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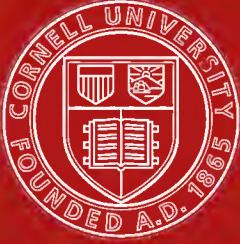
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ACTS OF PARLIAMENT

REFERRING TO

FREEMASONRY.



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This Monograph
THE LABOUR OF A DAY OF REST
(26th JUNE 1892.)

is

Dedicated, without permission, but as a token of esteem

by

H. J. WHYMPER,

to

Two Gunners

(*Wor. Bro. Major F. A. BOWLES, R. A.*
and
Bro. Capt. J. H. LESLIE, R. A.)

*who have done Excellent Work for the good of Masonry in general
during the past two years in the Rawul Pindee District.*

Gora Gully,

24th July 1892.

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Acts of Parliament referring to Freemasonry.

In a recent controversy between the Revd. Father Waterhouse and myself he stated Freemasonry was an unlawful association. I did not reply to this statement at the time as although I knew perfectly well it was incorrect I could not give such exact details as I wished.

These details and the proof that Freemasonry is a lawful institution exist in two Acts of Parliament—the first is known as 39 George III Cap. LXXIX and the second as 57 George III Cap. XIX.

The first Act contains 39 Clauses and 7 Schedules but it is only requisite to quote clauses I, V, VI and VII to give all the information which concerns the Craft.

“I. Whereas a traitorous Conspiracy has long been carried on, in conjunction with the Persons from Time to Time exercising the Powers of Government in *France*, to overturn the Laws, Constitution, and Government, and every existing Establishment, Civil and Ecclesiastical, both in *Great Britain* and *Ireland*, and to dissolve the Connection between the Two Kingdoms, so necessary to the Security and Prosperity of both: And whereas, in pursuance of such Design, and in order to carry the same into effect, divers Societies have been of late Years instituted in this Kingdom and in the Kingdom of *Ireland*, of a new and dangerous Nature, inconsistent with public Tranquillity, and with the Existence of regular Government, particularly certain Societies calling themselves *Societies of United Englishmen, United Scotsmen, United Britons, United Irishmen, and The London Corresponding Society*: And whereas the Members of many such Societies have taken unlawful Oaths and Engagements of Fidelity and Secrecy, and used secret Signs, and appointed Committees, Secretaries, and other Officers, in a secret Manner, and many of such Societies are composed of different Divisions, Branches, or Parts, which communicate with each other by Secretaries, Delegates, or otherwise, and by means thereof maintain an Influence over large Bodies of Men, and delude many ignorant and unwary Persons into the Commission of Acts highly criminal: And whereas it is expedient and necessary that all such Societies as aforesaid, and all Societies of the like Nature, should be utterly suppressed and prohibited, as unlawful Combinations and Confederacies, highly dangerous to the Peace and Tranquillity of these Kingdoms, and to the Constitution of the Government thereof as by Law established: Be it enacted by the King's most Excellent Majesty, by and with the Advice and Consent of the

Certain Societies suppressed.

Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the Authority of the same, That from and after the passing of this Act all the said Societies of *United Englishmen, United Scotsmen, United Irishmen, and United Britons*, and the said Society commonly called *The London Corresponding Society*, and all other Societies called *Corresponding Societies* of any other City, Town, or Place, shall be and the same are hereby utterly suppressed and prohibited, as being unlawful Combinations and Confederacies against the Government of our Sovereign Lord the King, and against the Peace and Security of His Majesty's liege Subjects.

Not to extend to regular Lodges of Free Masons held before passing this Act;

V. And whereas certain Societies have been long accustomed to be holden in this Kingdom under the Denomination of *Lodges of Free Masons*, the Meetings whereof have been in great measure directed to charitable Purposes; be it therefore enacted, That nothing in this Act shall extend to the Meetings of any such Society or Lodge which shall before the passing of this Act have been usually holden under the said Denomination, and in conformity to the Rules prevailing among the said Societies of Free Masons.

but Two Members of each Lodge shall certify the same on Oath, and deposit such Certificate within Two Months with the Clerk of the Peace, with whom the Name of the Society, the Names of the Members, and the Time and Place of meeting, shall be registered yearly.

VI. Provided always, That this Exemption shall not extend to any such Society unless Two of the Members composing the same shall certify upon Oath (which Oath any Justice of the Peace or other Magistrate is hereby empowered to administer) that such Society or Lodge has before the passing of this Act been usually held under the Denomination of a *Lodge of Free Masons*, and in conformity to the Rules prevailing among the Societies or Lodges of Free Masons in this Kingdom, which Certificate, duly attested by the Magistrate before whom the same shall be sworn, and subscribed by the Persons so certifying, shall, within the Space of Two Calendar Months after the passing of this Act, be deposited with the Clerk of the Peace for the County, Stewartry, Riding, Division, Shire, or Place where such Society or Lodge hath been usually held: Provided also, that this Exemption shall not extend to any such Society or Lodge, unless the Name or Denomination thereof, and the usual Place or Places, and the Time or Times of its Meetings, and the Names and Descriptions of all and every the Members thereof, be registered with such Clerk of the Peace as aforesaid within Two Months after the passing of this Act, and also on or before the Twenty-fifth Day of *March* in every succeeding Year.

Clerk of the Peace to lay such Certificate and Registry before the General Session yearly, who may order any Lodge to be discontinued, if likely to be injurious to the public Peace.

VII. And be it enacted, That the Clerk of the Peace, or the Person acting in his Behalf, in any such County, Stewartry, Riding, Division, Shire, or Place, is hereby authorized and required to receive such Certificate, and make such Registry as aforesaid, and to enrol the same among the Records of such County, Stewartry, Riding, Division, Shire, or Place, and to lay the same once in every Year before the General Session of the Justices for such County, Stewartry, Riding, Division, Shire, or Place; and that it shall and may be lawful for the

said Justices, or for the major Part of them, at any of their General Sessions, if they shall so think fit, upon Complaint made to them upon Oath by any One or more credible Persons, that the Continuance of the Meetings of any such Lodge or Society is likely to be injurious to the public Peace and good Order, to direct that the Meetings of any such Society or Lodge within such Country, Stewartry, Riding, Division, Shire, or Place shall from thenceforth be discontinued; and any such Meeting held notwithstanding such Order of Discontinuance, and before the same shall by the like Authority be revoked, shall be deemed an unlawful Combination and Confederacy under the Provisions of this Act."

The second Act has 40 Clauses and 3 Schedules—Clauses I, V, VI, XX and XXVI alone have any Masonic or Indian interest.

