

## Royal Arch Masonry in the Province of Northumberland under the superintendance of A. Potter.

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"This is all as true as it is strange: nay, it is ten times true; for truth is truth to the end of the reckoning."

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I have been induced, chiefly since the remarks of A. Potter the G. S. at the meeting of the P. G. C. at Tynemouth, 28th May, 1885, thus to address you on the above subject; and, owing to the repeated public imputations and partiality to themselves and confederates, (whose ill-nature, passion and revenge carry them too far in punishing the innocent) and their desire to injure one of our most able and willing companions, is that which I cannot conceal or palliate, having sufficient ground to confute all gainsayers:—Therefore, offensive or not offensive, I give you that which I have heard (I do not state this on my own authority) in Chapter, Lodge and the most Public Places, in such order, as will readily enable you to judge impartially of Paul O. Smith as Treasurer of Chapter 24.

It is a fine thing to claim to rule the waves, a very grand idea to have dominions on which the sun never sets; but one feels at times when a large cascality has been occupying our attention, that it is a thing of no mean importance, yet not very common (indeed it is because they are not common that we note them so carefully in well-to-do men, as I have of late; it is striking and disconcerting because it is uncommon; heartless and unpardonable as it is, it is exceptionable) to find great rogues among the rich now and then, who have a tendency to be pertinaciously deaf and blind to every thing which tells against them. It is painful to think that one who might be a gentleman can condescend to such meanness.

Giving the casting vote against W. Marr Bell, in favour of his senior, is the time when Bell's petulance and folly commences, that he joyed to see his betters shamefully outraged and

"Think'st thou, that duty should have dared to speak,

When pow'r to flattery bows? To plainness honour

Is bound, when majesty to folly falls."

abused. He appears anxious to be foremost like the figure head of a ship gaudily decorated, but after all a mere effigy, not contributing in the least to the management of the vessel.

The two candidates proposed by W. M. Bell were exalted in May, 1882; the required particulars to make the returns to the Provincial Grand Chapter complete, for one was not received until a few days of the appointed time of the meeting of Provincial Grand Chapter, 10th April, 1883, and the other did not produce his M. M. certificate to confirm the dates;

why did W. M. Bell, after repeated applications, not supply the necessary and important information to assist in having the form of returns complete? Instead of doing that he, 5th April,

“O, that his fault should make a knave of thee  
Thou art not what thou’rt sure of!”

makes complaint “that the returns are not sent in, of the serious consequence and the great penalties that will follow, it is our duty to see to the proper working of the Chapter.” He withheld the information and prevented the completion of the returns. These ambiguous creatures, the bats of modern twilight, A. Potter and W. M. Bell, complained loudly at North Shields, as if no one but themselves knew of the circumstances.

“Vicious, ungentle, foolish, blunt, unkind;  
Stigmatic in making, worse in mind.”

Their vicious propensity has led them to swerve from the plumb-line of rectitude and the square of morality; and vain glory has caused them to transcend the level of their allotted position. Wise men think ill of them; others speak ill of them; nay, even those whom honesty condemns, condemn them.

At the Fund Committee meeting of the Provincial Grand Chapter, 9th April, 1883, J. H. Bentham *then* handed to the Provincial Grand Treasurer the full amount of the dues for Chapter 24 and the fine for the same not having been paid in time as per bye-law: the Grand Superintendent was asked if the fine should be included, as the accounts were closed, said “No! you must credit the same in next year’s account.” Everything is done by him and nothing is done without him.

“I am sorry  
To hear this of him, and could wish he were  
Something mistaken in’t.”

At the meeting of the Provincial Grand Chapter at North Shields, 10th April, 1883, and the day immediately following that of the Fund Committee Meeting; the Treasurer read aloud his report that all the Chapters, respectively, had paid their returns. A. Potter expressed “his surprise that the oldest Chapter in the province should be in such a position by the Treasurer of De Swinburne *not* having *paid* the dues, this must be seen to, nevertheless the *fine* had been *paid*, he was *glad*.”

“Like one  
Who having unto truth, by telling of it,  
Made such a sinner of his memory,  
To credit his own lie.”

Here it was intimated that the list of members returned were incomplete and that the full amount had been paid: A. Potter replied—“*all I know* they have been asked for;” having been

“Great tyrant, lay thou thy basis sure,  
For goodness dares not check thee! wear thou thy wrongs.”

*informed previously* why the returns were not sent in, being incomplete, and that on receiving the required particulars the dues would be paid—(this is not the treasurer’s duty). Why

did he not cause W. M. Bell to supply immediately the dates, &c., of those two brethren whom he was the proposer, being a P. M. of the Lodge to which one of them belonged ?

" Mine were the very cipher of a function,  
To fine the faults whose fine stands in record,  
And let go the actor."

W. M. Bell spoke of the Treasurer, not of the Report of the Chapter, which was supplied to him the same day a few minutes before he did so—the same as by the Finance Committee found correct—of which he was H. in the absence of the first Principal—" he was ashamed, it was disgraceful to so old a Chapter, the returns were signed (incomplete) long ago, the amount should have been paid, this must be enquired into"—it was announced aloud "the fees have been paid and the fine."

" All human things are subjects to obey ;

And, when fate summons, monarchs must obey."

Notwithstanding the excellent principals and precepts laid down, we have A. Potter and W. M. Bell amongst us whose propensity to backbite and slander, a vice truly detestable, and more specially in those who are exhorted and enjoined to speak as well of the absent as if they were present, and to defend their honour and reputation whenever attacked. But alas ! we find these men assiduously employed in traducing others, exploring and publishing their opinions ; like trading vessels, they pass from place to place, receiving and discharging whatever calumny they can procure from others, or invent themselves.

" You told a lie ; an audacious, damned lie :

Upon my soul, a lie ; a wicked lie."

The *dues* from Chapter 24 to the Provincial Grand Chapter having been *paid*, also the fine, *previous* to the remarks of A. Potter and W. M. Bell, I hold that all should have been condoned with the payments. The Ogle Chapter which did not pay the demand was not aluded to : A. Potter intimated that if the sum was not paid he would *not hold* the meeting of Prov. Grand Chapter at North Shields. And, further, there was at that moment due from Provincial Grand Chapter to the Treasurer of De Swinburne Chapter four times the amount of the dues. From June 1882—paid March 1884.

" O had your mother's borne so hard a mind,  
She had not brought forth you but died."

W. M. Bell and T. Blenkinsop complain to A. Potter that *they* could get no account from the Treasurer (not the Treasurer's fault but the fault of the first Principal of 1882) that he had been allowed by the first Principal of 1883 a month to prepare his accounts ; no such, or any, time was ever asked for or

" Was not the Cause at first begun

With perjury, and carried on ?"

offered. On the contrary, the Treasurer had to ask the first Principal of 1883 to summons a special Finance Committee. The Treasurer cannot be at *their* bidding *outside* the Chapter

through *another*, they should have had greater respect for their first Principal,\* and expressed their desire *in* Chapter. All dues were paid on the 9th, therefore the Chapter was not a defaulter on the 11th. W. M. Bell says—"he is not the man to go behind any one's back to say anything which he dare not say to his face." Why did *he* not attend the *special* Finance Committee Meeting and meet the Treasurer face to face? and find—"who was to blame to give any party a chance to talk" *outside* the Chapter. They have shown the cloven foot and disclosed themselves—vulgar Jews, make-believe gentlemen—as they do—Truth with them is not the twin-sister of Justice—and falsehood not the most heinous of evils!

