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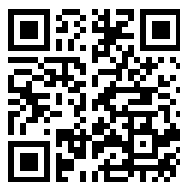
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LEGISLATIVE INVESTIGATION

INTO

MASONRY;

BEING A CORRECT HISTORY OF THE EXAMINATION, UNDER CIVIL OATH,

OF MORE THAN

FIFTY ADMERING AND SECEDING MASONS,

BEFORE A COMMITTEE

OF THE

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF RHODE-ISLAND,

HELD AT PROVIDENCE AND NEWPORT,

BETWEEN DECEMBER 7, 1831, AND JANUARY 7, 1832.

REPORTED FROM MINUTES TAKEN AT THE TIME,

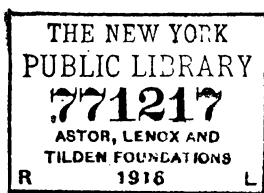
BY B. F. HALLETT, GEO. TURNER AND OTHERS,

AND CAREFULLY COMPARED.

OFFICE OF THE BOSTON DAILY ADVOCATE.

1832

W W



INVESTIGATION INTO MASONRY.

At the Jan'y Session of the R. I. Assembly, 1831, a Memorial signed by sixty seven Delegates to an Antimasonic Convention, praying for an investigation into the Masonic Corporations, created by the Legislature, was presented, and referred to a Committee. No further proceeding was had upon the subject until October Session, 1831, at which time the demand of public opinion for some disposition of the Memorial could no longer be safely postponed. Accordingly, a resolution prepared by Mr. B. Hazard, was introduced by Mr. James F. Simmons, to appoint a Committee to investigate the subject of Masonry. These gentlemen were both appointed on that Committee, after which a discussion arose upon a motion to refer the Memorial, with a notice, to Masonic Corporations. Messrs. Hazard and Simmons, in that debate, were extremely severe upon Antimasons, the former declaring that there was not one among them that he would trust with a groat out of his sight, and the latter asserting that the principles of Antimasonry were sapping the foundations of our political institutions. Both of these gentlemen were known to have a commanding influence with the party then in power in the State, and it was also known that Antimasonry would probably oppose the re-election of the individuals then in office. These circumstances, connected with the severe and apparently unprovoked censures cast upon Antimasons, by these gentlemen in debate, induced an apprehension that the design of appointing this Committee might be rather to suppress Antimasonry, if possible, and vindicate Masonry, than to give the subject a full and fair investigation without any reference to political parties. The course pursued will show whether there were any reasonable grounds for this apprehension. It was also known that another of the Committee, Mr. Haile, had on a public occasion compared the introduction of Antimasonry into politics, to a pestilence. Under such circumstances, it appeared to some that a majority of the Committee had already given evidence that they had prejudged the question upon which they were about to act.

Shortly after the adjournment of the Legislature, the following notice issued by Mr. Hazard, as Chairman, without being shown to at least two others of the Committee, was published in the newspapers:

"NOTICE.—The Committee named in the subjoined Resolution, will meet on Tuesday the sixth day of December next, at ten o'clock, A. M., at the State House in Providence, for the purpose of attending to the duties in said resolution assigned to them. Personal notice will be given to those, whom the Committee may think it necessary to call before them. And they will moreover readily attend to all information, testimony, facts, circumstances and suggestions in writing, which any individuals may have to communicate, and which may in any degree aid them in making the thorough investigation, which the General Assembly will expect from them. For the Committee,

B. HAZARD, Chairman.

Nov. 21, 1831.

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS.

In General Assembly, October Session, A. D. 1831.