"I. Whereas Affsemblies of divers Persons, collected for the Purpose or under the Pretext of deliberating on public Grievances, and of agreeing on Petitions, Complaints, Remonstrances, Declarations, or other Addreffes to His Royal Highness the Prince Regent, or to both Houses or either House of Parliament, have of late been made use of to serve the Ends of factious and seditious Persons, to the great Danger and Disturbance of the Public Peace, have produced Acts of Riot, Tumult and Disorder, and may become the Means of producing Confusion and Calamities in the Nation; be it therefore enacted by the King's most Excellent Majesty, by and with the Advice and Consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the Authority of the same, That no Meeting of any Description of Persons exceeding the Number of Fifty Persons, (other than and except any Meeting of any County, Riding or Division, called by the Lord Lieutenant, Custos Rotulorum, or Sheriff of such County, or a Meeting called by the Convener of any County or Stewartry in that Part of *Great Britain* called *Scotland*, or any Meeting called by Two or more Justices of the Peace of the County or Place where such Meeting shall be holden, or any Meeting of any County having different Ridings or Divisions, called by any Two Justices of any One or more of such Ridings or Divisions, or any Meeting called by the major Part of the Grand Jury of the County, or of the Division of the County where such Meeting shall be holden, at their General Assizes or General Quarter Sessions of the Peace, or any Meeting of any City or Borough or Town Corporate, called by the Mayor or other Head Officer of such City or Borough or Town Corporate, or any Meeting of any Ward or Division of any City, called by the Alderman or other Head Officer of such Ward or Division, or any Meeting of any Corporate Body), shall be holden for the purpose or on the Pretext of considering of or preparing any Petition, Complaint, Remonstrance or Declaration, or other Address to the King, or to His Royal Highness the Prince Regent, or to both Houses or either House of Parliament, for Alteration of Matters

No Meeting of more than Fifty Persons, (except County Meetings, &c.) to be holden without Notice being given in some Newspaper, by Seven House-keepers.

established in Church or State, or for the purpose or on the Pretext of deliberating upon any Grievance in Church or State, unless Notice of the Intention to hold such Meeting, and of the Time and Place when and where the same shall be proposed to be holden, and of the Purpose for which the same shall be proposed to be holden, shall be given, in the Names of Seven Persons at the least, being Householders resident within the County, City, or Place where such Meeting shall be proposed to be holden, whose Places of Abode and Descriptions shall be inserted in such Notice, and which Notice shall be given by public Advertisement in some public Newspaper usually circulated in the County and Division where such Meeting shall be holden, Five Days at the least before such Meeting shall be holden, or shall be delivered in Manner hereinafter mentioned; and that such Notice shall not be inserted in any such Newspaper unless the Authority to insert such Notice shall be signed by Seven Persons at the least, being Householders resident within the County, City or Place where such Meeting shall be proposed to be holden, and named in such Notice, and unless such Authority so signed shall be written at the Foot of a true Copy of such Notice, and shall be delivered to the Person required to insert the same in any such Newspaper as aforesaid, which Person shall cause such Notice and Authority to be carefully preserved, and shall also, at any Time after such Notice shall have been inserted in such Paper, and within Fourteen Days after the Day on which such Meeting shall be had, produce such Notice and Authority, and cause a true Copy thereof (if required) to be delivered to any Justice of the Peace for the County, City, Town or Place where such Person shall reside, or where such Newspaper shall be printed, and who shall require the same; and in case any Person shall insert any such Notice in any Newspaper without such Authority as aforesaid, or in case any Person to whom any such Notice and Authority shall have been delivered for the Purpose of inserting such Notice in any such Newspaper as aforesaid shall refuse to produce such Notice and Authority, or to deliver a true Copy thereof, being thereunto required as aforesaid, within Three Days after such Production and Copy or either of them shall have been so required, every such Person, for every such Offence, shall forfeit the Sum of Fifty Pounds to any Person who shall sue for the same.

Penalty on Persons inserting such Notice without Authority, etc. 50l.

Punishment of Persons assembled contrary to this Act, not dispersing after being required so to do by Proclamation,

V. And be it further enacted, That if any Persons exceeding the Number of Fifty shall be assembled contrary to the Provisions herein-before contained, it shall and may be lawful for any One or more Justice or Justices of the Peace, or the Sheriff of the County in which such Assembly shall be, or his Under Sheriff, or the Mayor or other Head Officer or Justice of the Peace or Magistrate of any City or Town Corporate where such Assembly shall be, by Proclamation to be made in the King's Name, in the Form herein-after directed, and he and they are hereby required to make or cause to be made Proclamation in the King's Name, to command all Persons

there affembled to difperfe themselves, and peaceably to depart to their Habitations, or to their lawful Bufinefs; and if any fuch Perfons fhall, to the Number of Twelve or more, notwithstanding fuch Proclamation made, remain or continue together by the Space of One Hour after fuch Proclamation made, that then fuch continuing together to the Number of Twelve or more fhall be adjudged Felony without Benefit of Clergy, and the Offenders therein fhall be adjudged Felons, and fhall fuffer Death as in Cafes of Felony without Benefit of Clergy.

VI. And be it further enacted, That the Order and Form of the Proclamation to be made as aforefaid, fhall be as hereafter followeth; (that is to fay,) the Juftice of the Peace, or One of the other Perfons authorized by this Act to make the faid Proclamation, fhall, among the faid Perfons affembled, or as near to them as he can fafely come, with a loud Voice, command or caufe to be commanded Silence to be while Proclamation is making; and after that fhall openly and with loud Voice make or caufe to be made Proclamation in thefe Words, or like in Effect:

“OUR Sovereign Lord the King chargeth and com-
mandeth all Perfons here affembled immediately
to difperfe themselves, and peaceably to depart to
their Habitations or to their lawful Bufinefs, upon
Pain of Death.

“GOD SAVE THE KING.”

XX. Provided always, and be it enacted, That nothing in this Act contained fhall extend or be conftrued to extend to any Lecture or Difcourfes to be delivered in any of the Univerfities of thefe Kingdoms by any Member thereof, or any Perfon authorized by the Chancellor, Vice Chancellor, or other proper Officers of fuch Univerfities refpectively; or to any Lecture or Difcourfe to be delivered in the Public Hall of any of the Inns of Court or Chancery, by any Perfon authorized by the Benchers of the Inns of Court, or by the Profefors in *Grefham College*, or to the Profefors in the College eftablifhed for the Education of the Civil Servants of the *Eaft India* Company, or the Seminaries eftablifhed for the Education of their Military Service, or to any Society or Body of Men incorporated or eftablifhed by Royal Charter, or by Authority of Parliament; and that no Payment made to any Schoolmafter or other Perfon by Law allowed to teach and instruct Youth, in refpect of any Lectures or Difcourfes delivered by fuch Schoolmafter or other Perfon for the Inftruction only of fuch Youth as fhall be committed to his Inftruction, fhall be deemed a Payment of Money for Admiffion to fuch Lectures or Difcourfes within the Intent and Meaning of this Act.