"I do fawn on men, and hug them hard,  
And after scandal them."

A man's character is a tender thing, and a wound there sinks deep into the spirit even of a wise and good man; and the more innocent any man is in this respect, the more sensible he is of this uncharitable treatment. He that speaks evil of others gives a bad character to himself, even to those whom he desires to please, who, if they be wise, will conclude that he speaks of them to others, as he does of others to them.

"Conceit deceitful, so compact, so kind."

*Four days* after the Meeting of the Provincial Grand Chapter at North Shields, and in consequence of the remarks of A. Potter and W. M. Bell there, the Treasurer of De Swinburne requested the first Principal to cause the Finance Committee to be immediately summoned together to examine his accounts: on the *seventh day* after, owing to no notice of his request, the balance in hand, £36 1s., was deposited in the Branch Bank of England, Newcastle—a very prudent and commendable act. On the *twelfth day*, after, he had *six hours' notice* of such meeting of the Finance Committee; this is remarkable, but this is much more remarkable, that on the 24th W. M. Bell writes from Hexham to the first Principal at Durham—"the Treasurer

"The court of conscience, which in man  
Should be supreme and soveran."

does not appear to have got notice of the meeting for the 26th, will you kindly let him know of it so that he may be there," thence to Newcastle to Cummins and thence to the Treasurer. If not so arranged, it is quite clear Cummins did not intend summoning the Treasurer for some sinister caprice. A mean dodge of a shallow and transparent character.

"His mother's blood  
Runs on the dexter cheek, and this sinister  
Bounds is his sires."

This appears as it were a plot and conspiracy against the welfare of a companion;—the great want of virtue, on which mutual trust and confidence is founded, soon divides and breaks them to pieces. Nor would men of unquestionable wisdom,

\* Who replied—"all is right and will be found right at the end."

known integrity, strict honour, undoubted veracity, and good sense, though they might be trepanned into an act of asinine stupidity and made guilty of the most odious crime that can possibly be conceived.

“One fire drives out one fire; one nail, one nail; right by right, fouler.”

Nevertheless, without good and sufficient reason, it is unfair to call a man from his occupation and pursuit; yet with the few hours' notice the Treasurer presented his accounts, with Deposit Receipt and Receipts for payments at the appointed time and place, waiting the arrival of one of the committee. (The accounts were not audited in 1882 owing to their not having been a special or other meeting of the Finance Committee as is required; or, the Treasurer had no notice.) The accounts of the Treasurer were *found correct*—the cash book is signed as such by Thomas Blenkinsop, N. Mein and W. R. Cummins. The Treasurer tendered his resignation to the Finance Committee and asked them to report the same (this they refused) with the financial statement to the Chapter.

“Smooth runs the water, where the brook is deep;

And in his simple show he harbours treason.

The fox barks not, when he would steal the lamb.”

At the regular meeting of the Chapter, 17th May, 1883, the Treasurer resigned:—the Chapter refused to accept his resignation. The first Principal asked W. R. Cummins, E., for the Finance Committee's statement of the Treasurer's accounts, when W. R. Cummins replied—“we have none to make;” then the like to T. Blenkinsop, who said—“no statement, had examined the accounts and that the Treasurer had stated he deposited the balance in the bank.” T. Blenkinsop was here told by the

“Do villainy, do since you protest to do't like workmen.”

Treasurer that he had the Deposit Receipt in his hand, read it and asked “what would it cost to get the money out of the bank;” (this question by T. Blenkinsop who was a banker and now a butcher is in direct opposition to his vocation,) to which W. R.

“Betwixt an erring barbarian and a super-suttle butcher.”

Cummins replied—“nothing, it is only a Deposit Note”—this T. Blenkinsop denied. The Treasurer stated there were others present, Mein and Cummins:—W. R. Cummins rose and said “*I will swear Most Excellent I never saw the Deposit Note!*”

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“When perjury, that heaven defying vice,

Sells oaths by tale, and at the lowest price.”

Having been appointed Grand Superintendant of Northumberland “I can do as I like.” “If you do not like my ruling you can leave the province.” “Cannot allow the use of box and dice, in future, to make your elections.” “Will not reply to your pertinent letters.” “Will not allow you to defend the honour and reputation of the absent.” “There is no one of respectability in De Swinburne Chapter—it must go.” “Saint Peter's is to be the Chapter.” 1664—20th April, 1883—“you

are going to have a disturbance in Chapter De Swinburne." Appoints a Companion a Provincial Officer as of De Swinburne Chapter, whereas such was then not a member of any Chapter. He that would govern others, first should be the master of himself, richly endued with depth of understanding, and knowledge. Who has sanctioned this that he should be permitted to over-spread the province, and act as he listeth with imputation of unequal state of the judgment and favour of one above the other, without just reason, at all seasons and in all places; he may plot and cabal against us; we are powerless in his meshes; and may, in spite of us, plot against us: he is amenable to the laws, and any well-grounded complaint may be preferred against him. Having overstepped his bounds, he will find scar heads and keen tongues to remind him and his confederates—respectfully, but unmistakable—of the invidious and indirect means. Does he owe his appointment to the Father of Evil?

"The devil knew not what he did when he made men politic: he crossed himself by't: and I cannot think, but in the end, the villainies of men will try to set them clear."

W. M. Bell was asked by the Treasurer, 17th May, for an explanation—in reference to the statement he made at North Shields, 10th April, of him and his accounts—T. Blenkinsop spoke aloud "do't answer him:" there can be no doubt this is the beginning of the disturbance you are going to have," and by whom was the very unmasonic conduct commenced, continued and complained of—W. M. Bell, T. Blenkinsop and R. W. Cummins, whose conduct is considered most reprehensible in engaging a companion in perplexities—we have no language to describe the criminality; no power of words to paint the sin; let the truth be made known—give it a bold rebuff, that he who ingeniously, cunningly and artfully defrauds, who knowingly endeavours to involve is no Freemason!

"Every inch that is not fool is rogue."

What you would have no man do to you, that do you to no man; never slander another either before or after his accounts have been approved: he that easily credits a false report is almost as culpable as the first inventor of it; and whether it may not be in his power to revenge a spiteful word, by a shrewd turn, so that if a man made no conscience of hurting others, yet he should in prudence have some consideration of himself.

They have forfeited the confidence, and honour of their companions. Consigned the Chapter to contempt in the eyes of those whose good opinion we would prize; their altercation is very unmasonic and irregular. Within bounds it is lawful, beyond it becomes criminal; act in such a manner that the tongue of slander may have nothing to censure; whereas a lie is troublesome, and sets a man's invention on the rack: one falsehood needs a great many more to support it.

