

wise in itself and *indignus vindice nodus*. We hope, therefore, to hear that Law 133 is expunged from the Irish Book of Constitutions. We are also very doubtful, we feel bound to add, of the propriety or value of the very elaborate forms of prayer provided for all occasions, and above all, of the lengthened ritual prescribed in print for the installation of a W.M., and the investiture of the officers of a lodge.

We think that it is far better to leave such matters to the *lex inscripta*, to the traditionary customs and oral teaching in the different lodges.

We are not, and never have been amongst those, who believe in stereotyped forms, or uniformity of ritual, inasmuch as from long experience we believe, they reduce Masonic working to a dull and meaningless level, and conduce, more than anything else, to idleness and incapacity in a W.M.

In the present instance, we think these forms are an unnecessary addition to the Book of Constitutions, and that, if there must be a form provided, our English form, as given in our Grand Lodge Constitutions, is far simpler and more dignified, and far more in accordance with the unchanged usages of Freemasonry.

We observe that no provision is made in these new Irish Constitutions for "Public Ceremonies," which we venture to deem a serious omission.

Having said thus much in all of fraternal good will and honest criticism, we congratulate the Irish Grand Lodge on their endeavour to meet the wants and necessities of this improving age, and of an increasing Craft. It has often been observed how little we in England know of the proceedings of the Irish Grand Lodge or of Irish Masonry, and we trust, therefore, that these, their amended Constitutions, will be followed by a little more publicity of documents and proceedings.

With these few friendly, and, we trust, not unseasonable remarks, we shall await with some little interest the discussion and settlement of these new and revised Book of Constitutions in the Irish Grand Lodge.

THE SPURIOUS RITE OF MEMPHIS.

It is with exceeding regret that we find ourselves compelled to recur to a subject which, to every right-thinking Mason, is simply one which he would willingly bury in oblivion. Nor shall we even now steep our pen in bitterness, or pour the vials of a righteous wrath upon the heads of those erring and misguided brethren who support, however feebly and unwisely, the impious Rite of Memphis. To us they are still brethren, and, with especial reference to some leading spirits in that unholy confederation, we are disposed to say, in the language of Scripture, "Come out of her, my people, and be not partakers of her sins." No greater fraud upon the Masonic public of the two hemispheres was ever perpetrated than the inception and subsequent *modus operandi* of the Rite of Memphis; and no body of men, since the foundation of society, has ever been burdened with a greater weight of wickedness in the persons of its pro-

moters and neophytes. One of these Heaven-abandoned men introduced the *soi-disant* Rite into England some time ago, and we commented in severe but justifiable terms upon his antecedents at the time. Unfortunately, however, the venom, imported by this miserable man, became a circulating medium, and shame be it to those who, as English Masons, countenance the *living lie*, there are now in our midst some,—a few, but still *too many*,—who have adopted not only the original frontispiece of fraud, but who are trying to imprint it upon the minds of the unwary by a course of misrepresentation and falsehood. The latest exploit of these individuals is the fact of their having published a kind of manifesto of the Rite of Memphis.

Whoever they may be, we tell them *plainly* they will not advance their cause by forging the signatures of distinguished Masons to their list of members, or exposition of principles. The letter which we print in another column, from Bro. Thévenot, Grand Secretary of the Grand Orient of France, clearly indicates that the name of the gentleman has been used in the most disgraceful manner to further ends entirely in conflict with his Masonic obligations, and we have also seen a letter from Bro. Loewenstark in which he repudiates all connection with the spurious Rite. After this we shall simply ask the aiders and abettors of this nefarious transaction, if they will still continue to place the names of respectable men and Masons, upon their published documents?

We have no right to assume that if Bros. Thévenot and Loewenstark, disclaim both membership and sympathy with the "unclean thing" other names may have been used with a similar disregard of truth. The whole episode is evidently planned by some rabid anti-Mason, to bring discredit upon the Ancient Craft, and we can only hope that all those whose names have been thus scandalously played with will indignantly repel the foul assumption.