Lectures at the
Univerfities,
Inns of Court,
Grefham College,
&c. excepted.

XXVI. Provided always, and be it further enacted, That nothing in this Act contained fhall extend, or be conftrued to extend, to any Society or Societies holden under the Denomination of Lodges of Freemasons, in conformity to the Rules

Act not to extend
to Freemasons
Lodges; nor to
Declaration ap-
proved by Two

Justices; nor to extend to Meetings or Societies for Charitable Purposes.

prevailing in such Societies of Freemasons, provided such Lodges shall comply with the Rules and Regulations contained in the said Act of the Thirty-ninth Year of His present Majesty, relating to such Lodges of Freemasons; nor to any Declaration to be taken, subscribed or assented to by the Members of any Society, the Form of which Declaration shall have been first approved and subscribed by Two or more Justices of the Peace, and confirmed by the major Part of the Justices present at a General Session, or at a General Quarter Sessions of the Peace, pursuant to the Rules and Regulations contained in the said Act of the Thirty-ninth Year of His present Majesty; nor shall extend or be construed to extend to any Meeting or Society of the People commonly called *Quakers*, or to any Meeting or Society formed or assembled for Purposes of a Religious or Charitable Nature only, and in which no other Matter or Business whatsoever shall be treated of or discussed."

Although these Acts were of the most supreme importance to the Fraternity there is very little recorded by Craft Authorities regarding them. I can only discover one reference in the Proceedings of the Grand Lodge of England to any Act—I give it in full.

AT A

SPECIAL GRAND LODGE

OF THE MOST ANCIENT AND HONOURABLE

Society of Free and Accepted Masons,

UNDER THE CONSTITUTION OF ENGLAND,

HELD AT

FREE-MASONS' HALL, LONDON,

On Tuesday, June 3, 1800.

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS

George Augustus Frederick, PRINCE OF WALES, &c. &c. &c.

GRAND MASTER.

Present

The Right Hon. the EARL of MOIRA, A. G. M. as G. M.
Admiral Sir PETER PARKER, Bart. D. G. M.
EDWARD DAVID BATSON, Esq. S. G. W.
JOHN BAYFORD, Esq. J. G. W.

JOHN HULL, Esq. P. J. G. W.
 THEOPHILUS T. TUTT, Esq. P. J. G. W.
 JAMES GALLOWAY, Esq. P. J. G. W.
 JAMES HESELTINE, Esq. P. S. G. W. and G. T.
 M. J. LEVY, Esq. P. S. G. W.
 ARTHUR TEGART, Esq. P. J. G. W.
 GEORGE CORRY, Esq. P. J. G. W.
 ARTHUR GORE, Esq. P. S. G. W.
 JOHN HUNTER, Esq. P. J. G. W.
 Sir JOHN EAMER, Knt. P. S. G. W.
 Hon. THOMAS WILLIAM FERMOR, P. S. G. W.
 S. STEWART, Esq. Prov. G. M. for Hampshire.
 GEO. DOWNING, Esq. Prov. G. M. for Essex.
 W. FORSSTEEN, Esq. Prov. G. M. for Hertfordsh.
 R. BARKER, Esq. Prov. G. M. for Rutland.
 W. GILL, Esq. Prov. G. M. for Bedfordshire.
 Mr. WILLIAM WHITE, G. S.
 Rev. A. H. ECCLES, G. C.
 Chev. BARTHOLOMEW RUSPINI, G. S. B.
 THE MASTER, WARDENS, and ASSISTANTS, of the STEWARDS'
 LODGE, and the Masters and Wardens of fundry Lodges.

THE Right Honourable the EARL of MOIRA, A. G. M.* acquainted the Brethren that this Grand Lodge was convened for the special Purpose of considering of an Address to His Majesty on his late providential Escape from the atrocious attempt made on his sacred Person.—On a Motion made by his Lordship, and seconded by Sir Peter Parker, D. G. M., it was

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY, That an humble and dutiful Address be presented by the Society, to His Majesty, on the Occasion.

His Lordship then produced the following Address, which was read, viz.

TO THE
 King's most Excellent Majesty,
 THE HUMBLE ADDRESS OF THE
GRAND LODGE
 OF THE ANCIENT FRATERNITY OF
Free and Accepted Masters,
 UNDER THE CONSTITUTION OF ENGLAND.
 MOST GRACIOUS SOVEREIGN,

THE Danger to which your Majesty was exposed in the atrocious Attempt lately made against your sacred Person, whilst it filled the Hearts of all in this Country with Alarm and Abhorrence, has authorized

every Class of your Subjects to offer at your Throne the Expression of their ardent Attachment without Fear of incurring the Charge of Intrusion.

Vouchsafe, Sire, under this Construction, to admit the Homage of a Description of Men who, in any ordinary Circumstances, could not as a Body tender the Profession of that Devotion to your royal Person and to your Government which it is their Boast to cherish, not in their individual Capacities alone, but in their peculiar Association.

The Law, by permitting, under certain Regulations, the Meetings of Free-Masons, has defined the Existence of the Society; binding, at the same Time, the Members of it, by a new Obligation of Gratitude for the Confidence extended towards them, to labour, as far as their feeble Powers may apply, in inculcating Loyalty to the King and Reverence to the inestimable Fabric of the British Constitution.

Being so acknowledged, we should think ourselves wanting in the first Duty towards your Majesty and towards that Constitution, did we not approach your Majesty with the Testimony of our Feelings on this awful Occasion.

Your Majesty is, therefore, implored to receive the humble Congratulations of the GRAND LODGE of FREE-MASONS, under the Constitution of England, (the Representative-Assembly of all the Lodges under that Constitution,) in the Name of themselves and of all their Brethren, on your having been shielded by the Hand of Providence from the desperate and execrable Attempt of the Assassins.

When Principles were first promulgated in France, which, to our Conception, tended to the Overthrow of all Peace and Order in Society, we felt ourselves called upon to depart from a Rule which had been till then religiously observed in our Association.

As a Veil of Secrecy conceals the Transactions at our Meetings, our Fellow-Subjects have no Assurance that there may not be in our Association a Tendency injurious to their Interests, other than the general Tenor of our Conduct, and the Notoriety that the Door of Free-Masonry is not closed against any Class, Profession, or Sect, provided the Individual desiring Admission be untainted in moral Character. To remove, therefore, as far as possible, any Ground for Suspicion, it has been, from Time immemorial, a fundamental Rule, most rigidly maintained, that no political Topic shall, on any Pretence, be mentioned in a Lodge.