W. M. Bell was told by the Treasurer that he had "violated his obligation of a master mason—you have *slandered* me in my absence and allowed others to do the same"—to which W. M. Bell replied—"I am fully justified in all I have said, for *this* receipt shows, that the dues which should have been paid in 1882 were not received till 1883, any one can see it."

"An ignis fatuus, that bewitches,  
And leads men into pools and ditches,  
This light inspires and plays upon  
The nose of Bell, like bagpipe drone,  
And speaks, through hollow empty soul,  
As through a trunk, or whispering hole."

W. M. Bell here handed the parcel of receipts, without being demanded, for inspection as he offered, to a companion who announced—"this receipt is for monies paid to the Provincial Grand Royal Arch Treasurer in June, 1882, as stated thereon, and such also appeared in the printed report\*." That the Provincial Grand Chapter did not give the Treasurer of Chapter 24 the receipt for this and another payment until 13th April, 1883, as is written across in red by him.

How could he justify all he had said at North Shields, 10th April? when he had not seen the receipt until the 26th April, or immediately after, on which latter date the Treasurer's accounts were fully examined, and by the Finance Committee *found correct*. How does he fully justify all he said then and to repeat the same on the 17th May?

"I know him a notorious liar,

Think him a great *gay* fool, solely a coward."

That to such as are *slandered* it is a great injury, generally a high provocation, but always matter of grief. It is certainly a great injury; it is an injury beyond reparation. It is an injury that descends to a man's wife and children. The moral relations of husband and wife, parent and child are equally certain and demonstrable as between square and triangle, cube and pyramid, or cone and sphere. Because the good or ill name of the father is derived down to them, and many times the best thing he has to leave them is an unblemished virtue. They make no conscience to rob the innocent

"So justice, while she winks at crimes  
Stumbles on innocence sometimes."

wife and children of the best part of his small patrimony, and all the kindness that would have been done them for their father's sake, his reputation has been undeservedly stained. Is it no crime by the breath of their mouths at once to blast a man's reputation, and to ruin his children perhaps to all posterity! Can they jest with so serious a matter? An injury so very hard to be repented of as it ought; because, in such a case, no repentance will be acceptable without restitution.

In any case, it is the duty of those who are well informed

\* See Report of Meeting of P.G.C. 8th April, 1884, if issued.

not to allow such unwarrantable statements to go abroad unrefuted. What can be so barbarous, as to play with another's honour and good name, which to some is better than life; more especially when they originate from the high, mighty, and would be puissant authority in question. In making this charge I do not dwell so much on actual misstatement of figures, and the suspicious substitution of one year's return for another—though such inaccuracy seems, at the first blush, wholly incomprehensible; but what appears almost more serious are the misleading deductions from the practical experience of the speakers; for when they speak the truth it is by accident.

By justice we are taught to do right to all and to yield to every man whatever belongeth to him. From whom did W. M. Bell receive the Treasurer's receipts which the Finance

"Buyers, you know, are bid beware;  
And worse than thieves receivers are."

Committee had to guide them when the accounts were examined and found correct? Such should, in justice to the Treasurer, have been retained by him and transferred to his duly appointed and invested successor. Can there be anything more positive than—"this receipt shows—any one can see it." Having produced this he should also be able to produce the Deposit Receipt for £50 ls. which was with the receipts. He certainly was not one of the Finance Committee who audited the Treasurer's accounts, therefore, he knows from whom he received the same; certainly not from and with the consent

And though they nothing will confess,  
Yet by their very looks can guess,  
And for what guilty aspect bodes,  
Who stole, and who received the goods.  
They'll question Bell and by his look,  
Detect who 'twas that nimm'd a cloak,  
Make Blenkinsop confess, and 'peach  
Those thieves which he himself did teach."

and knowledge of the Treasurer. The most graceful eulogy of virtue is but disgusting in the lips of a man whose conduct gives the lie direct to his words. W. M. Bell thus exposes the "disgraceful" irregularities of the Prov. Grand Chapter, by its not giving receipts for monies paid by the Treasurer in June 1882 until April 1883 and of 9th April until the 13th 1883, and then not until after repeated applications to J. H. Bentham, and this is the particular receipt, June 1882, he alluded to and showed to justify his remarks. There is no real distinction between open profanity and the mocking of first making a solemn appeal and prayer to our Creator, and then degenerating into levity, or indifference and inattention.

About the eighteenth May, 1883, R. W. Cummins (a Jackall) appoints himself treasurer; demands, without the

"He's no swaggerer, hostess; a tame cheater, he."  
direction of the Chapter, from the Treasurer the receipt and

cash books. The resignation of the Treasurer not being accepted, and no one invested until September following, he did not receive them: but he had new books made, and gave T. Blenkinsop receipt for his subscriptions, although he had been reported, in Chapter, when R. W. Cummins was present, as being more than eighteen calendar months in arrears, and as per Bye-Laws resigned. R. W. Cummins acknowledged that the RECEIPTS were taken by T. Blenkinsop and *passed* to him.

“So I do still by these pickers and stealers.”

To call this kind of action admirable is as logical as to call thieving admirable, and a man who “passed” your watch or your purse an admirer of fine chasing or of sharp edged milling.

Sept. 19th, 1883, the self-appointed treasurer had a finance committee to audit his accounts—such being irregular were not accepted in Chapter, thus T. Blenkinsop is not a Member.

R. W. Cummins was appointed Scribe E. in September, 1882, and could not discharge his duties in May, 1883.

“So like some rats of amphibious nature

He’s neither fit for land or water.”

The Treasurer, Smith, having done the duty for non-residents for several years, and R. W. Cummins having a place of business in town, was told by the Treasurer he would have to attend to the duties of his appointment, replied—“he would see the Chapter dam’d first before he would, let the Chapter contract for the work”—“you are a liar, a dam’d liar.”

“The devil dam’d ‘em black, then cream-fac’d loon!

Where got’st thou that goose look?”

This is what makes a man uncomplaisant to others; so that he retains no deference, nor has any regard to the inclination of those he converseth with. ’Tis a certain mark of a clown, not to mind what either pleases or offends those he is engaged with. And yet one may sometimes meet with men in clean fashionable clothes and smooth shining faces giving an absolute, unbounded swing to their own humour herein, and suffering it to jostle or overbear every thing that stands in its way, with a perfect indifference how people have reason to take it. This is the brutality every one sees and abhors. It is what no one can approve, or be easy with; and therefore it finds no place with those who have any tincture of good-breeding.

In the early part of June, 1883, R. W. Cummins is requested, by the First Principal, to summons the present and past Principals of the Chapter to meet on the 6th, and notify the business to be transacted, he does not follow the instructions

“You know the scandalous meanness of that proceeding, which was used.” given to him, but summonses a Special Meeting of the Chapter without stating the business: this was with another sinister object, at the dictation of A. Potter who stated at this Meeting “that all were satisfied, that the Treasurer’s accounts were accurate at the audit.”

