

Reprinted from THE FREEMASONS' MAGAZINE and MASONIC MIRROR
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BASTARD MASONRY IN ENGLAND.

We have just received a Transatlantic Exchange, "Pomeroy's Democrat," containing under the above expressive, if not very elegant heading, the following pungent exposé of this latest innovation—the Rite of Mizraim. As supplementary to our already strongly expressed opinion in connection with this subject, we cannot do better than allow our readers the advantage of perusing our contemporary's article *in extenso*.

If the signs of the times do not deceive us greatly, France, that hot-house of Masonic so-called degree manufacturing, will be outstripped by some of the crack-brained degree-mongers in England. It is not many years since that the so-called "Rite of Memphis" was tabooed by authority in England and the effort to establish it failed. The desire for novelty, however, was not thus to be squelched, and not long since under the file-leadership of Bro. Robert Wentworth Little, a young Mason, possessed of some literary ability and a *cacoethes scribendi*, revived and termed it "The Ecclesiastical and Military Order of the Red Cross of Rome and Constantine" as a kind of opposition, if not a substitute for the long established "Religious and Military Order of Knights Templar." Why the Order of Red Cross, which is based on the fiery Cross, which Constantine saw in the Heavens, should have the prefix of "Ecclesiastical," we cannot imagine, for it has no religious ties—Christianity—as has the "Order of the Temple," but passing that by, it has made considerable headway, and would appear to be gaining ground, its Sovereign Grand Master, being that very enthusiastic and active Mason, the Earl of Bective, better known as Lord Kenils.

Not satisfied, however, with the success which has so far attended the establishment of the Constantinian Order, the desire for further novelty it would appear, has seized upon the leaders of the same, and, as will

be seen from the following, they have annexed to it the bastard "Rite of Mizraim" with its 90° and of which the illegitimate Rite of Memphis was an offshoot. Says the London "Freemason"—

"An Assembly of the Conservators General of the Rite of Mizraim was held at Freemasons' Tavern, Great Queen Street, on Wednesday, the 28th inst., for the purpose of opening the 'Beehive' Sanctuary of Levites, the 33° of the Rite, a Supreme Council General of the 90° having been regularly formed under the authority conveyed in a diploma granted to the Ill. Bro. Cremieux, 33° of the Rite Ecossais and a member of the Grand College of Rites in France.

The sanctuary having been formally opened, between eighty and a hundred brethren were duly admitted by sevens at a time, and obligated as members of the 33° and that number, large as it may appear, would doubtless have been still greater had it not been for the extreme inclemency of the weather, and the absence of many brethren from town for the Christmas holidays.

In our next we will furnish more particulars of this interesting meeting, merely adding that, although the Rite is now attached to the Red Cross Order for administrative purposes, and the thirty-seven conclaves on the roll are authorized to confer it, yet all non-Christian Master Masons are eligible for reception into the Order.

The Right Hon. the Earl of Bective is the Sovereign Grand Master, (nominate), and the next two officers are also Provincial Grand Masters in the Craft, as well as distinguished members of other branches of Freemasonry. Under such auspices the Rite is destined to attain a very high position in the Masonic world, and we heartily wish it every success."

This reads very well on paper, but we doubt very strongly the accuracy of the most important part of the statement, and that is, that it was "formed under the au-

thority conveyed in a diploma granted to the Ill. Bro. Cremieux, 33^o of the Rite Ecossais, and a member of the Grand College of Rites in France."

Ill Bro. Cremieux is the Sov. Grand Commander and Grand Master *ad vitam* of the Supreme Council of France, which body, unlike the Grand Orient of France, strictly confines itself to the cultivation of the regular and legitimate degrees of the Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite, and has no entangling alliances, especially with Rites concocted by degree-sellers in opposition to itself. Ill Bro. Adolphe Cremieux has hitherto borne the reputation of being a Freemason of the most conservative character, and should the statement made in the London "Freemason" prove to be correct, we have not the least doubt but that both the American Supreme Councils of the Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite would withdraw their recognition and cease all correspondence with the Supreme Council of France, as they have done with the Grand Orient.

