, and it is less usual where they remember their oaths, for one body to encourage its accredited or discredited organs to revile those of another jurisdiction, who, while the dispute remains undecided, are pleased to exercise the right of simple visitation.

Yet railing accusations have been brought against me, both by the official organ of one of the bodies in the northern jurisdiction, and also by others, which, while willing to be served by them, it would perhaps not be willing to own as duly accredited, because it did not please me to recognize its right to claim that all the world should acknowledge it to be legitimate, to excommunicate subordinate bodies denying its supremacy, and to require that none of other jurisdictions should, on pain of its sovereign displeasure, dare visit bodies thus placed under interdict.

Consequently, any of our brethren who may journey in the northern jurisdiction must either refrain from visiting any bodies or communicating with any Masons, whatever, of the Ancient and Accepted rite, or expose themselves to be in like manner denounced by the organs and mercenaries of one body or the other.

Now, we had not decided, or even inquired, when I was in New York, which of these two bodies was the true and real Supreme Council for the northern jurisdiction. The body which was certainly that Council from 1813 to 1860 had divided into two factions, each of which organized itself into a Supreme Council *de facto*, and claimed the allegiance and obedience of all Masons and bodies of the rite within the jurisdiction. Each of these was constrained to decide for itself to which of the rivals it would bear allegiance; but Masons of other jurisdictions could not be subjected to any such necessity.

How you will finally decide yet remains unknown. Until you do decide, I know of no right possessed by the Boston Council, superior to that of its antagonist, to require that we also shall excommunicate those who refuse to obey it, or that we shall, without examination, recognize it as a Supreme Council, or submit to be insolently denounced by its organs.

As to myself, I had not endeavored to come, nor had I come, to any conclusion in respect to the controversy, until I prepared my address shortly before you convened in November. That I did not recognize the New York body as legitimate, by visiting its subordinates, is quite evident, since, when the time came for me to investigate the question, my judgment was, as you know, that it was not a lawful Supreme Council. I had not even protested against the wrongful use or wrong construction put upon our baluster denouncing the Hays' Council, as the successor of that of Cerneau, which was represented and used as a condemnation of the United Council of New York 'for the United

States and their dependencies,' as, perhaps, in justice both to that body and myself, I should have done. Nor had I seen fit to explain the quotations of sentences from my letters, used to sustain the Boston Council; but I had left the whole matter to await your action, declining only to submit to be prohibited by either body from visiting the subordinate bodies of the northern jurisdiction, or to undertake to decide in advance who were and who were not legitimately 33ds. I recognized as such, for the time being, Ill.: Bro.: McCLENACHAN, of the New York body, created such before the separation, and Ill.: Bro.: CASSARD, restored to his rank by the Boston body afterward.

It is evident that many serious questions in connection with this matter present themselves for your consideration. If a subordinate body in the northern jurisdiction required to decide to which faction of the Supreme Council it would adhere, and so deciding, erred in its judgment, did it thereby become spurious and clandestine? Could the Supreme Body, by so separating into two hostile camps, annihilate one or the other half of its subordinates, and by mutual excommunications render utterly uncertain the legitimacy and constitutional existence of all? Could it thus place the Scottish Masons of other jurisdictions under the unpleasant necessity of either refraining from all communication with their brethren of the North, or of visiting at the peril of being denounced for violation of their obligation not to recognize or communicate with unlawful or clandestine bodies of Masons? Was every one of us bound to judge for himself, at that grave peril, the merits of a dispute, the sovereign rights of parties, on which *we* even now find it difficult to decide, and as to which the members of our lodges and chapters have either absolutely no knowledge, or are bewildered by conflicting statements? *When the Grand Commander and Secretary General of a Supreme Council disagree as to the number of its actual and active members*, the former, with the Treasurer General, averring that there are but *five*, and the latter that there are virtually *fourteen*, may not those of other jurisdictions reasonably require them to settle this point among themselves, before either fraction shall launch its anathemas at those who visit subordinate bodies holding letters-patent of constitution of undoubted authenticity? Must we, as individual Masons, on pain of its sovereign displeasure, at once refuse to recognize as 33ds those whom either of the bodies may see fit to denounce?

How *could* the brethren of our jurisdiction, how could

we, until after full investigation, decide between the Ill.: and well-known brethren, EDWARD A. RAYMOND, SIMON W. ROBINSON, JOHN L. LEWIS, LUCIUS R. PAIGE, and others, on one side, and CHARLES W. MOORE, KILLIAN H. VAN RENSSELAER, CHARLES R. STARKWEATHER and WINSLOW LEWIS on the other; when Ill.: Bro.: WM. B. HUBBARD himself declined the task in despair, or at least wavered in his decision and publicly identified himself with neither?