The singular Juncture to which we have alluded seemed to call for some positive Declaration which might distinctly exhibit our Opinions; we thence ventured to profess to your Majesty the Loyalty with which the Free-Masons of England glowed towards your royal Person, and their unalterable Attachment to the present happy Form of Government in this Country. But, as no Foresight could devise a Motive of equal Importance with that which then actuated us, the recent Occurrence being of a Nature too horrid to be in Supposition as a Possibility, it was strongly declared that no Precedent should be drawn from that Step; and that on no future Occasion should the Grand Lodge exercise an Advertence to Events which might entail upon Free-Masons the Charge of assuming the Privilege to deliberate as a Body upon public Affairs. Hence, Sire, our present Address has not been so early as our individual Anxiety would

have dictated; for, it was requisite that a general Concurrence should sanction the Grand Lodge, in a second Relaxation of its Rules, before we could jointly express that which we severally felt in the most ardent Manner on the solemn Subject.

We have poured forth to the Grand Architect of the Universe our humble Thanksgiving, that, to the other Blessings showered on this Country, he has added that of defeating a Crime the sole Attempt at which produced universal Dissmay throughout these Realms; and we earnestly confide in his divine Bounty to preserve to us and to our Fellow-Subjects, for many, very many, Years to come, a Life so important in its Example, and so inestimable in its Superintendance over our Happiness, as that of your Majesty.

It was then RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY, That the Foregoing be the Address of this Society to His Majesty.

RESOLVED, That it be signed by the Grand Master, the Acting Grand Master, and Deputy Grand Master, and counter-signed by the Grand Secretary in the Name and on Behalf of the Society.

On a Motion made by Sir Peter Parker, D. G. M. and seconded by James Hefeltine, Esq. G. T. it was

RESOLVED, That the Earl of Moira be requested to convey to the PRINCE OF WALES, G. M. the Wifh of this Grand Lodge that his Royal Highness would be graciously pleased to present the Society's Address to His Majesty.

ORDERED, That the Proceedings of this Grand Lodge be printed and sent to the several Lodges for the Information of the Fraternity.

By ORDER of the GRAND LODGE.

William White, G. S.

* His Lordship took occasion, in the Course of his Speech, to allude to certain modern Publications holding forth to the World the Society of Masons as a League against constituted Authorities: An Imputation the more secure, because the known Conditions of our Fellowship make it certain that no Answer can be published. It is not to be disputed, that, in Countries where impolitic Prohibitions restrict the Communication of Sentiment, the Activity of the human Mind may, among other Means of baffling the Control, have resorted to the Artifice of borrowing the Denomination of Free-Masons, to cover Meetings for seditious Purposes, just as any other Description might be assumed for the same Object: But, in the first Place, it is the invaluable Distinction of this free Country that such a just Intercourse of Opinions exists, without Refrains, as cannot leave to any Number of Men the Desire of forming or frequenting those disguised Societies where dangerous Dispositions may be imbibed: And, secondly, the profligate Doctrines, which may have been nurtured in any such self-established Assemblies, could never have been tolerated for a Moment in any Lodge meeting under regular Authority. We aver, that not only such Laxity of Opinion has no Sort of Connexion with the Tenets of Masonry, but is diametrically opposed to the Injunction which we regard as the Foundation-Stone of the Lodge; namely, "Fear God and Honour the King." In Confirmation of this solemn Assertion, what can we advance more irrefragable, than that so many of His Majesty's illustrious Family stand in the highest Order of Masonry, are fully instructed in all its Tendencies, and have intimate Knowledge of every Particular in its current Administration under the Grand Lodge of England.

Writing regarding the clauses in the Act of 1799 which I have quoted Bro. Gould* states—

“The insertion of these clauses was due to the combined efforts of the Duke of Atholl and Lord Moira. Indeed, the latter subsequently affirmed that the exemption in favour of Masonic meetings was admitted into the Act in consequence of his assurance to Mr. Pitt “that nothing could be deemed a Lodge which did not sit by precise authorisation from the Grand Lodge, and under its direct superintendence.”

But this statement, though emanating from the “Bayard” of the English Craft, is a little misleading. Doubtless the Freemasons were chiefly beholden to the Earl of Moira for the saving clauses of the Act—an obligation most amply acknowledged by the Society at large. But, nevertheless, the letter of the Acting Grand Master, as he then was in both Kingdoms, was based on wrong premises, and suggested to the civil authorities a course not in keeping with the principle of the Statute to which it referred. The Bill was much modified in its passage through Committee; but “the Act was ultimately framed so as to embrace as participants in its immunities ALL Lodges of Freemasons complying with its requirements, irrespective of any Grand Lodge control.”

On the passing of the Statute, it was assumed that no *new* Lodges could be constituted, and at a Grand Lodge, held November 20, 1799, the common threat of erasure from the list for non-compliance with its arbitrary regulations, was invested with a new terror. The necessity of conforming to the laws was once more laid down, followed by this note of warning:—

“It behoves every Lodge to be particularly careful not to incur a Forfeiture of its Constitution at the present Period, as, in Consequence of the late Act of Parliament, no new Constitution can be granted.”

Immediately after the passing of the Act, the Grand Lodge of Scotland consulted the Lord Advocate as to whether they might interpret the Act as applying to *Grand* Lodges, and therefore enabling new *subordinate* Lodges to be constituted. He replied—“It appears to me impossible to maintain . . . that a Lodge of Free Masons, instituted since the 12th of July last, can be entitled to the benefit of the Statute. . . . The interpretation suggested cannot be adopted;” and he concluded by advising them to go to Parliament for powers to establish new Lodges. Ultimately—as we are told by Laurie—the Grand Lodge “agreed, in 1806, upon the recommendation of the Earl of Moira, then Acting Grand Master Elect (of Scotland), to adopt the practice of the Grand Lodge of England, viz., to assign to new Lodges the numbers and charters of Lodges that had become dormant, or had ceased to hold regular meetings.”

The practice, however, of the Grand Lodge of England, in this respect, has been slightly misstated. The Grand Master was frequently authorised to assign the warrants of erased Lodges “to other Brethren,” but there was always the proviso, “with Numbers subsequent to the last on the List of Lodges.” ”

* Gould (R. F.). History of Freemasonry.

The proviso which Bro. Gould mentions is illustrated by the following extract from the Free-Masons' Calendar of 1810.—

“The Constitutions of the following Lodges were declared by the G. L. to be forfeited, for Neglect of the Laws of the Society, and the G. Master was authorized to assign the Warrants to other Brethren, with Numbers subsequent to the last on the List of Lodges.