We are aware that the desire to reach high position in the Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite in England is not so rapid as many would desire in that country; and the grade of 33^o is there guarded with the greatest care and watchfulness by the Ill. Brethren composing the Supreme Council of England and Wales, and the Dependencies of Great Britain. (This wise caution on its part has given much dissatisfaction to aspirants, among whom Bro. Robert Wentworth Little, and his patron, Lord Bective, may be classed; and hence their desire to run an opposition of their own, with the post-fix 90^o tacked on to their other dignities, instead of 33^o.)

In order that our readers may the better understand what the Rite of Misraim is, we shall briefly sketch its origin, &c.

The Rite of Misraim was first promulgated in Italy, in 1805, and was said to have been brought from Egypt by a learned philosopher of that country, named Ananiah. It is said its founders were some Masons who had been refused admission to the Supreme Council of the Scotch Rite then organized at Milan. It was established in France in 1814, and was to be heard of in some Lodges in Paris some ten

years ago, but even then it was not recognized by the Grand Orient.

It consists of ninety degrees, which are divided into four series—symbolic, philosophic, mystical, and cabalistic—and in each series are seventeen classes. The names of this, more than any other of the Rites, proved that the founders must have sorely tested their mental faculties. They appear, indeed, to have been driven to their wits end, for the forty-ninth and fiftieth bear the very expressive titles of "Chaos the first and second," while the fifty-second rejoices in the somewhat profane designation of "Supreme Commander of the Stars."

At the fifty-ninth and fifty-sixth the comic element predominates; they are the "Washer" and "Bellows-blower." Many of the degrees pretend to be founded upon and borrowed from the Rites of Ancient Egypt; but allowing that the Rite may have in many degrees an eminently philosophical character it is altogether too complicated and diffuse ever to be practiced.

One of its chiefs, Marc Bedarride, in 1835, published an elaborate work, exponent of its principles, under the title of "De l'Ordre Maconnique de Mizraim," from which we learn that the legend of the third degree is abolished in this Rite. H.A.B. is said to have returned to his family after the completion of the Temple, and to have passed the remainder of his days in peace and opulence. The legend substituted for that admitted by all other Rites is carried back to the days of Lamech, whose son Jubal, under the name of Hario-Jubal-Abi, is reported to have been slain by three traitors, Hagava, Hakima, and Harremda.

The traditions of this system are full of anachronisms, historical events and characters, separated by hundreds of years, being made to figure on the same scene at the same time; and if any of our English brethren desire to cultivate it, or any other such Masonic counterfeit, we sincerely hope they will not call it Masonry, but give the elephant they have paid their money for its appropriate name, "Humbug."

SPURIOUS MASONIC ORDERS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE FREEMASONS' MAGAZINE AND MASONIC MIRROR.

Dear Sir and Brother,—I observe that an attempt is now being made to establish in England "The Order of Mizraim." Were this order introduced simply as an independent secret society, and as unconnected with Freemasonry, there could be no objection raised thereto. Its claims would not then clash with those of legally constituted Masonic bodies, already established, and those who joined the Society, would not expect to obtain thereby any Masonic rank, which would be acknowledged either at home or abroad.

From the published reports, however, it appears that the promoters profess to hold meetings, and confer degrees under the Authority of the "Grand Collège des Rites" of France, as conveyed in a diploma, granted to the Ill. Bro. Cremieux, 33° of the "Rite Ecossois."