Whereas the crimes and enormities within a few years, committed in a neighboring State by certain Free Masons avowedly in the cause of Masonry, have excited universal indignation and abhorrence; and have awakened jealousies and suspicions very unfavorable to all Masonic institutions, and under the weight of which the whole Masonic fraternity,

the good and virtuous as well as the vicious, must unavoidably suffer: Therefore, in the hope of allaying the great and increasing excitement thus occasioned, and that the innocent may be distinguished from the guilty, if in this State there are any, who can justly be charged with advocating the criminal doctrines imputed to Free Masonry:

Resolved, That Messrs. Hazard, W. Sprague, Jr. Simmons, Haile, and E. R. Potter, with such others as the Honorable Senate may think proper to add, be and they are hereby appointed a Committee, fully to investigate and inquire into the causes, grounds and extent of the charges and accusations brought against Free Masonry and Masons in this State.—And that said Committee, so far as may be necessary to enable them to perform this duty, be empowered to administer oaths, to examine witnesses, and to call for books and papers."

At the time of the publication of this notice, a note was forwarded to Mr. Sprague, one of the Committee, by Mr. Hazard, in which that gentleman remarked, "Whatever may be said in the newspapers, I am very confident there will be no difference of opinion among the members of the Committee, upon the subject of Masonry or the course to be pursued in relation to it."

This assurance led to a hope that the investigation would be conducted in a manner of which no person desirous for a full disclosure of the truth, could reasonably complain.

Members of the Antimasonic State Committee had made repeated attempts to ascertain from the investigating Committee what course they would pursue, and upon what points they would be willing to hear testimony; but they were not recognised as being entitled to be heard in preferring charges, or proving those alleged in the Memorial, nor could they learn any specifications to define the vague terms of "charges and accusations against Masonry and Masons," into which the Committee were directed to inquire. Up to the day appointed for the examination, it was generally understood that Masons would not state upon oath, what their Masonic oaths were; and it is also a fact that the Committee, though requested, declined summoning at least one Mason, who though holding a high official station, had declared that he would not reveal his Masonic oaths under a civil oath. To prevent a total failure of the investigation by a refusal of Masons to testify, and the neglect of the Committee to summon seceding Masons, the Antimasonic Committee took measures to procure such testimony as the short time allowed by the notice would permit. They accordingly prevailed upon the Rev. Moses Thacher, Rev. Levi Chace, and a number of seceding Masons to attend the examination in person, and they procured the depositions of others, which were taken in legal form. The intimation therefore, that Mr. Thacher, or any other witness presented himself voluntarily as has been represented in the Assembly, is incorrect. He came at the special and urgent request of the Antimasonic State Committee. The investigating Committee used no compulsory process, in any case, and their summonses were virtually nothing more than requests.

With a view of bringing the investigation to some point, the following suggestions were drawn up, and presented to the Committee, by Wm. Sprague, Esq. for their consideration, on the first day they met for business, Tuesday, Dec. 6th. These suggestions were made by an individual, in compliance with the rule prescribed by Mr. Hazard, Chairman of the Committee. They were as follows:—

TO THE COMMITTEE.

One of the principal "grounds of the charges and accusations brought against Freemasonry and Masons in this State," and every other State, which you, gentlemen, are appointed "fully to investigate and inquire into," is the oaths administered in the several degrees in the Lodges and Chapters. It is deemed indispensable to establish what the precise form and expression of these oaths are, in order to determine whether they may or have, or do lead to an interference with the civil duties of citizens.

In the first place it is charged that these oaths are illegally administered, in solemn form, by persons not Magistrates, and who are liable to indictment and punishment for this offence, at common Law.

Thus Sir E. Coke lays it down, that "All oaths must be lawful, allowed by the Common Law, or some statute; if they are administered by persons in a private capacity, or not duly authorised they are *coram non iudice*, and void; and those administering them are guilty of a high contempt for doing it without warrant of law, and punishable by fine and imprisonment. 3. Inst. 278. 2. Roll Abr. 257; cited in Jacob. Law Dic. Tit. Oath.