"Like an angry ape,  
Plays such fantastic tricks before high heaven  
As make angels weep."

Thus blinded by their passions, they do not consider what is true, but what is mischievous; they care not what evil they speak, nay they have been so base as to invent and raise false reports, on purpose to blast the reputation of him by whom they think themselves injured. Bereft of truth masonry is bankrupt.

It is a noteworthy fact that, although the Treasurer is assailed on every side, violently proceeded against, and his acts misconstrued, a greater gap is made in their own honour:—he has not complained of you; but asked—"explain to me your remarks." He has appealed against the decisions of the Prov. Grand Superintendent of 7th December, 1883. His afforded his successor all information possible, has frankly and honestly replied to all his enquiries—"return me the Deposit Receipt and I will speedily procure you the £26 ls." which cannot be had than through him personally. They must very soon have found that they could not get the £26 ls. at all, much less for "nothing:" and now wish the Past Treasurer to make affidavit that the Deposit Receipt had been lost, —by whom—stolen.

"As we three did agree  
The Deposit Note to keep;  
So we three do agree  
The Deposit Note to keep:  
Until we three  
Shall disagree."

They appear to forget that principle is as much involved in trifling things as in great things. Integrity is as much compromised in stealing a pin as a purse or the Treasurer's receipts. If stealing a pennyworth involves the principle of honesty, buying a pennyworth involves the principle of benevolence. The shallow fools who had brought to light the flimsy villany to which they had allowed themselves to be egregiously befooled.

"But he that filches from me my good name,  
Robs me of that which not enriches him."

T. Blenkinsop and W. M. Bell complain \* to A. Potter—these silly, meddling, tattlers who are the canker and rust of

"And spur thee on with full as many lies,  
As may be hollo'd in thy treacherous ear."  
Idleness, as idleness is the rust of time, pride themselves, in a narrow sphere, and to take a lead, even in the wrong direction, taking the shadow for the substance. What they complained of we cannot exactly tell, but the reply of A. Potter to a request for a copy of the allegations made by them, was—"T. Blenkinsop replies that the charge they had against the Treasurer was—that he would not produce the accounts (to them as individuals) which ought to have been presented before the meeting of the Chapter, held in September last, and that several accounts were unpaid

\* See page 3, paragraph iv.

which had been standing a long time (not so long as their subscriptions); but, as all had been paid, he has now no

“My swent ounce of man’s flesh! my incoony Jew!”

complaint to make against the Treasurer.” W. M. Bell says—

“They each pull’d different ways, with many an oath,

Arcades ambo, id est—blackguards both.”

“I wish you to demand the particulars of the charge, in order that I may reply to the Treasurer.” (W. M. Bell makes a charge to A. Potter—not the Treasurer.) A. Potter continues—“I am prepared to withdraw the summons on your furnishing W. M. Bell with these particulars.” Nothing could be more

“I smell a rat,

Potter, thou dost prevaricate;

Then put ’em in a bag and shake ’em,

Yourself o’ th’ sudden would mistake ’em,

And not know which is which, unless

You measured their wickedness.”

invidious than this. Let no flickering taper of earth be palmed upon you for its steady light. Should men held up the rush-light of their own conceits to illumine your journey, say to them—“get out of my light!” And in the light of duty, his conduct should be considered reprehensible, what shall be said of a professing Mason who defrauds? Hypocrisy has its own code and key of interpretation. It travesties christianity. It sees every man and every thing in the obscurity of its own dark heart. The genial warmth of honesty it hates. And does he conveniently forget his groundless fabrication!

“I am a misanthrope, and hate mankind.”

They should have sought to have *their* complaint adjusted through the Chapter; failing in this, then to the higher authority: had the proper and masonic rule been followed I have not the least shadow of a doubt all would have been fairly and amicably settled. They have not held in respect the first Principal of the Chapter, neither has A. Potter that due regard to the law published by the authority: to prevent, or endeavour to heal, any jealousies, animosities, or differences, which may unhappily arise between those who ought to be united; there has been *no quarrel*.

“A goodly apple rotten at the heart;

O, what a goodly outside falsehood hath!

Special Meeting of Officers of the Provincial Grand Chapter, 19th July, 1883, also of Chapter De Swinburne same time and place. The Treasurer was precluded the possibility of being present, the cause accepted: the complaint of W. M. Bell was referred to,—on being asked what was done to him he had to complain of, A. Potter said—“I will not allow him to answer that question.” It was the Treasurer’s receipts which W. M. Bell produced to justify his remarks at North Shields that

\* The First Principal announced—“The Treasurer’s accounts having been found correct and signed for, there was no ground for complaint against him and never was there any complaint to the Chapter.”

were returned to him much quicker than he anticipated. Is this not sufficient evidence that A. Potter did not wish it to be there exposed that he was accessory after the fact of W. M. Bell being the receiver of stolen property? Having reference to communications on un-masonic actions the letter of one Companion was thrown by A. Potter over his shoulder into the face of the other, saying—"I do not keep copies of my communications."

The backbiters, slanderers and vilifiers may see themselves fully represented as in a true mirror; and detestable as the spectacle naturally appears, much more so does it seem when masonically explained. The true Mason is no blasphemer. The clauses of the Royal Arch Regulations and the Constitutions, respectively, were referred to; but, A. Potter repeatedly said, when such clauses were mentioned,—“what have I to do with that?”—“I cannot see it!”—“you did not! you did not!! do you give me the lie?”

“Justice, that sits and frowns where private laws

Exclude soft mercy from an honest cause.”

“I will not allow you to defend the Treasurer.” Nay, he was, by one, struck so plainly, that I too could well feel his blows; and so firmly that I could readily understand. Thus you might suppose nature to have endowed him with a skull of such impenetrable substance, that all the iron hail in the batteries of reason pitter patter there, as harmless as boiled peas on an Egyptian breast-plate,—that it needed a surgical operation to get it into his brain. W. J. Ward said—“it is most desirable we should know something more—what is the cause, and how has this all come about?” A. Potter said—“I will supply a copy of W. M. Bell's complaint, and that the whole shall be commenced *de novo*.”

“By outward show let's not be cheated;  
An ass should like an ass be treated.”

At the Meeting of the three Principals (A. Potter, J. H. Bentham, and W. J. Ward) of the Province, 29th November,

“O villains, vipers, dam'd without redemption;  
Dogs, easily won to fawn on any man;”

“Three Judases, each one thrice worse than Judas.”

1883; application having previously been made for the copy promised to be supplied, of W. M. Bell's complaint, by A. Potter, who refused to supply the same and stated—“he would not allow the subject to be re-opened;” application was also made for the receipts of the past Treasurer, the books and the annual returns of the Chapter, 24, to the Provincial Grand Chapter for the year ending 1882, to be produced at this meeting;—the trade receipts, in Cummins possession, were only produced.

“And yet with canting, slight and cheat,  
I will serve their turn to do the feat.”