	1809.		
16	White Swan, St. Peter's, Norw.	404	Snowden Lodge, Carnarvon.
78	Angel, Norwich.	524	L. of Urbanity, Wincanton.
170	R. Mecklenburgh L. Croydon.	534	L. of St. John, Lancafter.
244	Beaufort Lodge, Swanfea.	543	Crown Inn, Nantwich.
291	L. Jehofaphat, Wootten-und-Edge.	548	L. of Peace and Good Neighbourhood, Wrexham.
361	L. of Peace, Joy, and Brotherly Love, Penryn.	558	L. of Harmony, Tamworth.
383	L. of Unanimity, Wells.	567	Social Lodge, Cambridge.

The Transactions of the Grand Lodge of Scotland as quoted by William Alexander Laurie show that on the 5th August 1799 the Act of that year was “taken into serious consideration” the following is the record.*

“Which enactments having been taken into serious consideration, the Grand Lodge unanimously agreed that it was her province, as the head of the Masonic body in Scotland, from whom all regular Lodges hold by Charter their right of Meeting, to take effectual steps for enforcing the observance of the law before recited—a law which, as bearing honourable testimony to the purity of the Order, and thus silencing the daring breath of calumny, must be truly flattering to the Brethren at large.

She therefore, in the first place, most strenuously recommended the instant attention of the Daughter Lodges of Scotland to the foregoing legislative regulations; by which two essential requisites were necessary for entitling the Fraternity to hold in future their usual meetings.

1st, That two of the members of each Lodge shall certify upon oath, before a justice of the peace or other magistrate, that “*The Lodge has, before the passing of the said Act, teen usually held under the denomination of a Lodge of Free Masons, and in conformity to the rules prevailing among the Lodges of Free Masons in this kingdom;*” and which affidavit, certified by the magistrate before whom it is taken, must be registered with the sheriff-clerk of the county where the particular Lodge holds its meetings, within two calendar months from the 12th of July last. And,

2d, That one of the presiding officers of the Lodge do record with the sheriff-clerk, *within the same space*, 1. The name by which the Lodge is distinguished; 2. The place and days of meeting; and 3. The names and descriptions (designations) of the attending members.

And the Grand Lodge, responsible for the regular conduct of the Masons of Scotland holding of her, which, she is firmly persuaded, is almost without exception entirely consonant to the principles of the Craft, yet anxious to guard against every intrusion on their ancient and respectable Order, or upon its established and accustomed forms, unanimously resolved—

* The History of Freemasonry and the Grand Lodge of Scotland.

"1^o. That every Lodge holding of the Grand Lodge of Scotland shall, *within six months* from this date, apply for a certificate from the Grand Lodge; which certificate shall bear an express renewal of power to hold Masonic meetings, under her sanction and authority; and which shall not be granted without production of evidence to the Most Worshipful the Grand Master, his Depute, or Substitute, that the Act of Parliament above recited has been literally complied with. And every Lodge which shall not, within the said space, demand and obtain such certificate, shall be expunged from the Grand Lodge Roll; have consequently no right thereafter, by its presiding officers, or by proxy, to sit or vote at their meetings, and be deprived of all future protection of the Grand Lodge.

"2^o. That the said certificate shall be subscribed by the Grand Master, his Depute or Substitute, and by the Grand Secretary and Grand Clerk for the time, and have the seal of the Grand Lodge appended thereto; for which a fee of five shillings, and no more, at the disposal of the Grand Lodge, shall be exacted.

"3^o. That the said certificate shall be thereafter applied for on or before the 25th day of April 1801, and of every succeeding year, and evidence produced, as before mentioned, so long as the said Act is in force; under the same certification of being so expunged from the Roll in case of failure.

"4^o. That no such certificate shall be granted until all the arrears due to the Grand Lodge be discharged.

"5^o. That the names of all the Lodges who have so obtained certificates shall be annually transmitted to one of his Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State, and to the Lord Advocate of Scotland.

"6^o. That the foregoing Resolutions be printed, and copies transmitted to all Lodges throughout Scotland holding of the Grand Lodge, that none may pretend ignorance thereof.

"7^o. That copies thereof be also transmitted to his Grace the Duke of Athole, and the Right Hon. Henry Dundas, by the Most Worshipful Grand Master, who is requested to take that opportunity of expressing the grateful sense the Masons of Scotland entertain of their exertions in behalf of the Craft.

"8^o. That a committee be appointed to wait on the Lord Advocate, with a copy of the said Resolutions, and that they be instructed to assure his Lordship that they have a grateful feeling of his Lordship's kindness to the Masons of Scotland, and will be ready to listen to any other regulations that to him may appear proper to be adopted.*

"9^o. That copy of these Resolutions be also transmitted to the Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of Ancient Free Masons in England.

"And *Lastly*, That the thanks of the Grand Lodge are justly due to the Right Honourable and Most Worshipful Sir James Stirling, Bart., their present Grand Master, for his constant attention to the interests of the Craft since his unanimous election to the chair, and more particularly in his correspondence with Mr. Secretary Dundas, during the dependence of the late bill in Parliament." "

* The following were appointed a committee for the above mentioned purpose:--The Right Honourable and Most Worshipful the Grand Master; Brother John Clark, Substitute Grand Master; and Brother Campbell of Fairfield.

Laurie also gives a very full description of the difficulty which arose regarding the creation of new Lodges.

1799. NOVEMBER 30. The Right Honourable Sir James Sterling, Bart., was re-elected Grand Master, and the Right Honourable Charles William, Earl of Dalkeith, chosen Grand Master Elect.

Several charters having been applied for since the passing of the Act concerning the Suppression of Secret Societies, a doubt was entertained by several Members of the Grand Lodge whether or not they were entitled to grant new charters during the operation of said Act, it was therefore moved and unanimously carried, "That a Memorial and Case be made out and laid before the Right Honourable the Lord Advocate for Scotland, for his opinion and advice upon the subject; and should his Lordship be of opinion that the Grand Lodge, under the above Act, had not powers to grant such charters, that the Grand Lodge should solicit his Lordship's assistance in an application to Parliament (should that appear necessary,) for remedying this defect, as well as for vesting certain powers in the Grand Lodge which would materially benefit their poor. In conformity with this Resolution, the following Memorial was submitted to the Right Honourable the Lord Advocate:—

"Memorial and Case for Sir James Stirling, Baronet, Grand Master Mason of Scotland; the Right Honourable the Earl of Dalkeith, Grand Master Elect; George Ramsay, Esq. younger of Barnton, Depute Grand Master; John Clark, Esq. Substitute Grand Master; John Trotter of Mortonhall, Esq., and Alexander Charles Maitland-Gibson, Esq. of Cliftonhall, Grand Wardens; John Hay, Esq. younger of Hayston, Grand Treasurer, and others, Members of the Grand Lodge of Scotland.