I do not believe that the legitimacy of the inferior bodies is affected by this feud, or that brethren from other jurisdictions were compelled at their peril to decide between them. It is for us and not for them to decide. We have not yet held either body legitimate or illegitimate. It is not the case of a body illegitimate in its inception, like the Cerneau, Foulhouze and Atwood impostures. Whether the RAYMOND body merged in that commanded by HAYS is not a settled question. It is the case of two bodies, each in part composed of undoubted members of a lawful Supreme Council, and each claiming to be that Supreme Council. Mutual excommunication, in such a case, settles nothing; nor, I think, will arrogant demands for recognition, or audacious denunciations of those from other jurisdictions who do not at once decide as one or the other claimant commands. If either means to ask recognition at the hands of an acknowledged Power, there is another and better mode in which to proceed. There are established modes of correspondence and communication between Masonic Powers, and when one whose title is disputed claims recognition it should in due form and by the proper channel present the grounds on which it bases its pretensions.

Each of the rival bodies should have borne it in mind that its legitimacy was not entirely self-evident, but rather liable to grave doubt. Neither could demand of us to recognize it without investigation; and the claims of the body at Boston were at least not *superior* to those of the RAYMOND body before its union with the spurious organization in New York.

The Grand Orient of France and the Supreme Council of France united into one body by a concordat, in 1804. When they, after a few months, divided again, each claimed the right of supremacy over the Ancient and Accepted rite. Each has ever since continued to exist and to administer the rite. The Grand Orient, having a Supreme Council in its bosom, for perhaps thirty years endeavored to prevent those of its obedience from visiting bodies constituted by its rival,

and on one occasion *purified* a room which the latter had occupied. But the Grand Orient was at last compelled by its own members to admit that its course had been unmasonic, and that these bodies, though anathematized by it, were not spurious. So, it seems to me, while the question between the rival Councils of Boston and New York remains open, and unsettled by their Peers, the subordinates of neither are spurious, though acknowledging allegiance to what may ultimately be decided not to be a lawful sovereign power. And, it may be added, we might surely visit the subordinate bodies in New York, lawfully chartered, when some of the chiefs of the Boston Council were negotiating with some of those of the New York Council for a settlement upon almost the identical basis proposed by myself; *as I chance to know and then knew was the case*; and when the first proposition for a union with the HAYS' body came *not* from those who afterward united with it, but from those who now denounce it.

If you should decide both bodies illegal, as I think they are, I am not sure but that the subordinates of both will still have a legal existence. Could we, by committing suicide as a body, destroy our subordinates? If the question should ever arise, it will deserve grave consideration; and it is, I think, quite certain that in such case a subordinate still holding an undoubtedly authentic charter, older than the schism, would not find itself annihilated.

I also lay before you a published communication from some one who speaks as by authority, reviling us for permitting Ill.: Bros.: CHARLES T. McCLENACHAN and LUCIUS R. PAIGE to be present at our session in November, and to be heard in regard to the questions involved in the feud between their body and that at Boston.

These brethren presented themselves, and asked to be heard, and we permitted it, as we had the right to do, not receiving them as members of, or ambassadors from, a Supreme Council, but as individual 33ds. I believe they had been expelled by the Boston body, and that their Council, before the union with the Hays' body, had in turn expelled those of the original Council who had separated from Ill.: Bros.: RAYMOND and ROBINSON, its two highest dignitaries. All that is, to us, mere idle thunder. We shall not, for all that, in advance of a solemn judgment on the whole question, hold it unmasonic to recognize either CHARLES W. MOORE or SIMON W. ROBINSON as a lawful Inspector General, or ANDRES CASSARD as duly restored

to his rank of 33d. *He* would have been permitted to visit us, if he had presented himself; and we should with equal readiness and pleasure have welcomed Ill.: Bros.: ALBERT CASE and WINSLOW LEWIS as 33ds, if they had seen fit to honor us with their presence. I should have advised the Boston Council that some members of the other body proposed to be heard before us, and have invited them to visit us, if I had not had good reason to suppose that the invitation would be misconstrued into a demand that they should plead their case before us, and that a rude answer would have been returned.