A. Potter was asked why, Blenkinsop, Cummins, Taylor, Mars-ton, and Campbell were present, replied,—“they are present at my request by W. M. Bell's desire.” The tribe of sycophants,

who are never tired of singing his praise, decreed, as he requested, that it was his prerogative to abrogate the law in this regicidal court. At the conclusion Cummins thanked him for the very able and impartial manner in which he, as a Justice of the Peace, had conducted the case on *their* behalf.

"Judas brought them from Rome, to make a league of confederacy."

W. M. Bell\* had all he desired. That which the Treasurer asked for was denied him, all he could say and quote, also that of another, was of no avail to vindicate his character, from as false and as foul an accusation as ever brought sorrow to the mind of man. I am convinced that, notwithstanding the disgraceful efforts which had been made to prejudice the fair hearing of this case: that they proceed to *vilify* the Treasurer they had already *traduced*, and the attempts which had been made to rouse party passions, in order that they might escape the penalties of their misdeeds. Who can be secure against false accusations or erroneous judgments? There is no truth in him, besides, his oath is no stronger than the word of a tapster; they are both the confirmer of false reckonings. Here is a man owning frankly to a downright lie without the slightest appearance of shame; and yet, ever since he had learnt to speak, had been told that falsehood was the most horous of evils.

"Something savouring  
Of tyranny, which will ignoble make you,  
Yea, scandalous to the world."

The misrepresentations of the malignant confederacy with regard to the Treasurer's accounts, and the barefaced insinuations thrown out afterwards, will I hope cause others to be as well prepared, to enable them to act up to the force of their convictions and facts, and not allow themselves to be browbeaten by those who have revolutionized and seek their ruin. I cannot allow these base quendos and flash statements to remain unchallenged. It is a mean and low practice to inveigle a man into criminating himself by not allowing him to have all the evidence he asked for and to deny those who did speak; they betray themselves to every censure worse than drunkards. This is not the conditions the enquiry was promised to be held under, made by A. Potter on the 19th July.

Their ends were evil, and their purposes narrow; they degraded the Immutable Laws of a great and honourable association; wisdom, beauty and strength are departed: they are the tares and the thorns which destroy the vineyard; hypocrites whose humility is wrapped in a cloak. Ichabod may be engraved on its ruins.

J. H. Bentham, to whom the money had been paid, declined

\* Did he as First Principal of Chapter 24 receive the required consent of Grand Chapter to publish, 9th July, 1884, the "Extract from Minutes of Grand Chapter of 7th May, 1884, signed, certified, Shadwell H. Clarke, G.S.E."

to admit that he had been repeatedly applied to for the receipts

“If you are born to honour show it now”

“Thou canst not then be false to any man”

(see copy letter book) for such payments, and said—“he did not recollect it—it was out of his business.” Had A. Potter, who then held the Treasurer’s receipts for payments in his hand, been the impartial judge, he should have put the question to J. H. Bentham in such a manner as to have had a reply, whether he caused another to be added to the roll of perjurers or not;—he preferred to

“Play judge and executioner, all himself.”

The functions of a Grand Superintendent should be discharged by a man of fortune, who being guided solely by duty, philanthropy, and honourable ambition, would afford the surest pledge of independence; it is this that constitutes the dignity and majesty of the order, exalts its character and establishes public morals. Would discard those needy individuals who cannot live without addition to their income, who cannot be their own master, because their principles are more decayed than their fortune, and whose urgent wants engender political immorality. Pitiful! When a man of a certain rank stoops to solicit the appointment, there is an end of all independence and dignity of character, he is sold before-hand.

They are so bad themselves, think and speak ill of others is not only a bad thing, but a sign of a bad man,—when men are bad themselves, they are glad of an opportunity to censure others and endeavour to bring things to a level: hoping it will be some justification of their own faults, if they can but make others appear equally guilty. Innocence shall make false accusation blush, and tyranny tremble. Abused by some most villainous knave, some base notorious knave, some scurvy fellow, O, heaven, that such companions thou couldst unfold and put in every honest hand a whip, to lash the rascals naked through the provinces to Morpeth!

On the 7th December, 1883. “We, A. Potter, J. H. Bentham and W. J. Ward, in examining into the complaint made by W. M. Bell and T. Blenkinsop \* against you, and after a careful investigation, have unanimously come to the conclusion that W. M. Bell and T. Blenkinsop were correct in the observations they made respecting your accounts as Treasurer of De Swinburne Chapter.” This conclusion required them to accept nothing as fit which is capable of being made apparrant to the reason, but that it was outside the region of their enquiry.

“I utterly abhor, yea, from my soul refuse yea for his judge.”

1.—9th April, 1883, the sum of £4 4s. for dues, due February, 1883, and 2s. 6d. fine as per Bye Laws, was

\* “I have now no complaint to make against the Treasurer,” 22 June, 1883.

paid by the Treasurer for De Swinburne Chapter, not earlier, see page 1, last paragraph.

- 2.—9th April, 1883, there was then due to the Treasurer of De Swinburne Chapter, by the Provincial Grand Chapter, the sum of £16 4s. 3d. from June 1882—paid March, 1884.†
- 3.—10th April, 1883, they complain at North Shields. There is no account of any debt unpaid by the Treasurer standing longer unpaid than their subscription.
- 4.—13th April, 1883, the Treasurer of Chapter 24 received receipts for monies paid to the Provincial Grand Chapter for dues ending December, 1881 and 1882.
- 5.—14th April, 1883, the First Principal is requested by the Treasurer of De Swinburne Chapter to summons the Finance Committee to audit his accounts.
- 6.—18th April, 1883, the Prov.G. Registrar says—“I regret you should have trouble in enquiring into the neglect of no returns being sent in time, so far as Provincial Grand Chapter is concerned a full explanation was given in Provincial Grand Chapter and the fine of 2s. 6d. has been paid to the Treasurer, and now I think the best way is to take no more notice and let the Scribe E. (Cummins) be more careful in future.”
- 7.—21st April, 1883, there being no acknowledgement of the request of the Treasurer, by the Scribe E., he deposited the balance of his accounts £36 1s. in the Branch Bank of England in Newcastle-upon-Tyne.
- 8.—26th April, 1883, with six hours' notice, the Treasurer presented his books and accounts for examination by the Finance Committee of De Swinburne Chapter, and were then found correct, as per copy from Cash Book, viz.—

Receipts .....	£87 0 2
Payments .....	£50 19 2
Balance * .....	36 1 0
	£87 0 2

“The auditing of the foregoing accounts was delayed owing to a serious illness in the Treasurer's family. At the Annual Meeting of the Provincial Grand Chapter (and in the absence of the Treasurer) Comp. W. M. Bell, H. of this Chapter, made remarks derogatory to the character of the Treasurer (all dues to the Provincial Grand Chapter having previously been paid), and the Treasurer having written to the First Principal, requesting a meeting of the Finance Committee to be called at

† Putting the Accounts thus—who is debtor?—who is defaulter??  
 A. Potter owes Smith and has been for years .....£20 4 3  
 Smith owes A. Potter and was due a few days ..... 4 4 0  
£16 0 3

once to enable him to answer the insinuations of Comp. W. M. Bell and others, and such meeting not having been called within seven days, the Treasurer has this day placed his balance \* in the Bank of England, Newcastle Branch, and resigned his office of Treasurer.