"The Fraternity of Free Masons in Scotland are not less distinguished for their loyalty and antiquity, than for the many illustrious personages who have at different times been at the head of that respectable body. From the earliest ages they acknowledged their Sovereign as their Grand Master. To his royal authority they submitted all differences that arose among the Brethren, and when not a Mason himself—but which was seldom the case—his Majesty was in the use of appointing a distinguished Brother to preside as his deputy at all Masonic meetings, and to regulate all matters concerning the Craft. King James I, that patron of learning and science, is accordingly found countenancing the Lodges with his presence as the Royal Grand Master, till he settled a yearly revenue of Four Pound Scots to be paid by every Master Mason of Scotland to a Grand Master chosen by the Brethren, and approved of by the Crown—one nobly born or an eminent clergyman—who had his deputies in cities and counties; and every Brother at entry paid him a fee. His office empowered him to regulate in the Fraternity what should not come under the cognisance of Law Courts; to him appealed both Mason and Lord, or the Builder and Founder, when at variance, in order to prevent law pleas; and in his absence, they appealed to his Deputy and Grand Wardens that resided next to the premises.

"William St. Clair, Earl of Orkney and Caithness, Baron of Rosslin, &c., obtained a grant of this office from King James II. Under his kindly auspices Masonry now began in Scotland to spread its particular influence through all parts of the kingdom. By another deed of the same Prince, this office was made *Hereditary* in the said Earl, and his heirs and successors in the Barony of Rosslin, (which grant was sanctioned and confirmed by subsequent acts of the Masons themselves,) in which ancient family it continued till near the middle of this century.

“The Barons of Rosslin granted charters of Constitution and Erection, countenanced the Lodges, determined all matters of difference among the Brethren, and supported with becoming dignity the character of Master Mason over all Scotland. They held their head Courts, or in other words assembled Grand Lodges, at Kilwinning, in the county of Ayr, where it is presumed Masons first began to hold regular and stated meetings.

“Such continued to be the state of Masonry while the family of Rosslin were in flourishing and prosperous circumstances. But the late William St. Clair of Rosslin, the representative of this noble family, a Mason, and a gentleman of the greatest candour and benevolence, was under the necessity of disposing of his family estates, and having no children of his own body, was unwilling that the office of Hereditary Grand Master, vested in his person, should become vacant at his death, and thereby revert to the Crown.

“In this situation, therefore, this gentleman, undoubted *Hereditary Grand Master* of Scotland, assembled the Brethren of the Lodges in and about Edinburgh, and represented to them how beneficial it would be to the cause of Masonry in general, to have a nobleman or gentleman as Grand Master, of their own election, to patronize and protect the Craft; and in order to promote so laudable a design, he proposed to resign into the hands of the Brethren, or whomsoever they should be pleased to elect, all right, claim, or title whatever, which he or his successors had to preside as Grand Master over the Masons in Scotland.

“A set of regulations were accordingly drawn up for the future conduct of the Grand Lodge, which was submitted to a general convention of all the Lodges of Scotland, called together for the purpose of receiving the above Resignation, and electing a Grand Master. At this meeting, therefore, which was held on the 30th November 1736, the said William St. Clair gave in a Resignation, formally and regularly executed, of the office of Hereditary Grand Master, in favour of the Brethren present, or whomsoever they might be pleased to elect to that high office.

“It may be here proper to mention that the Hereditary Grand Master had the exclusive power of presiding over all regular Lodges in Scotland, settling all disputes amongst them, and even individual members of Lodges aggrieved had a right to complain to the Grand Master, and the grievances of such Lodges and Brethren were by the Grand Master and the Grand Lodge decided and determined. The Grand Master had likewise the power of convoking the several Lodges, *and also of granting Charters of Constitution and Erection* in favour of Brethren wishing to hold regular Lodges, upon payment of certain fees, and conforming to certain regulations thereby prescribed.

“In consequence, therefore, of the above Resignation, the whole powers and privileges vested in the Hereditary Grand Master by King James II, and confirmed, as abovementioned, by the Masons themselves, and uniformly exercised by him and his predecessors, were transferred to the Brethren then present, consisting of the Masters and Wardens of all the regular Lodges in Scotland, being the representatives of said Lodges; and which meeting was then declared to be the Grand Lodge of Scotland, and therefore proceeded to the election of Grand Master and other Office-bearers to represent them.

“It is necessary also to mention that the Grand Lodge, so constituted, have been in the *uniform practice, since 1736, of granting Charters of Confirmation to Lodges* erected before that period, as appears from a continued series of Minutes engrossed in the Sederunt Books of the Grand Lodge, and also from the Charter Books thereof. They have also been in the *uninterrupted practice of granting new Charters of Constitution and Erection to Lodges*, upon

regular application and payment of certain fees, which are appropriated to the use of the poor, the only purpose to which the funds of the Grand Lodge are applied; and from which dues a very considerable part of the revenue of the Grand Lodge arises.

“The Right Honourable Counsel will recollect that in the course of the present Session of Parliament the wisdom of the Legislature deemed it prudent to pass an Act, cap. 79, intituled ‘An Act for the more effectual Suppression of Societies established for seditious and treasonable purposes, and for better preventing treasonable and seditious practices.’

“As set forth in the preamble of this Act, it is obvious the meaning and intention of passing the same was chiefly with the view of suppressing certain societies therein particularly named, and which, by said Act, are accordingly suppressed; and the Honourable Counsel is referred to the Act itself, which accompanies this Memorial, particularly to the 1st, 2d, 3d, and 4th sections, which, it is hoped, his Lordship will take the trouble to peruse.

“From the active interference of some liberal and enlightened friends of Masonry, members of the Legislature, particularly his Grace the Duke of Athole and the Right Honourable Henry Dundas, and from a conviction, through the representation of these Right Honourable Brethren, of the Masonic Societies of this country being not only strictly constitutional, but highly laudable institutions, as being principally directed to charitable purposes, Parliament was induced to grant an exemption in their favour in the following terms.” [Here follows the quotation of sections 5, 6, and 7.]

“After the passing of the above Act of Parliament the Grand Lodge met on 5th August 1799, being their stated Quarterly Communication, and took the said Act of Parliament into consideration when they unanimously agreed that it was their province, as Head of the Masonic Body in Scotland, *from whom all regular Lodges hold their right of Meeting by Charter*, to take effectual steps for enforcing the observance of the Statute. The Grand Lodge accordingly adopted a set of Resolutions for that purpose, a printed copy of which is herewith submitted to the Honourable Counsel, and which the Memorialists trust meet with his Lordship’s approbation. These Regulations have accordingly been circulated amongst the country Lodges, and the good effects resulting therefrom, in bringing the enactments of the Statute more immediately under the observation of their very worthy but less informed Brethren, have already been sensibly felt.