Blackstone goes so far, on this point as to say, that "It is much to be questioned how far any Magistrate is justifiable in taking a voluntary affidavit in any extrajudicial matter, as is now too frequent upon every petty occasion, since it is more than possible, that by such idle oaths a man may frequently *in foro conscientie*, incur the guilt, and at the same time evade the temporal penalties of perjury." Blk. Com. Vol. 4. 137. Even this doubt is expressed of unnecessary oaths, administered by lawful magistrates. It is certainly stronger as applied to Masonic oaths, administered unlawfully in secret, and binding the person who receives them to do a moral wrong if he adheres to them.

Should the Committee deem this a proper subject of their inquiry, they can easily establish the fact, by the testimony of seceding and the admission of adhering Masons, that oaths are administered in Lodges and Chapters, by swearing on the holy Scriptures. See Deposition of Benjamin Russell and De Witt Clinton, herewith presented, marked (No. 1 and 2)

The nature of these oaths, their exact terms and import from the language in which they are expressed, are also important to be learned. The facts themselves, as to what the oaths say, are deemed to be much more essential to a fair understanding of them, than the construction which persons interested *not*, in explaining them away to avoid the charges brought against them, may put upon them. Besides, if the oaths are to be judged of by construction, rather than their plain and obvious meaning, would not the interpretation of those oaths, by Masonic works of the highest authority, previous to Masonry being called in question, be more satisfactory, than the construction adhering Masons may now contend for, when the charge is made that these very oaths have led to the murder of a citizen in New York, and screened his murderers from the just infliction of the laws?

On this point, the nature of the oaths, the committee is respectfully referred to a printed paper (marked No. 3) containing the oaths of five degrees, in nearly the same language. (with some not very material alterations in expression and none in meaning) as they have been administered in N. Island Lodges and Chapters, up to the murder of William Morgan, in 1826, and probably ever since. The same paper contains evidence of the uniformity and universality of these Masonic oaths, as do also the Depositions of Messrs. Clinton and Russell, before referred to.

To establish the uniformity of Masonic Oaths in

the United States, reference is further made to a paper marked No. 4, containing the trial at New Berlin, New York, as sworn to by Philip Peck, who was present at that trial.

Also-paper No. 5, Affidavit of Israel Chace.

Also paper No. 6, Affidavit of Tabor Cory.

The same point will be proved by inquiry to that effect of all seceding or adhering Masons, who may be summoned before the Committee.

Paper No. 7, contains the statement of one of your Hon. Committee, William Sprague Jr. Esq. asserting the language of certain portions of the three first oaths. It is requested that that gentleman may be examined, with others who have testified with him, or who are believed to be ready to testify, if called on, viz: Wm. Sprague Jr., Rev. Henry Tatem, (who has taken the degree of Knight Templar.) Dr. Wm. H. Allen, Willard Ballou, John Brown, Nathan Whiting, Benjamin W. Case, (Royal Arch) Rev. Moses Thacher (Royal Arch,) John F. Greene, Arthur Potter, Anson Potter, Gamaliel Church, (Royal Arch) Barney Phelps.

The above named persons, and some others whose names may be presented if desired, are acquainted with masonry, and it is believed will give the Committee all the information in their possession. It is believed that their testimony will not essentially vary from the statement of the form of the Oaths as given in printed paper No. 3.

The Committee are also respectfully requested to summon before them some known adhering Masons, to ascertain from them the form of proceedings in Lodges, and Chapters. If permitted to suggest, the following names would be offered:—

Rev. David Pickering, Mr. Moses Richardson, who, it is suggested, became acquainted with the abduction of Morgan, in the Grand Chapter of New York, soon after it happened. Should he decline stating on this point, Walter Paine Jr. and Asa Pearce should be summoned. Mr. Peter Grinnell is acquainted with the same facts.