Newcastle-on-Tyne,

PAUL O. SMITH, P.Z.,

April 21st, 1883.

Treasurer, Chapter No. 24.

April 26th, 1883, *Examined the above and found correct—*

T. BLENKINSOP, P.Z. N. MEIN, P.Z. R. W. CUMMINS, S.E.

In the presence of PAUL O. SMITH, P.Z."

9.—7th June, 1883, A. Potter stated at the Special Meeting — "that all were satisfied that the Treasurer's accounts were accurate at the audit."

10.—22nd June, 1883, T. Blenkinsop, through A. Potter, says—"having paid all accounts I have now no complaint to make against the Treasurer." The same must in justice also apply to his joint complainer W. M. Bell.

11.—There has not been application for any sum, then due, left unpaid by the Treasurer when he resigned.

Their complaints were premature and unfounded as shown by themselves—they deliver brawling judgments, unabashed. From first to last they scattered truth as chaff before them. Adapted dictatorial tactics to silence truth, flung sweeping and disgraceful charges broadcast, poured out volleys of financial statements which proved to be "cooked," by St. Nicholas and a Ward not in Chancery, the champions of financial morality attempting a financial juggle, and that due to cupidity, their knowledge had been superficial and imperfect; this unlooked for result, was forged by the high-handed enterprise of the great Northumbrian himself, whose diseased imaginations exceed the bounds of discretion, in exaggerating and misrepresenting.

"Throw plenty of clay, and some will stick."

Therefore, the remarks of W. M. Bell, 17th May, 1883, were slanderous, and he who slanders the husband and father, the bread winner, vilifies his wife and children.

The dread of incurring the displeasure of A. Potter and the consequent punishment for speaking the truth has been the cause why so few have dared to speak to him. This is the man whose intellect and attainments become the despot of the Orderly Room, he descends no doubt to false witness;

"May the grass wither from thy feet; the woods  
Deny thee shelter! earth a home! the dust  
A grave! and heaven her God!"

has not the capacity to apprehend abstract truth. Indeed, it must be admitted he has disgraced himself, and injured the fame of that order whose principles he belied, and

\* Can the same be said of him as Treasurer of Northumberland Chapter.

"Since there is none but fears a future state ;  
 And when the most obdurate swear they do not,  
 Their trembling hearts belie their boastful tongues."

whose morality he trampled upon. We cannot set up an inquisition to punish men because they want common sense or common prudence or because we cannot get them to adopt our views of propriety.

"Within fifteen days the Treasurer is to send to W. M. Bell through A. Potter an apology and withdraw the imputation, also that he pay a fine of twenty shillings." The Treasurer  
 "Virtue itself of vice must pardon beg."

of De Swinburne Chapter deserves to be respected and applauded, not to be derided and scorned; while his motives are honourable, and his demeanour dignified and proper. His acts are not stained by malevolence and prejudice or polluted; his morals are irreproachable; his opinions are orthodox, fair and unblemished. Surrounded by intriguers with secret and evil designs. Calumny and falsehood constantly overwhelmed all that was good, beneath the mass of evil that was invented. Heaven that made him honest, made him more than ever Queen did, when she made a C. B. Honesty needs no money, disguise nor ornament. This fact reveals the secret of the hostility evinced towards the Treasurer.

According to the obligations imposed by your oath, how could your religious feelings permit you openly to violate that oath as you have done; your crime is a great one,—a conspiracy for the commission of a violent act is stopped as soon as we seize the arm that holds the powder. But a conspiracy to influence the minds of others has no end.

No wonder Carlyle and Paine, et hoc genus omne, opposed and stigmatised the order. He that professes little, raises no envy; but men do like to mark those who have taken a high stand among the virtuous of society. Knowing this, and that Masonry prescribes a code of Ethics, it becomes all to take heed lest, the ignorant or the malicious might triumph.

Let me unkick the oath 'twixt thee and me,  
 And yet not so, for with a kiss 'twas made."

18th December, 1883, the Treasurer intimated that he would appeal to the Supreme Grand Chapter against the decision of the 7th December, 1883, of A. Potter:—on the ground of improper reception of evidence and misdirection, and that his decision was against the weight of evidence; and referring him to the transactions of the Fund Committee, 9th April, 1883, when the dues and fine were paid—to the Finance Committee meeting, 26th April, 1883, when his accounts were audited and found correct—to the Special Meeting 7th June, 1883 when he, A. Potter, said that "*all* were satisfied, that the Treasurer's accounts were accurate at the audit"—by the reply of T. Blenkinsop, 22nd June, 1883, "having paid all accounts,

I have now no complaint to make against the Treasurer"—and also, to his having summoned only those in favour of one side, and gave no notice to produce evidence for the other, neither did he produce that evidence asked for in his possession. This letter he said he did not receive. I am afraid this is a failing he is troubled with, having heard him, 19th July, 1883, deny the receipt of another's, but when put to closely, had the letter in his hand.

"Why dost thou, tyrant, boast abroad thy wicked works of praise."

Within three days after the 18th December, 1883, W. H. Bell announced in the street "have you heard that Smith has been proclaimed," previous to hearing him make this statement he had told the same to others.

On the 27th December, 1883, A. Potter, under date of the 24th, "suspended the Treasurer from all functions of the Royal Arch

"Thrust from the company of awful men."  
 "Arch" thought to obey God more than man, he could not plead guilty to a charge, preferred by him, of which he was INNOCENT, and of which he was reminded of in the communication to him on the 18th and also of the intention to appeal against his decision and was again referred to on the 27th. He is thus *illegally*, and without good and sufficient cause, *suspended* from his Royal Arch functions.

Were all the courts of law and equity removed to the lower empire with Mephistopheles as judge and a jury of nine such as Judas Iscariot their judgement would be much more preferred. A little too much like holding a candle to that Him who must not be named, and who ought to be suppressed, not encouraged—snuffed out of the order for the order's good, not illuminated.

Thus we have the mortifying instance of the consequence of base conduct as the means of suspension of one of our most intelligent and useful members. Be ye ever disposed to honour good men for their virtues, and wise men for their knowledge; not for your reputation only, but for the reputation of others. They look with an evil and envious eye upon the good that is in others, and do what they can to discredit their commendable qualities; thinking their own characters lessened by them, they greedily entertain, and industriously publish, what may raise themselves upon the ruins of other men's reputations. It cannot be without hurt to him, but the loss to the Chapter for the want of those emphatically splendid examples or moral grandure is so much the greater! It is odds but the charge, by passing from one to the other of them is aggravated beyond measure by each adding something to it. The consequence of which may be dangerous one way or the other—the injured and his friends will take the first opportunity to revenge the slander and defamation.

