

D. L. J. Bourgas Esq

Charlestown July 31st 1827

Dr. Br.

Your favor of the 23^d inst. was duly received. The degree of "Maconnerie d'adoption" appear to be recognized by the Southern Supreme Council; though I take it for granted they never even dream of conferring them upon the ladies. I would here remark "en passant," that there is a degree called "Heroine of Jericho" which has become quite fashionable of late in this country. I know several ladies, & have heard of a great many others who have received it. The propriety however of introducing masonry in any form among the fair sex, is highly questionable, and I think will never receive many advocates.

When I informed you that I could not officially address your Supreme Council until I had written to some Ill. Brethren members of our Consistory who resided at a distance, it appears you altogether misunderstood me. My meaning was this. As an individual member ^{or officer} of that Cons.: I could do nothing officially in behalf of said Cons.: until I had consulted with the other members. Our present situation is peculiar. One of the members of our Cons.: resides at Skaneateles, another at Saratoga, another at Vernon & others at Albany &c. It would therefore be impracticable to obtain a full meeting at this present time. The only course to be pursued under existing circumstances, & until we are better organized, was to write to each member individually for ^{his} vote, which would be equivalent to, though not quite so formal as, a vote given in full meeting. I did not feel myself at liberty to do any thing as a member or even officer of that Cons.: which might concern all the members thereof without consulting them. My enquiring as to "terms" of admission under the jurisdiction of your Sup. Council will not perhaps appear singular after seeing the clause on that subject in the "official letter" of our Consistory (which has been delayed in order to make ^{additions} ~~the same more full~~), & after we inform you that we received information from one of the members of the Supreme Council at Charleston, that the "Constitutions of the 32^d degree consist of Edicts & rules which from time to time have been altered repealed and amended, so that it is difficult to say what they are until some intelligent brother will make a digest of them." In civil affairs, no person will blindly take an oath of allegiance to a government until he becomes ac-

-quainted with the laws of that government, and ascertain
whether they are such as he wishes to live under. So in ma-
sonic matters. We did not wish to come under the jurisdiction
of the Southern Supreme Council until we knew its rules.
We received a satisfactory answer to our enquiries, as set forth
in the official letter which you will ^{herewith} receive. Br. Dalcho
says in his "Shuman Rezon" or Book of Constitutions, that laws
and regulations are not landmarks, but yet that "there are certain
rules, which although not landmarks, are venerable for their
antiquity, and should be guarded with care." yet in the venerable
Regulations & Constitutions made by the Nine Commissioners at
Berlin 1762 & the propriety is admitted of "making alterations
suited to the times in which we live." But to be candid we have
no regulations of the 3^d degree, of the description alluded to ^{by} you,
which you recommended to my perusal. Our objections at the time
we came under the jurisd. of the South: & applied particularly
to the enormous fees exacted for the degree, and to some matters
connected with our Lodges of perfection & which now do not
come in question. We have in the official letter set forth the
"terms" (but perhaps a less objectionable word might have been used) on
which we were admitted by the Southern Sup. Council &
we doubt not but that the same liberties will be extended
to us by your Supreme Council. We shall however charge a ^{sufficiently large} fee
to keep out some brethren of a particular description &
not too high ^{to go} to bar the door against some worthy brethren, who
do not happen to be the favorites of Mammon. The regulation
limiting the number of members of a Consistory I think a
^{restrictions which have from age to age been heaped upon the order to evade the scrutiny of the tyrants of}
salutary one. — But it seems unnecessary in this land of liberty to adhere to certain ceremonies & ^{of the}

The term "representative" used by me needs some
explanation. In framing the mandates & decrees of our G.
Council of Princes of Jerusalem, we pursued a policy which has
been adopted by the Symbolic Grand Lodges & G. R. & A. Chapters
of the present day. You will perceive by the printed copy of
said mandates and decrees which ^{you} will herewith receive, that
every Lodge of perfection under the jurisdiction of our G. Council
of Princes of Jerusalem, has a right to send a representative
to the G. Council. In fact that these representatives constitute
the G. Council. All princes of Jer. except such representatives &
present & past officers, not being entitled to vote &c. Pursuing
such a policy our G. Council could not but prosper, and it has

prospered beyond our expectations. Its annual Conventions are well attended and the Subordinate Lodges of Perfection are highly flourishing. You would be gratified particularly by visiting the Lodge at Saratoga Springs. They have all the furniture necessary to confer the Hef. degrees in ample form. The good of the great masonic cause, should I can only be truly sought through the prosperity & honor of the Subordinate bodies.

I have been ballotted for & found worthy to receive the Temple's degree in Temple Encampment Albany, but have hitherto declined the honor, as I am induced to believe it will interfere with my off. as a N-h. But Br. Holbrook must think differently on this subject, since he holds the office of G. Commander of the G. Encampment of South-Carolina. It seems that N-h if not originally the same is a continuation of the Temple's order. Br. Francken stated in the Consistory of S. P. R. C. Kingston, Jamaica &c. 1769, that "lately a commotion had been made in Paris & other places relative to N-h, and that inquiry had been instituted by the governments of Europe whether those freemasons styled Knights of N-h were not in reality Knights Templars!!"

I see it is necessary that I should attend your Supreme Council in person. Where next winter Br. Simpson or some other sublime Brother of proper qualifications may have occasion to visit Albany, & could not some such person be duly empowered to act as the agent of your Supreme Council for this purpose, I shall not have it in my power to go to New York until some time next Spring. In the mean time my leisure hours might be profitably employed in making myself more fully acquainted with the sublime Degrees. Our knowledge of all the degrees up to the 17th is full & ample, but we have nothing more than the signs words, decorations &c of some of the others. Our wants shall be made known to you in the course of a few months with your permission - Knight of E. & W. Pat. Noach. & Rose Cross which we are now copying appear to be complete. I have not had leisure ^{as yet} to examine all the rest. From yourself as a mason high in the order, "of great experience & skill in the masonic art" Br. Holbrook, "anticipates the happiest results and that you will be able ^{to} give us all necessary light and information" Br. Saml. D. Campbell of this city, ^{who} has received the ^{of Blue} Hef. degree, will leave this place for Paris the last of September next, & will remain there during the winter. If you have any Papers to send to Francis, this will be a good opportunity. I shall get him to call on you if you desire it. I wish you would be so kind as

to make out a list of the names of Books on Sublime Freemasonry (the
Thuilleux for example) which it would be proper for me to have VBr. Campbell
may get them for me. Br. Campbell is not sufficiently zealous in the
Masonic cause to be admitted a member of our Consistory, though his
high standing in society & his ample fortune might perhaps make
it desirable. I do not care much about being associated with
Masons in any Masonic business which requires zeal & industry, who
after receiving degrees care no more about them. But Br. C. as my
friend will faithfully discharge any thing he is entrusted with.
"Entre nous" the visionary legends - traditional improbabilities & some
inconsistencies & are too conspicuous in the sublime degrees, and in fact
in the whole Masonic system. But I keep such things to myself.
yours truly
G. J. [Signature]

J. J. Gurgas Esq
New York



Mailed to Gurgas
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