Mr. Peter Grinnell, who in 1816 visited the Lodges in N. England, it is believed. Inquiry should be made of this gentleman as to his knowledge of the Check degree, established in 1826—27, to keep out the book Masons, who might study Morgan's disclosures. On this point, see paper No. 8. containing a letter signed P. Grinnell and C. M. Nesbitt. Please also inquire if this Check degree was received from the New York Grand Lodges, and communicated to all the Lodges in this State. Examine also, Messrs. Sprague, Chase, Thacher, Ballou, Tatem and others on this point, which will clearly establish the connexion between the Lodges of Rhode Island and New York, and the fact that Morgan's disclosures were true, or a special degree, to exclude those who read his book, would not have been required.

Josiah Whitaker, William Wilkinson, Richard Anthony, Henry Mumford, Christian M. Nestell, Benj. S. Olney, John Barton, Henry Martin, [who administered the Royal Arch Oath to Moses Thacher,] Samuel Jackson, 2d, Barney Merrey, Barzillai Cranston, Jacob Frieze, [Examine Mr. Frieze as to an article on the 28th page of paper No. 9. written by him.] Rev. Martin Cheney.

The Committee are also requested to ascertain if possible, at what time, Chapters and Lodges in R. I. or any members became acquainted with the abduction of Morgan, and whether any and what statement had been made respecting it, and his fate. Oran Packard of Cumberland, if summoned, (a Royal Arch Mason,) it is believed will throw light on this subject.

The existence of Lodges of Blacks, who take the same oaths as white Masons, and work under a Grand Lodge at Boston, which grants dispensations all over the country, has excited some alarm, particularly in connexion with the insurrection at the South, it being stated, that Walker, the black who published an incendiary pamphlet a short time ago

to excite the slaves to revolt, and Gen. Nat, the leader of the recent Massacre in Va. were members of the African Lodge.

On this point testimony may be obtained from Henry Coddington, of Providence. Also, from the following officers of Harmony Lodge, in Providence, viz:—George C. Willis, Master; Thomas, Senr Warden; Alfred Niger, Jun., Warden; Northrup, Senr. Deacon.

The inquiry whether Masonry imposes the penalty of death for violation of her oaths, is certainly important. Individual construction of Masons *now* cannot be as good proof, as the terms of the penalties, and the construction put upon them by the most approved Masonic writers. On this point leave is asked to refer to printed sheets, No. 9, a proof sheet of a document not yet published. References are there given to Masonic authors, which will be offered to the Committee if desired, for further examination as to the correctness of the reference. So far as the Records of Lodges and Chapters may be offered, the Committee are requested to receive them in the understanding that they contain only what Masons deem *proper to be written*, and do not record the *unwritten* and most important matters in the Lodge. On this point of the duties of a Masonic Secretary, see Book of Constitutions, p. 15, Cross's Masonic Chart, p. 69, do do, 149, Templars' Chart, 79, cited in proceedings R. I. Antimasonic Convention, p. 10.

The several corporations were chartered by the General Assembly as Charitable Societies. This will be seen by reference to their acts of Incorporation, cited in the Antimasonic Memorial, (see paper No. 11.) A strict inquiry on this point is respectfully suggested, in order to ascertain what proportion of the funds are devoted to charities, and what proportion to useless parades. On this point see paper No. 19, and records of Newport St. John's Lodge, in possession of Benj. W. Case."

The several documents above referred to, were presented to the Committee, but it did not appear that any use was made of them in the investigation. The Committee, on the first day, frankly and readily received all names of witnesses presented to them, most of whom they summoned. Those who had declared they would not testify at all, were not summoned. Masonic Clergymen the Committee declined summoning, on the ground, as was understood, that it might lead to a breach, or unpleasant feelings in their societies.

Previous to the meeting of the Committee, and nearly every night during their sitting in Providence, the Masonic Hall was lighted up, and it is presumed the Masons assembled there to determine upon the measures they should adopt to produce uniformity in the statements they should make to the Committee. On several occasions, when the examination was carried into the evening, the principal Masons retired, as it was understood to visit the Lodge Room, and unquestionably for the above purpose.