In February, 1884, the Finance Committee of the Chapter 24, W. M. Bell in the chair, order that application be made to the past Treasurer to induce him to sign an affidavit that *he* "Win us with honest trifles to betray us in deepest consequences." He had *lost* the *Deposit Note*\*—this he did not do, neither will he I hope ever be so simple as to comply; for they who took, to *impound as instructed*,† the receipts from the Treasurer on the 26th April, 1883, are the only persons able to account for the same; the receipts and deposit receipt are as money to the treasurer in his transactions with the Chapter; therefore, we may yet here of their demanding of him the receipts for payments for of such the deposit note is one of them and signed for by the finance committee, but it is known in whose hands these receipts have been and they know too well that at any cost the deposit receipt cannot be exchanged for cash *without it and his presence for the same*—be assured you would not have heard anything of this had they been able to procure the £36 ls.

I am astonished at the effrontery to injure the well-being of the Treasurer by the most glaring acts of injustice and partiality to the meanness of dissimulation. Wondering specula-

"Thou dost wrong him, thou dissembler, thou."

tion, prying curiosity, and ill-witted sagacity are alike at fault, in their natural anxiety to penetrate and unravel the inexplicable and would be singular and mysterious disappearance of the Deposit Receipt. He must be a cipher—why, then, should we have to tolerate that which is the result of mere apathy? being capricious and tyrannical we cannot command for him the deference which will be sure to follow the expert. His ruling ever oppressive, has become positively odious, smouldring discontent and intrigue, with a shibboleth of disaffection is now fostered.

It must not be judged by any rule of logic, to elucidate and analyse the subject. That such special knowledge of various and varying rules and methods of action as are required to obtain practical issues on the given subject, according to circumstances, and according to the men to be dealt with for the time being. Those who have seen how deep-rooted are the wrong impressions and prejudices, that one is struck with

03231 \* Bank of England Branch, Newcastle, 21 April, 1883.

I do hereby certify that Mr. Paul O. Smith of 43 Side, Newcastle, has this day paid into the Branch of the Bank of England at Newcastle the Sum of Thirty six pounds and one shilling the same to be withdrawn upon the personal application of the Depositor and the surrender of this Certificate.

For the Governor and Company of the Bank of England,

£36 ls. Od.

F. B. Fairley, Agent.

Entd. John Braithwaite.

† Who bribed the Deacons to steal the hand of the Baptist in a case richly jewelled from Antioch? Seized by the Corsican at Valetta, who transferred to his own finger the gem which sparkled on the dead hand, carelessly observed to the Grand Master "you may keep the carrion" he did, and afterwards, handed the relic to the Emperor Paul.

amazement in reading their accounts and statements; there are few wise men, and fools without number, the assent of the greater part of mankind to an assertion only goes to show that is folly.

“Where and what art thou, execrable shape.”

Thus the errors and imperfect judgments prevail and so bringing odium and ridicule upon the fraternity, seems quite incomprehensible, unless ignorance has caused him to judge from a prejudiced point. The ill-judged violence first produced, and caused to be continued under the force of those very circumstances which he did not wish to comprehend, and consequently could not wisely control or direct, no one can doubt or deny, as being offensive and objectionable. It would be a difficult task for a very clever man indeed to say what he is aiming at,—unless he is stopped in time he may lead the fraternity with cunning and astuteness quite incompatible with his character and position into irretrievable obliquy and derision.

Late, but not too late, I have to state that the Treasurer has been summoned to attend by command of A. Potter all meetings of Provincial Grand Charter, and also by W. M. Bell, A. Robertson and R. W. Cummins to all meetings of Chapter de Swinburne; thus summoned he attended, was ordered to retire, declined, referring W. M. Bell to the law on his case, and the whole circumstances briefly—T. Blenkinsop called out

“This is no place, this house is but a butchery.”

“shall we put him out.” Is this a charge of insubordination, after being summoned to be present, does it not prove the existence of a premeditated insult and seeking for revenge.

“Nerves can true reconciliation grow

Where wounds of deadly hate have pierced so deep.”

For this evil speaking of what A. Potter would have you believe are the Treasurer's *evil ways*,—who knows in the chance of things, and the mutability of human affairs, whose kindness he may stand in need of sooner than he would. So that did he consult his honour he would refrain from *vilifying*, if he considered the cost the hot simoon of *slandrous* and reproachful words are. Makes himself a martyr, and goes to the stake for an abstract dogma and an unprovable faith, which are not of the least good to society which way soever they go: and now he betrays his province and sacrifices his most cherished principles to save his own worthless skin or to improve his shabby fortune. Lost in the darkness of his moral night he creates devils after his own image, and is himself the thing he fashions, no creature between earth and sky is so cruel or so unjust as he. He enslaves his brother, and punishes him because he is a slave; he partitions society, where the powerful have all the privileges and his enslaved brother has all the burthens to bear, makes laws of supreme humanity and justice while he oppresses those he has downtrodden, and carries tribute to tyrants: believes in

that Providence which is on the side of the big battalions, and is never weary of proclaiming what ever may be the most iniquitous; and with his feet in the mudheaps of sinfulness and wrong strives to put all in the shade—he is without the seal of the Divine on his forehead. The hypocrite had left his mark, and stood in naked ugliness—he was a man who stole the livery of the court of heaven to serve the devil in.

Thus saith Cromwell, when it was first moved to proceed capitally against the King “that if any man moveth this with design, he should think him the greatest traitor in the world.”

Thus saith A. Potter, 7th December, 1883,—“I\* have been assisted by J. H. Bentham and W. J. Ward in examining into the complaint made by W. M. Bell against you, and after

“Do not your juries give their verdict,

As if they felt the cause, not heard it?”

a careful investigation we have unanimously come to the conclusion that W. M. Bell and T. Blenkinsop were quite correct in the observations they made respecting your accounts as Treasurer of De Swinburne Chapter and that as you could produce no proof that W. M. Bell had ever mentioned the name of your wife or family it is highly reprehensible for you publicly to make such a charge against him, that he had vilified them and showed a spirit of vindictiveness in persevering with the charge after W. M. Bell denied ever having alluded to them—

As false

As air, as water, wind, or sandy earth;

As fox to lamb: as wolf to heifer's calf;

Perd to the hind, or stepdame to her son.”

we therefore decide that within fifteen days you must send through me a written apology to W. M. Bell, withdraw the imputation—also that you pay a fine of Twenty shillings.”

“He thus gives sentence, at times,

On one man for another's crimes.”

I am informed that you will not join them in giving a guarantee to the Bank by which they could get the money as you had no doubt that it was surreptitiously taken with the other receipts—you must be perfectly aware that the Deposit Note† was of no value to any person until you had signed it and that there must be a groundless charge against some members of the Chapter and your refusal must be damaging to your character. (This is the invention of the foolishest and most fertile schemer, whose causeless affronts are sure to be re-paid with interest in some form or another. A lame and impotent conclusion of which it is difficult to say whether A. Potter or S. Clark shows to most disadvantage.)