This appearance of legality may lead many Masons to join the Order without examining its claims to be considered a genuine branch of general Freemasonry. There is no power the "Grand Collège des Rites" of France reserves more strictly to itself than that of conferring the high degrees and establishing Councils or other Masonic authorities. In the "Statuts Généraux" of the Grand Orient it is expressly stated that "La Grand Collège des Rites a seul le droit d'initier aux derniers degrés de la Franc Mac. du Rite Ecossois Ancien et Accepté ainsi que les grades équivalents dans tous les autres rites reconnus par le Grand Orient."

And the utmost power it confers on any of its members is, "Lui donnant pouvoir sous notre autorité d'établir et de constituer provisoirement et sous notre ratification a peine de nullité, des Loges de perfection, Chap. Col. et Cons. de la haute Maçonnerie. Mais seulement dans les états et empires ou il n'existe régulièrement aucun des dits corps Maçonniques".

I have underlined the above words, because they show not only that no member of the "Collège des Rites" has the power to establish *definitively* any lodge, chapter, college, or council anywhere but that he has no power to establish them in any country where there exist any regularly established Masonic authority, while here in England the Grand Lodge, Grand Chapter, and Supreme Council of the 33° of the Ancient and Accepted Rite, are all acknowledged by the Grand Orient of France, and are in fraternal and amicable relations with that body.

The Order of Mizraim, moreover, is not, and never has been acknowledged, as a legitimate Masonic body by the Grand Orient of France, or by any other existing masonic authority.

It was originally compiled, accordingly to Dr. Oliver in 1782, or according to Clavel, in 1805, by several Masons who had been refused admission into the Supreme Council of the Scotch Rite, then recently organised in Milan. In 1814 it was introduced into France, and in 1817 an unsuccessful application was made to the Grand Orient to accept it as a legitimate branch of Masonry; about the same time unsuccessful attempts were made to extend this rite to Belgium, Sweden, and Switzerland, and in 1820 it was introduced in Ireland, where the G.M., the Duke of Leins-

ter, and several leading brethren joined it, in order to test its merits, but finding it spurious, prevented its further extension.

A great portion of the degrees of this order were taken from the Rite Ecossois, with more or less variation, and some of them were identically the same in every respect, consequently, when introduced with the pretension of being a genuine branch of Freemasonry, it directly clashes with the legitimate Masonic bodies already existing.

Before Masons, therefore, join this order, it would be well for them to enquire into its history, and to investigate the authority under which it acts. Out of the order itself, they must not expect to have their rank acknowledged, either in England or in any foreign country, and those who belong to any of the grades of "The Ancient and Accepted Rite," may find that in joining this order, they have violated their O.B. of Allegiance to their own Supreme Council.

I am, Sir and Brother,
Yours faithfully and fraternally,
AN OLD MASON.

RECENT DEVIATIONS FROM THE MASONIC LANDMARKS.

Our pages have contained, of late, frequent protests against the increasing tendency on the part of a section of the Order to forsake the established and recognised degrees of Freemasonry, for what may be considered to be not merely quasi-Masonries, but some of these organizations being actually under the category of spurious and so-called Masonic orders, directly clashing with and placed under the legitimate sanction of already existing Masonic bodies.

We continue to receive letters deploring this tendency to diverge from the straight and even path, and more especially so when the circumstances are aggravated, from the fact of the charges, brought to bear by our correspondents, against the paid servants of Grand Lodge, as being the parties who have taken the initiative in "promoting" the various parasitical offshoots from the genuine Masonic tree.

The complaints made are of too grave a character to be allowed to be passed by without comment. Endorsing the remarks of some of our correspondents, we say unhesitatingly that the English Craft, looking to Grand Lodge, and more especially to the Board of General Purposes as their Legislative Body, have a right to demand that this subject should receive a most searching examination; the money of the Craft paid in the shape of salaries to the officials in the Grand Secretary's Office, is certainly being diverted from its intended purpose, if, as is stated by our Correspondents, the time which ought to be devoted to their duties in connection with the Craft, is spent, to a large extent, in a propagandaism, directly in violation of the terms of their engagement. And we can fully enter into the feeling which is gaining ground so widely that the time has come when a searching investigation must be made with a view to the general organization and working of the Grand Secretary's department being put upon a more satisfactory footing, apart from the special charge now brought, of promoting the growth of spurious Masonic orders.