The testimony was taken at four different times; *first*, before four and sometimes five of the Committee sitting in Providence, from the 7th to the 17th of December—*second*, before Mr. Hazard the Chairman, sitting alone in Newport, irregularly for several days—*third*, before Mr. Simmons, another of the Committee, sitting alone in Providence,—and *fourth*, before Mr. Haile in Warren, at which last examination no person whatever was present to put cross questions to the adhering masons, who were examined by Mr. Haile. Mr. Sprague or Mr. Cornell, did not at any time assume the right of sitting alone to take examinations, without the approbation of other members of the Committee. The former issued one summons, or rather request, to a citizen residing in another State, whose deposition was taken.

During the only investigation in which the committee acted as a body, Mr. Haile, one of the Committee, officiated as scribe, and wrote down,

principally in his own language, the answers of the witnesses, as he construed or understood them, which the witnesses were required to sign. In his minutes so taken, the answers of witnesses are put down in a condensed form, without any statements appearing of the circumstances under which the answers were given; such as the remarks of members of the Committee, the variation of answers upon second thought, by the witnesses, and a variety of circumstances, without which it is impossible to determine whether the examination was fully and fairly conducted, and how far the witnesses are entitled to credit. The most material difference between us, will be, that where cross questions were proposed, the second answer of the witness was generally taken by him instead of the first, while this Report will in most cases, give both answers, that the witness may not avail himself of the time given for reflection to frame an answer best suited to evade the question, if such were his design. None of these and other circumstances connected with the progress of the investigation; the manner in which the Chairman put or refused to put questions, or his severe censures upon witnesses and spectators, will be found in Mr. Haile's Report. While therefore, we shall agree in the main facts, there will be so material a difference in the filling out of the narrative on our part, by stating facts which his abridged account will omit, as entirely to relieve the State printer of Rhode Island from the trouble of prosecuting for an infringement of a pretended copy right, of a public Legislative Report, which is no more the subject of copy right than a speech made in Congress, and taken down by a Reporter. [It might be interesting to learn by whom this copy right of a public document was transferred to the State printer, for what consideration, and for whose benefit. The circumstance is believed to be unparalleled.]

This attempt to confine the circulation of this important evidence (which is the property of the public alone) by guarding it with a copy right, and thereby preventing its republication in the newspapers, has induced us to publish our version of it in this form, which is free to all the world to republish.

Having thus stated the preliminaries of the investigation, we proceed to lay before the public a full and faithful Report, taken at the time, of the proceedings of the Committee and the examination of witnesses. The correctness of this Report, in every essential particular, will be vouched for by a number of individuals who paid strict attention to the investigation. An appeal is also made for the accuracy of our narration, to the numerous spectators who were present.

On the morning of Wednesday, the first day, the Committee met for business, Mr. Hazard and others of the Committee, held a long conversation in the Senate Chamber, with several of the most eminent masons of Providence. Among them were the Grand Master, the Grand Commander, the General Grand Treasurer, and others. A part of that conversation was known at the time. Its import, and that of other interviews understood to have taken place, it is believed is fully explained in the subsequent disclosure made by one of the witnesses, Wm. Wilkinson, Esq., *that a majority of the Committee had agreed with these Masons, that if they disclosed their oaths, they should not be questioned as to the ceremonies, proceedings, &c. which they considered to be the secrets of Masonry, that they had sworn not to reveal!* The fact is simply stated as it is borne out by the testimony. Whether it was proper for an investigating Committee to have entered into such a stipulation with the witnesses who were to be examined upon charges against their own Institution, the public must decide.

No Committee appeared before the Legislative Committee in behalf of any body, and neither the

Memorialists to the General Assembly, or the Antimasons were permitted to appear to make good any charges against Masonry. During the investigation six or eight of the highest Masonic Officers in Rhode Island were constantly present, seated on one side of the table, and a number of members of the Antimasonic State Committee were as frequently present, seated on the other side. Both parties, in their individual capacity, proposed questions in writing, which were handed to the Committee. The examination was held in the Senate Chamber in Providence.