Thus saith the Treasurer, 18th December, 1883,—“in reply to yours of the 7th inst., I have to state that considering

\* See page 9 last lines † See page 16 No. 10. ‡ See Copy of on page 19.

you summoned only those in favour of one side, and as you stated were there at your request and at W. M. Bell's desire to be present against me, and giving me no notice to produce evidence and not producing that which I asked for, and that documentary evidence I had and drew your special attention to and my remarks as well as those of another you would not allow to be taken in my defence. Under these circumstances I shall be compelled to Appeal to the Supreme Grand Chapter on your decision against me of the 7th December, 1883."

"The same case several ways adjudge!"

Thus saith the Royal Arch Regulations, sec. 37, p. 12.—  
 "The Decision of the Grand Superintendants shall be final unless an Appeal shall be made therefrom to the Supreme Grand Chapter, but no Appeal shall be entertained unless transmitted to the Grand Scribe E. within three calendar months from the date of the decision appealed against."—"He who feels aggrieved by the decision of any other Masonic authority or jurisdiction, than the Supreme Grand Chapter, may Appeal against such decision."

"And look before you ere you leap,

For as you sow, ye're like to reap."

On the 4th March, 1884, within the time prescribed, the Appeal against the decision of the 7th December, 1883 was sent to the Grand Scribe E. and acknowledged, not as *the*

"This is falser than vowe made in wine."

Appeal, but a document purporting to be an Appeal from a *sentence of suspension*. Never was there a statement made more calculated to mislead and deceive, one of the strangest escapades known; might be accused of profane confidence in the strength and number of his kindred. A copy of the same had also been sent to the Provincial Grand Superintendent. The appellant complied with the law of appeal, not so with the opposite party.

"To squander paper, and spare ink,

Or else men of their words, some think."

The Deposit Note\* issued to you as its Treasurer having been lost, (by whom) by declining to join with usual indemnity the Bank requires—I must point out to you that this is a course of conduct that on reflection you cannot I am sure desire to adhere—and I trust you will see the propriety of putting yourself right on all these points and so obviate the necessity for the intervention of the Grand Chapter. (This is neither desirable nor gracious being unexplained and unexplainable. A lame and impotent conclusion of which it is difficult to say whether S. Clark or A. Potter shows to most disadvantage.)

The Appeal clearly shows that the decision of the 7th December, 1883, was unjust—what makes the injustice the more unjust is the act of suspension by the Provincial Grand Superintendent after he had been told his decision of that date

\* See Copy of on page 19.

would be, owing to its injustice, be appealed against, yet he makes a charge of insubordination before the more serious charges had been adjudicated upon by Appeal. It is not right that we should be compelled to comply with the grossest of injustice, he would, as in this case, deprive you of that right which he is in honour bound to see maintained. *There is no fault whatever against the Treasurer*, that which he had been compelled to leave undone was through sickness and family bereavements, is venial, and this cannot be held to be a crime to merit such a sentence as that *appealed* against. Humanitarianism, mingling into sentimentality has been unjust to its own

There has been no appeal against the sentence of suspension because the suspension was for not complying with the unjust decision of the 7th December, 1883. No sophistry or ingeniousness could obscure, and no representation, however audacious could explain away the right of shewing the appeal against the decision of 7th December, 1883, unless A. Potter who perhaps with intencion and malice forethought, provoked by his own conduct rendered himself unworthy of obedience; because, hitherto, the fraternity have had no reason to provide for an event which they have presumed would never happen.

To the Grand Chapter as an appellate tribune, having good and well-founded cause of complaint, without let or hinderance, being aggrieved, you have a right to appeal and to be heard before you are called on to apologise, if you do not, your appeal will not be heard—thus doing away with the right of appeal. Is it that they do not wish to be convinced, but that they wish to smother up the affair in circumlocution, and strand it by delay? See what the old lawyer demands in *David Copperfield*. Or, to use a more pleasant simile, it is the Aaron's rod that swallows up every other form of honour the be-all and the end-all of all.

To account for the many perjuries they were so often guilty of, and the oaths they readily took, merely as they found it suited their interest; they magnified the obligation of an oath, yet in their own case dispensed with the Laws of God, the Ordinances of the Realm, the Ten Commandments, the Litany, all

“Oaths are but words, and words are but wind.”

Oaths, Civil, Military, and Religious. We are now told that the oaths we have taken are not to be explained according to the interpretation of the masonic law: No! How then? Surely according to the interpretation of A. Potter and S. Clark.

“Virtue returns into vice and honour into avarice.”

When we think how the Committee of General Purposes appear to be just as capable of eloquent defence as any other, we are grateful to men who have at least an atom of honour, and who can tell us with absolute certainty that a lie is a lie now and always, and cannot by any expensiveness of rhetoric

be translated into the truth. A humble lesson, it may be, yet still in many ways reassuring to those of us who have been led to believe that in mortals black may be white, and white black. It may not, then be disagreeable, if we endeavour succinctly to gauge their meaning; rightly understood and properly appreciated, they disclose the true relations actually subsisting, and never has there been a more startling combination underneath the surface veneer of society found within the four seas.

Even in morals figured most unblushingly as cheats—weighed honour in mercenary scales—did nothing to induce and encourage virtue; were most shamefully vicious in making the public mind drunk with calumny, rancour, vituperation and declamation. They have lost their way, yet rather than try to get out of the difficulty by retracing their steps, they are ready to consider almost any scheme, be it ever so wild, which may give them a chance of avoiding the humiliating necessity of admitting their mistake. Professing to be immaculate and unselfish they do in a day mischief which in many years cannot be repaired, unless purified of pollution and guided by wiser councils. Is there any act of the Grand Orient equal to this?

Finally, to make allusion to that which we have seen has not been without very serious consequence, am certain the late Treasurer is punished for an offence for which he is in no way responsible, it is very hard he should be so un-masonically treated and judged, when they see their error, as likely as not, they are incapable as to how it may be corrected, and in attempting to extricate themselves to be beguiled into more blunders. Having cancelled their own rules and thus sanctioned a practise unwise. Indeed it would be most difficult to conceive any thing more virulent, unscrupulous and unjustifiable. He must feel deeply the harshness of this treatment, especially at the hands of the Officers of the Grand Chapter who resorted to the meanest, the disgraceful, the memorable, the indelible, the never to be forgotten artifices in order to stifle the truth and shelve the due consideration of the Appeal against the decision of the 7th December; and in the face of this fact, he would be more than human if the action of the Grand Chapter in all the circumstances I have related above, did not embitter those feelings, and sometimes sway him to exhibit a want of confidence in Masonic promises, come from whom they may.

May God avert the omen!

Tynemouth, June, 1885.

By order of the E.C.

\* \* \* I have been favoured, since the death of R. Smaile, with his notes and certified copies of all the correspondence and appeal on this subject, which will be collated, placed parallel, with explanatory notes, for your early perusal. Special reference to G. S. E.'s statement in February, 1884, quoting the legal advice of the G. R. and also to the expressed opinion of the G. R. Decr., 1884. on Dupuch's case.