When any other body, legitimate or irregular, considering 'its rights and prerogatives disregarded, or their limits unduly circumscribed,' shall take more particularly the course of conduct of the Southern Council under review, and what its officers are presuming to do, it will not be difficult for us to justify ourselves, and perhaps to retort with some effect. To the allegation that we have been wanting in 'gentlemanly bearing' toward either of the rival bodies, or have failed to observe 'the rules of comity,' or 'by premature violence leaped over the confiding restraints of fraternal affection,' we oppose a simple denial. We have *not* 'taken to our embraces a body of clandestine Masons, for years under the ban by our own declarations.' We did *not* denounce the body now existing in New York, 'even as late as in 1863.' We have had *no* diplomatic correspondence or friendly intercourse with the present Boston body, or the present New York one, *as* a lawful Council: and *we* have never recognized, nor have *I* ever recognized either Ill.: Bro.: VAN RENSSELAER or the late chief of the rival body as a lawful Sovereign Grand Commander. It is quite true that we have not addressed any communication to the Boston body, in order to obtain its views as to 'the standing and condition of the spurious bodies in New York,' which, we are assured, the Boston Council would 'have courteously received, and given it a fraternal consideration.' When we shall have recognized the Boston Council, and have entered into an alliance or amicable relations with it, it will be quite time for it to prescribe to us whom we shall permit to be heard before us. It will not even then be true that we invited Ill.: Bros.: McCLENACHAN and PAIGE 'to a participation in our deliberations.'

I call your attention also to an article published against our Ill.: Bro.: PIERSON, in order that the truth of the matter may appear in our proceedings; although it is not

by publications in weekly newspapers that charges against one of our members should be presented to us. We, like the body whose official organ the paper in question is, 'will be found accessible at all times, through a proper official medium, when approached respectfully,' and not 'abused by an unwarrantable insult.'

The allegation is, that Ill.: Bro.: PIERSON, at what time is not stated, or at what place, conferred the degrees of the rite to the 32d, upon LYMAN T. MORSE, of Seneca Falls, New York, for the sum of sixty dollars.

If this be so, the trespass upon another jurisdiction will be atoned for, whenever we recognize a Supreme Council for that jurisdiction. How the fact may really be I do not know. We have never sanctioned any breach of comity; but, on the contrary, when the Grand Consistory at Louisville had conferred the degree on a worthy brother, resident in Pennsylvania, I advised him that he must be healed by authority of the Supreme Council at Boston; and I instructed Ill.: Bro.: WEBBER that the same Grand Consistory could not invade the proper jurisdiction of the Supreme Council for England and Wales, and their dependencies, by conferring the degrees upon residents of Canada.

We have never permitted the northern jurisdiction to be encroached upon, although its Supreme Council unlawfully seized upon Maryland and the District of Columbia, and appropriated them to itself, and elected a member from the former, and never condescended to reply to our reclamation, or even to give it 'a fraternal consideration;' although the Ill.: Bro.: VAN RENSSELAER, some years since, as Deputy for Ohio, etc., proposed to invade our jurisdiction, and establish bodies in Wheeling, Virginia; and although the Boston body, under his command, perhaps deeming 'its limits unduly circumscribed,' has violated every obligation of 'courtesy and comity,' and 'committed a grave misdemeanor,' contrary to that 'good understanding and fraternal relationship' to which it appeals, by 'the most extraordinary course of conduct,' of appropriating MISSOURI to itself, and by its laws including that State within its jurisdiction. 'Courtesy and its own self-respect' should naturally have dictated to the 'Boston' Council a more conservative line of policy; one more consistent with the rules of 'comity and gentlemanly bearing.' We, also, are 'kind, forbearing, and of long suffering, and ready to exercise the full attributes of charity; but these virtues become a by-word and a reproach, when abused by an

unwarrantable insult, or when our rights and prerogatives are disregarded, or their limits unduly circumscribed.'

If you should decide in favor of the Boston Council, 'the dignity of *this* body may require *it* to take more particularly the course of conduct of that Council under review,' and 'give the matter of its seizure of Missouri its serious and deliberate consideration, with a view of enforcing a retaliatory discipline, or in some other way to correct these moral and Masonic abuses.' We should hardly enter into amicable relations with a body that has deliberately and knowingly undertaken to appropriate a State of our jurisdiction, and seeks redress for fancied injuries, not by addressing itself directly to us, but by crooked and not very reputable channels. If we had not had imposed upon us the judicial duty of deciding between our contending bodies, and if I had not, therefore, deemed it improper to engage in any controversy with either, under any provocation, I should, as perhaps I ought to, have prohibited communication with even the subordinates of the offending body, and have replied to invectives which it has permitted, if not encouraged. I have thought it more decorous to await your final decision; in the meanwhile advising all those of our obedience of my opinions upon the question of their right of visitation, by an encyclical letter, a copy of which I file in the archives. It states, only with more precision and more at large, what I had before said to brethren of our jurisdiction visiting the North: and should in justice to them have been issued at an earlier day; and yet, I confess, I should still have refrained from promulgating it if I had not been provoked to show certain persons, whom I need not name, how little I regarded their threats and invectives.