One of our correspondents draws our attention to the fact that the late Grand Secretary, Bro. Clarke, in 1859, issued a special circular to all lodges, upon the subject of spurious Masonic degrees, of which we append a copy, together with that of the diploma of the spurious Masonic degree referred to.

It is therefore much to be regretted that those in the Grand Secretary's department should now stand charged with encouraging that which has been brought under the ban from the very same department, comparatively so recently.

Freemasons' Hall, London,
24th October, 1859

Dear Sir and W. Master,—I am directed to inform you that it has come to the knowledge of the Board of General Purposes that there are at present existing, in London, and elsewhere in this country, spurious lodges claiming to be Freemasons.

I herewith furnish you with a copy of a certificate issued by a lodge calling itself "The Reformed

Masonic Order of Memphis, or Rite of the Grand Lodge of Philadelphes," and holding its meetings at Stratford, in Essex.

I am directed to caution you to be especially careful that no member of such body be permitted, under any circumstances, to have access to your lodge, and that you will remind the brethren of your lodge that they can hold no communication with irregular lodges without incurring the penalty of expulsion from the Order, and the liability to be proceeded against under the Act 39, George III. for taking part in the meetings of illegal Secret Societies.

I am further to request that you will cause this letter to be read in open lodge, and the copy of the certificate to be preserved for future reference in case of necessity.

I remain, Dear Sir and Brother, yours fraternally,
W.M. GRAY CHARTE, G.S.

N.B.—It is to be observed that the original certificate contains various emblematical devices which it has not been deemed necessary to have copied.

Au nom du G. Conseil Gen. de l'ordre Mac. Reformé de Memphis
Sous les Auspices de La G. Loge des Philadelphes,
a tous les Maçons répandus sur les deux Hémisphères
Salut, Amitié, Prosperité, Courage, Tolérance.

Ne varier.

Nous, Vénérable et Offic. de la Loge Egalité o. de Stratford assemblés par les nombres mystérieux connus des vrais Maçons certifiés et attestons que le T. Ch. E. né à . . . le . . . min. . . cent vingt huit, possède du premier au 3^e degré de l'o. et fut reçu en cette qualité de cette Loge. En conséquence nous avons toutes les Loges à reconnaître en sa qualité et d'accueillir fraternellement et à lui prêter aide et protection au besoin. Fait et signé dans un lieu éclairé d'un rayon divin, ou règne le bon, le vrai, la science, et la piété de tous les biens. O. de Stratford (Essex) . . . jour de . . . An de la V. L. 000,000,000 (. . . E.V.

To all it may concern, these are to testify that our Brother . . . who hath signed his name in the margin hereof, was regularly received in Freemasonry, and admitted to the third degree in the Equality Lodge . . . And that he is duly registered in the Book of the Order accordingly.

In testimony whereof we have hereto subscribed our Names and affixed our seals.

At Stratford, Essex, the day of . . .

A L 000,000,000 (. . . 1859, V.F.

Timbré et scellé par nous G. des sceaux et timbres de la Loge.
F. Schroedter.

Le 1er Surveillant :
Leamen . . . son.

Le O. Star :
John Stewart.

Le Trésorière :
C. Turner.

Le Ven. de la L :
Robert Meikle.

Le 2me Surveillant :
David Booth.

Le G. Expert :
Stephen Smith.

Le Secrétaire :
William Cox.

Enregistré au G. Liv. d'or du G. Conseil gen. :
Le Président :
C. Veillard,

L'Arch. gen. de l'o. :
B. Duquesne,
Vallée de Loirdres le . . . jour de . . . 1859, E.V.
Le Secré. gen. de l'o. :
J. Balagué