“At a subsequent meeting of the Grand Lodge, held on 25th November, a petition from the Right Honourable the Earl of Aboyne and others, Officers of the 6th or Aberdeenshire Regiment of North British Militia, lying at Dundee, was read to the meeting, praying the Grand Lodge to grant them a Charter of Constitution and Erection, under the title, name, and designation, of the Aboyne 6th North British Militia Lodge. After reading the above petition, it was stated that under the 5th Section of the Act of Parliament, there seemed to be considerable doubts how far the Grand Lodge could now grant Charters of Constitution and Erection. The words of which Section being, ‘That nothing in this Act shall extend to meetings of any such Society or Lodge *which shall, before the passing of this Act*, have been usually holden under the denomination and in conformity to the rules prevailing among the said Societies of Free Masons,’ which seems to infer that no Society or Lodge that did not subsist before the passing of said Act could now be tolerated or authorized.

“The Grand Lodge of Scotland therefore, desirous of walking upon sure ground, and wishing to do nothing but what is strictly legal and constitutional,

directed a case to be made out by a Committee of their number, and laid before the Right Honourable the Lord Advocate of Scotland for his opinion upon the above clause in the Act of Parliament, and in the meantime delayed giving any deliverance upon the petition from the Earl of Aboyne and others till his Lordship's opinion was obtained.

“ Having said so much, the Memorialists, after a few observations, will leave their case with the Honourable Counsel, confiding in that well-known candour and liberality which regulate all his actions as well as his opinions, for such a favourable interpretation of the law and of his official duties.

“ The privilege of granting Charters of Erection and Constitution is not only coeval with the Institution of the Grand Lodge itself, but, as appears from its records, has been enjoyed without interruption from that period downwards. But while, on the one hand, it is even necessary for the existence of the Grand Lodge, it has, on the other, been the principal source of that order, regularity, and subordination that has hitherto so conspicuously prevailed at all Masonic meetings in Scotland, as well as of the fund from which the poor are supported. With submission therefore, it never could be the intention of the Legislature to deprive the Grand Lodge of Scotland of that privilege, without which all Masonic meetings in this country must soon come to an end.

“ Under the 3d Section of the Act of Parliament in question, it is, with submission, competent for the members of any Society whatever to meet, and even to constitute themselves, provided the declaration ‘ of such Society shall have been first approved of, and subscribed by two or more justices of the peace,’ &c. The condition under which the exemption in favour of Lodges of Free Masons is granted are at least equally strict with those of the Section alluded to, independent altogether of the clause under consideration, particularly Section 7, where it is enacted ‘ That it shall and may be lawful for the said justices, or the major part of them, at any of their General Sessions, if they shall so think fit, upon complaint made to them upon oath, by any one or more credible persons, that the continuance of the meetings of any such Lodge or Society is likely to be injurious to the public and good order, to direct that the meetings of any such Society or Lodge within such county, &c., shall from thenceforth be discontinued; and any such meeting held notwithstanding such order of discontinuance, and before the same shall, by the like authority, be revoked, shall be deemed an unlawful combination, under the provisions of this Act.’

“ There is hardly a justice of the peace in the country who is not himself a Mason, and of course must be fully satisfied of the constitutional purity of the only engagements or declarations come under by every Mason whatever. In place of an exemption in their favour therefore, if the clause in the Act of Parliament under consideration is to be strictly interpreted, Masonic Societies will, it is apprehended, be in a worse situation than any other Society in the country.

“ It may likewise be observed that it never surely could have been the intention of the Legislature to deprive the Masonic body of the privileges and benefits of that Society; and, upon mature consideration, the constitution of a new Lodge, under the Grand Lodge of Scotland, will be found to differ only in form from the admission of an equal number of Brethren into a Lodge already existing. *The applicants for every new Charter must of necessity be Master Masons*, and of course entitled to admit Brethren into their original Lodge. All that is granted to them therefore, by a Charter from the Grand Lodge, is a new name, and place of meeting, more convenient for their local

situation, while the Grand Lodge is, and must be responsible for the regularity and good conduct of that and every other Lodge enjoying the privilege of meeting as a Masonic body under her Charters.

“In this view, it is with great deference submitted how far it may be thought consistent with the spirit and meaning of the Act of Parliament to suppose that the Legislature had the Grand Lodges of England and Scotland only in view in granting an exemption from the enactments of the Statute in favour of ‘any such Society or Lodge which shall, before the passing of this Act, have been usually holden under the said denomination, and in conformity to the rules prevailing among the said Societies of Free Masons,’ considering the whole of the other Lodges, both in England and Scotland, in no other light than that of so many extended branches, which in fact they are, of these Grand Lodges respectively, and which of course fall to be held responsible for the regular and constitutional conduct of all their Members in their character of Free Masons.

“Such an interpretation of the Statute, with submission, while the spirit and meaning thereof would be effectually preserved, so as to exclude all seditious and treasonable discourses from being canvassed in any Lodge or Society of Free Masons, would, at the same time, not only remove the present difficulty, but, by connecting the country Lodges more intimately with the Grand Lodge, tend at once to the preservation of the true spirit of Masonry, and that regularity and good conduct in all their meetings which the Legislature only could have had in view in enacting the present Statute.

“The Memorialists will only further remark, that should the Honourable Counsel feel himself under legal difficulty in interpreting the law in the manner suggested, they earnestly intreat his Lordship’s kind assistance, in his high official and legislative capacities, in obtaining such alterations of the law as might ascertain the powers of the Grand Lodge, as well as give them a *persona standi in judicio*, (a right which is at present at least doubtful,) by which their funds, and therefore their powers of affording relief to the indigent, would be greatly increased.”

Copy of the Lord Advocate’s Opinion on the above Case.

“The words adopted both in the 5th and 6th sections of the Act are so explicit that it does not appear to me possible to maintain, under any interpretation, that a Lodge of Free Masons, instituted since the 12th of July last, can be entitled to the benefit of the Statute. I do not know why the Act was so anxiously limited, but the legal construction of it is unquestionably what I have stated. It is impossible to adopt the interpretation suggested in the Memorial for this reason that if the Grand Lodges of England and Scotland respectively were the only Societies to which the legislature alluded, and to whom the regulations thereof apply, it would follow that all subordinate Lodges were at liberty to disregard these rules altogether, a proposition impossible to be maintained after perusal of the 6th and 7th sections of the Act, which distinctly impose upon every Society or Lodge all over the kingdom the necessity of registering the certificate within the county or division within which its meetings have been usually held, and renewing the same on or before the 25th of March every year. I am very clearly of opinion therefore, that no new Lodge can be entitled to the benefit of the Statute; and that, if it is material for the Memorialists to obtain powers to institute such new Lodges, to the effect of entitling them to the protection of the Act, it can only be done by an application to Parliament.