Certainly, we do not desire to encroach upon the northern jurisdiction, or exercise any powers within it. We have nothing in the world to ask of either party, nor have we any prepossessions in favor of or against either. We only wished them to settle their difficulties among themselves, that the Ancient and Accepted rite might not suffer by their dissensions, and the formation of new spurious Supreme bodies in New York be prevented; and also that we might establish amicable relations with an undisputed Supreme Council for the northern jurisdiction. I am sure that until the schism occurred, which rent the original body in twain, there was never any want of respect, courtesy, or kindness, toward it or its officers, on our part; and I do not remember any act of respect,

courtesy, or kindness on the part of itself or its officers toward this Supreme Council or its Grand Commander, but acts of *discourtesy* toward us I do *well* remember—not only mere inert neglect of ordinary civilities, but our letters unanswered, and our jurisdiction proposed to be rudely invaded, and part of it actually and for many years wrongfully appropriated, as those who did it now frankly confess.

Sensible men ought to know that the dispute between Boston and New York is not to be settled by the use of epithets, and by abusing as clandestine Masons men who stand as high in other branches of the Order as JOHN L. LEWIS, ROBERT D. HOLMES, JOHN W. SIMONS, and *others*, Grand and Past Grand Masters, and dignitaries of the General Grand Chapter, and of the Templar Order. Nor can it be settled by broad allegations, in a Magazine hitherto regarded as respectable, that the legitimacy of one of the bodies 'has never before been questioned, even by inferential insinuations,' and that Ill.: Bros.: RAYMOND and ROBINSON were expelled Masons; that one body is Masonic, and the other Anti-masonic.

And as little will it deter *us* from doing *our* duty to resort to the use of invectives, and of threats of putting names in red letters and making them by-words; or to prefer arrogant demands, couched in offensive language, for instant recognition, coupled with abusive protests against any examination of the questions involved, and attempts to excite dissensions among ourselves.

For the claim preferred by me, of our right to decide between rival bodies in one and the same jurisdiction, instead of permitting a foreign body to put itself forward as general dictator and umpire, I here distinctly repeat it. The Councils of CERNEAU, FOULHOUSE, ATWOOD and HAYS have all in turn been recognized in Europe, each equally without knowledge of the facts, examination, or reflection. When we shall divide into two factions, and of these each shall expel and denounce the members of the other, let the next oldest Council on this continent of North America decide between them, and France not step in to prejudge the question without inquiry. There is not a Supreme Council in the world, that is legitimate, which has not been created by virtue of powers, which, conferred by this Council on the Ill.: Bro.: de GRASSE, were carried by him to Europe, or on the Ill.: Bro.: de la MOTTA, were exercised by him in New York. This is the 'MOTHER SUPREME COUNCIL OF THE WORLD,' and as such, necessarily,

has precedence, and the right to be first heard to deliver its opinion among the Peers.

I file for preservation 'certain curiosities of literature,' from respectable and semi-respectable sources; not to comment upon them, but for your amusement. So far as these arraign *me*, they may perhaps make it not improper for me to say this: I have never made profit or a living by Masonry, nor received wages for any labor in Masonry, or re-imbursement of any expenses. I never sought or *expected* any office conferred upon me, I never shrunk from any toil or any duty. I have labored many years upon the Rituals and other ceremonies and liturgies of the Rite, and expended thousands of dollars in procuring rare books for investigation, and in otherwise carrying on the work. Not seeking reputation by publications, all of any value that I have written for years is locked up within the Rituals and other work of the Rite. The fruits of my labor are at the service of the Scottish Masons everywhere, and all take of and use them freely, for the most part, without acknowledgment. I do not complain; I am glad it should be so. A foreign body, moved by an impotent anger, may denounce me, even in red letters; or discontents here, if they ever arise, may lead me to lay down a dignity I never coveted, and powers I have never abused; but the Rituals used in this jurisdiction, all now completed and in part printed, will, I know, remain, and vindicate me. They are far from being perfect, but I am not so much possessed by 'pride which apes humility' as to say that I believe them unworthy of the Order.