THE GRAND ORIENT OF FRANCE AND THE RITE OF MEMPHIS.

We are requested to publish, for the information of the Craft, the following letter from Bro. Thévenot, Grand Secretary of the Grand Orient of France, relative to the so-called Rite of Memphis. This letter was addressed to the Supreme Council, 33°, in answer to an enquiry, and it convincingly proves to all unprejudiced minds that a system founded upon such gross fraud and falsehood cannot for a moment withstand the expression of public or Masonic opinion.—[Ed. F.]

"Grand Orient de France
"O. de Paris, le 22 Aout, 1873 (E. V. V.)
"Au T. Ill. F. Robert Hamilton, 33° dégr.
"Grand Secrétaire Général du Suprême Conseil d'Angleterre, &c.
"Cher Monsieur et T. Ill. F.
"Vous m'apprenez que dans une récente circulaire, émanée du soi-disant "*ancien et primitif rite de la Maçonnerie*," mon nom figure comme membre honoraire, 95e. degré de ce rite, et vous me priez de vous fournir quelques renseignements à ce sujet.

Je m'empresse de satisfaire à votre désir, tout en vous remerciant bien vivement de cette communication. Ma réponse sera aussi simple que catégorique. La voici. Je déclare que je ne fais et n'ai jamais fait partie, ni directement ni indirectement, du soi-disant "*Ancien et primitif rite de la Maçonnerie*," ni du pouvoir constituant ou directeur de ce rite, nouvellement implanté en Angleterre, ce que je déplore amèrement.

J'affirme que la mention de mon nom comme membre honoraire et comme possédant le 95e. degré de ce prétendu rite maçonique est une imposture que je signale aux maçons de tous les pays, et contre laquelle je proteste et m'inscris en faux cette mention a été faite à mon insu et sans aucune participation de ma part.

Telle est ma réponse, cher Monsieur et T. Ill. F., et en vous confirmant ma lettre du 8bre 1872, par laquelle j'ai eu l'honneur de vous informer que je n'avais aucun rapport avec le prétendu "*ancien et primitif rite de la Maçonnerie*," je vous autorise à faire de cette réponse tel usage que vous croirez utile pour la diffusion des saines doctrines de l'ordre Maçonique, dont je suis le très dévoué serviteur.

Veillez agréer, cher Monsieur et T. Ill. F., l'assurance de ma considération la plus distinguée et de mes sentiments les plus fraternels.

Le chef du Secrétariat du Grand Orient de France.

(Signed) THEVENOT.

TRANSLATION.

Grand Orient of France.

O. de Paris, 22nd August, 1873.

To the V. Ill. Bro. Dr. Hamilton 33° Gd. Gen. Secy. of the Grand Orient of England, &c. &c.

Dear Sir and V. Ill. Bro.,
You inform me that in a recent circular emanating from the self-styled *Ancient and Primitive Rite of Masonry*, my name appears as an Hon. Member 95° of this Rite, and you request me to furnish you with some information on the subject.

My reply will be both plain and categorical. I declare that I do not take, and never have taken part, either directly or indirectly, in the self-styled *Ancient and Primitive Rite of Masonry*, either as a founder or director of the Rite, lately imported into England, and which I bitterly deplore.

I affirm that the mention of my name as an Hon. Member, and as possessing the 95° of this pretended Masonic Rite is an imposture which I publish to the Masons of all countries, against which I protest, and of which I declare the falsehood. This mention has been made unknown to me, and without any participation on my part.

Such is my answer, dear Sir and Ill. Bro., and in confirming my letter to you of 5th Oct., 1872, in which I had the honour to inform you that I have no connection with the pretended *Ancient and Primitive Rite of Masonry*, I authorize you to make any use of this letter which you may consider advantageous for the sound doctrines of the Masonic Order, of which I am the very devoted servant.

Accept, dear Sir and V. Ill. Bro., the assurance of my most distinguished consideration and most fraternal sentiments.

The Sect. Gen. of the Gd. O. of France.
(Signed) THEVENOT.