“The Opinion of

(Signed) “R. DUNDAS.”

“GEORGE SQUARE, EDINBURGH, 23d January 1800.”

After hearing the foregoing Opinion, it was moved and carried, "that full and ample powers should be given to the same Committee to take such steps as they think proper for application to Parliament for obtaining the great objects in view, as stated in the Memorial." In conformity with this motion, the Committee held numerous meetings, made various suggestions to, and had several interviews with influential parties, but with no effect, up to 1806, when the Grand Lodge agreed, upon the recommendation of the Earl of Moira, then Acting Grand Master Elect, to adopt the practice of the Grand Lodge of England, viz :—to assign to new Lodges the numbers and charters of Lodges that had become dormant or had ceased to hold regular meetings. "The Grand Lodge of Scotland therefore, with such an example before them, are satisfied that the same practice may be followed here, and that their doing so would be no infringement of the Act of Parliament, in so far as they were not creating new Lodges but only reviving Lodges that had been held as such before the passing of said Act. The Grand Lodge of Scotland therefore resolve to assign or transfer charters of dormant Lodges to such applicants as may be regularly certified by two neighbouring Lodges. But in order that no undue preference should be obtained, in point of seniority, they resolve that the date of such transfers shall be regulated according to the date of the application to the Grand Lodge."

As has been shown however the practice of the Grand Lodge of England was not precisely that adopted by Scotland as in England fresh Numbers were given to old warrants.*

I do not know where to find an explanation as to how, after the Union of the two English Grand Lodges in 1813, the difficulty so clearly described by the Scotch Grand Lodge ~~were~~ got over. New Lodges have been continually formed from the date of the Union and unless the term "Lodge of Freemasons" in Clause VI was held to apply to the United Grand Lodge as suggested by Scotland, I do not understand why they were allowed. The Acts make it very clear that the Institution of Freemasonry was recognized by the Government as a perfectly legal one but the practice of Freemasonry was restricted to Lodges in existence in 1799. How this difficulty was got over I cannot discover from the resources at my command for it is certain the Acts have never been repealed—there was a recent allusion to this in the "Freemason."

I find from an old Scotch Royal Arch Circular, given on the opposite page, that as late as 1818 matters were somewhat unsettled, and, owing to Royal Arch Chapters being entirely unconnected with Craft Lodges in Scotland, separate affidavits were required for Chapters, they were apparently not originally required for English Chapters.

* The Ancient (Athol) Masons apparently adopted another device to evade the Act and issued *new* Warrants with old Numbers. Bro. Graham in his excellent History of Freemasonry in the Province of Shropshire instances a case where the number of a Lodge which became extinct in 1776 was attached to a warrant issued in 1809.

Edinburgh, 13th January, 1818.

MOST EX. COMPANION,

WITH reference to a Circular Letter which I had the honor of addressing to you, of date the 24th of last month, the last Paragraph of which enjoined a strict observance of the requisites of the Acts of Parliament, passed in the 39th and 57th years of the reign of his present Majesty, prohibiting the existence of certain societies, but containing an exception in favour of Masonic Institutions, under certain conditions, I have been induced, in consequence of having received several representations from Chapters in the country, complaining of the want of a proper Form of Affidavit, required to be made annually, in terms of the said Acts of Parliament, to bring the subject under the consideration of the standing Committee of the Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Scotland; and I am now directed to transmit, for the guidance, of the Chapter over which you preside, the following Form of an Affidavit, which has been approved of by the Committee; and to express their sanguine hopes, that now, when every obstacle in the way of this most important object is removed, the Affidavit of no Chapter will be found wanting in the Report which the Committee expects to receive at their next meeting. The Committee desist from any farther remarks on the propriety of a rigid and uniform attention to this necessary duty, conscious that the Office Bearers of every Chapter holding of the Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Scotland, will consider this as the first and most important branch of their duty as good Masons; and more particularly, as holding the honorable distinction of Office Bearers in this ancient and illustrious Degree.

FORM OF AFFIDAVIT.

At _____, this _____ day of _____ 1818 years,
 Appeared before _____, one
 of his Majesty's Justices of the Peace for the County of _____

(In this space insert the County, and the Names and Professions of the three Principals of the Chapter)

First, Second and Third Principals of the _____ Chapter, or
 Lodge of Royal Arch Free Masons, held in _____, under the
 sanction of the Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Scotland, and in
 compliance with the Acts of Parliament 39 Geo. III. cap. 79. entitled,
 'An Act for the more effectual Suppression of Societies established for
 'Seditious and Treasonable Purposes; and for better preventing Trea-
 'sonable and Seditious Practices'—and 57 Geo. III. cap. 19. entitled
 'An Act for the more effectually preventing Seditious Meetings and As-
 'semblies,'—made oath, that the meetings of the above designed Chapter

or Lodge of Royal Arch Free Masons, over which they preside as Office Bearers, are held expressly for the purposes of Masonry alone: That nothing detrimental to Church or State is transacted therein: That their regular stated Meetings are held on the _____ of each month: That they hold other occasional Meetings for Initiating Members, and transacting other business connected with their said Chapter or Lodge: That their usual place of Meeting is in _____; and that the List herewith deposited, attested by the Senior Scribe or Secretary of the said Chapter, contains the Names and Designations of all the attending Members thereof, to the best of their knowledge and belief. All which they declare to be truth, as they shall answer to God.

A list of the Names, Professions and Places of Residence of the Members who generally attend your Meetings, must be presented with the Affidavit, and with it lodged in the hands of the Justice of Peace Clerk, whose certificate of your having done so, you will be pleased to transmit to me, as requested in the last paragraph of the circular Letter to which I referred in the commencement of this.

(Signature of) *1st Principal.*

(Signature of) *2nd Principal.*

(Signature of) *3d Principal.*

(Signature of) *J. P.*

I avail myself of this opportunity of again requesting your *immediate attention* to the first paragraph of my circular Letter of the 24th of December 1817.

I am,

MOST EX. COMPANION,

Your very faithful,

and obedient servant,

Recorder, &c. Sup. Grand R. A. Chapter of Scotland.

To
The Most Ex. Grand Principal Z. }
of the R. A. Chapter. }

Lodges in the United Kingdom are still under the operation of the Acts I have cited and quoted from, but in India there is no Act whatever which in any way applies to Freemasonry and no one need be deterred from entering the Craft in any country under British rule from a supposition's idea it is illegal.

22/

H. J. WHYMPER.

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Acts of parliament referring to freemaso



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