It has been carefully reported in New York, in such ways as to make it certain, that it should be known by those who would give me information, that some of the articles of which I have spoken were written by a particular member of this Council. The truth of these statements has been indignantly denied by the Ill.: Bro.: in question; and I do not believe that any one of our members has been guilty of so great an impropriety. To have done so one must have learned little of the duties and obligations of a Kadosch, and remembered little of the teachings of the Rite. A copy of the summons to attend this meeting, however, has been published in a newspaper in New York, and is stated to have been furnished by a member of this Council. If it be so, this act deserves censure, at least; and it is my duty to declare, as I now do, that it was an inexcusable violation in a Mason of the 33d degree, both of duty as a Mason and honor as a Knight. Shall a

Sovereign Grand Inspector General deliberately betray the high confidence reposed in him, and furnish an expelled Mason in another jurisdiction, the open enemy of his Grand Commander, with the means of attack, by putting in his hands that which he had no right even to see, and which he himself received under his pledge and obligation of secrecy? Then, indeed, when this becomes less than criminal will everything in our degrees have become unreal, and our obligations and vows of allegiance, and knightly pledges and honor, and all, mere idle empty words.

When those, who demand my recognition in Boston, think it either Masonic or prudent to employ even expelled Masons to calumniate me, they somewhat mistake their own position. When, in August, 1860, the three Sovereign Grand Inspectors General, and some Honorary Members entitled to no vote, who remained after the Sov.: Grand Commander had closed the Council, and he and the Treasurer General had retired, leaving no quorum—when these revolutionists, carrying into execution what had been previously planned, undertook to act as a Supreme Council, with an Honorary Member for Chief, in order to dethrone the Grand Commander, and subvert the Government of the Order by radical changes in the Grand Constitutions, they did not *depose* Sov.: Grand Commander RAYMOND, but only declared him unfit and a usurper of power, and resolved that the Supreme Council *ought* to proceed to the election of a Sovereign Grand Commander.

Upon that, the arch-rebel, not an active member of the Council, being in form elected by this company of 33ds, active and honorary, to be Lieutenant Grand Commander, when there was not a quorum of active members, either by the genuine Constitutions or their new and spurious ones, he proceeded forthwith (*the Sov.: Grand Commander still in office*) to issue edicts as 'Acting Sov.: Grand Commander,' was justly denounced by his lawful chief as a rebel, and afterward, with his coadjutors, expelled.

After the Sovereign Grand Commander had thus been superseded, in open defiance of Masonic law, it was attempted formally to depose him; and it is a little singular that a single sentence in a letter from myself to one of the revolutionists, torn from its context, was fraudulently used as a *justification* of their course, when it distinctly gave them to know that we could not consider their Grand Commander as deposed until charges had been preferred against him, and he had been formally tried.

This question of the violent ouster of a Grand Commander is now gaily and lightly declared to be 'stale and thread-bare.' It may be so; but I do not think the case will ripen into a precedent. It will always remain true, no matter what Powers may recognize the Boston body, or how illegal the New York one may now be, that the former is the issue of a revolt and a revolutionary movement against legitimate power; that Ill. Bro. VAN RENSSELAER is not Grand Commander, and that the body of which he is chief is not a lawful Council; but, on the contrary, he, and those who with him effected the *coup d' état* and deposed the Grand Commander, were guilty of *lèse majesté* and *rebellion*. To sanction such a violent and revolutionary procedure would be to hold that a lawful power could be established by rebellion and treason, by an undisguised and flagrant violation of the oath of allegiance and fealty taken by every Knight Kadosch and Prince of the Royal Secret. To follow so hideous a precedent would be to overturn and subvert the whole Constitution of the Hierarchy, and make of criminal usurpation the foundation of a good title to Supremacy.

Perhaps I speak plainly enough to make it understood why I have no apologies to make to the organization at Boston, and why I do not know it as a Supreme Council. It is, to me, simply a lawless assemblage of persons, those of whom who were once 33ds, having laid aside that character, to associate with others to whom they have unlawfully and in violation of their vows communicated the 33d°. The recognition of such a body as a Supreme Council, by that for England and Wales, must have been imprudently given, under an entire misapprehension of the facts.

These are my opinions, and these, as well as those heretofore expressed by me, are simply those of a single member of the Council. Give them the same weight as if they were expressed by another member, holding no office, or by a third person, not a member. I do not wish they should have more, nor do I suppose they will. There are among you older and wiser Masons than I am. No one, I think, will dispute that a majority of the members of your Committee are so, or deny their impartiality, or its freedom as a whole *from even such objections as can only be unmasonically made*; and to your decision, whatever it may be, I shall unreservedly yield any opposite opinion of my own, as it is the duty of every good Mason to do. *Si quid veritati dissentaneum à me dictum sit id nec dictum esto.*