Wednesday, December 7, 1831—Present of the Committee, B. Hazard, chairman, James F. Simmons, Wm. Sprague, Jr. and Levi Haile; (absent, E. R. Potter and S. B. Cornell, of the Senate.)

TESTIMONY OF REV. MOSES THACHER.

Mr Hazard called the Rev. Moses Thacher as the first witness, who proceeded to give the following testimony, the substance of which was taken down in writing by Mr. Haile, of the Committee, who acted as Scribe for that purpose.

MOSES THACHER sworn in chief, in answer to interrogatories, says. He resides in North Wrentham, Massachusetts; is a clergyman; has been a Free Mason and taken seven degrees, viz. Entered Apprentice, Fellow Craft, Master Mason, Mark Master, Past Master, Most Excellent Master and Royal Arch.

INTERROGATORIES BY THE CHAIRMAN.

In what Lodge and at what time did you take the three first degrees? Answer. In St. John's Lodge, Providence, in the winter or spring of 1826-27.

When did you take the next? Ans. The summer following.

In the same Lodge? Ans. No; in the same Hall, but in what is termed the Chapter, the Providence Royal Arch Chapter.

When did you take the last degree? Ans. I am not able to designate the precise time. I took the three preparatory degrees in 1827, and soon after the Royal Arch degree, which took a whole evening in performing the ceremonies.

Before you took the degrees, was an obligation or oath administered to you? Ans. Yes, a distinct oath, upon taking each degree.

ENTERED APPRENTICE'S OATH.

Mr. Hazard.—Can you repeat the oath that you took as an entered Apprentice? Ans. I can repeat the oath substantially. I do not know that I can give all the language, verbatim.

Be so good as to repeat what you do recollect. Ans. So far as I recollect it was substantially this. I was made to kneel and clasp the sacred writings with the square and compass in this form. The Master of the Lodge then addressed me in language like this. Before you proceed any farther it is necessary for you to take an oath or obligation; this oath will not interfere with your religion or politics. Have you any objections to take it? On signifying my assent, he directed me to repeat the oath after him, calling my own name. I would not be understood as giving the language verbatim, which was used in introducing the oath, but the sense and substance. The Master then proceeded to administer the oath by sentences, to be repeated after him, as I was utterly ignorant of it; ignorant masonically, for as I afterwards found I had seen the oath before, substantially.

Mr. Hazard. Where had you seen it? Ans. In a book called Morgan's Illustrations which had accidentally fallen into my hands.

Mr. Hazard. [To Mr. Haile, who was writing down the testimony.] You need not go too fast, Mr. Haile. It is best to have it all down, because Mr. Thacher has got to sign it. Well Sir, (to the witness) repeat it as you recollect it.

Witness. I proceeded after the Master, sentence by sentence, and said,

"I, Moses Thacher, of my own free will and accord, in presence of Almighty God and this worshipful Lodge of Free and accepted Mason, dedicated to God, and held forth to the Holy Order of St. John, do hereby and hereon, most solemnly and sincerely promise and swear, that I will always hail, ever conceal, and never reveal any art or arts, part or parts, point or points, of the secrets, arts and mysteries of ancient Freemasonry, which I have heretofore received, am about to receive, or may hereafter be instructed in, to any person of persons in the known world, except it be to a true and lawful brother Mason, (I think is the mode of expression; I am not certain as to that mode,) or in the body of a lawfully constituted Lodge of such, and not unto him or unto them whom I shall hear so to be, but unto him or them only whom I shall find so to be, after strict trial, due examination or lawful information.

I furthermore promise and swear, that I will not write, print, stain, stamp, hew, cut, carve, engrave, or indent it, upon anything movable or immovable, under the whole canopy of Heaven, whereby or whereon the least letter, figure, mark, character, stain, shadow, or resemblance of the same, shall become legible or intelligible to myself or any other person, whereby the secrets of Free Masonry may be unlawfully obtained, through my unworthiness. To all which I do most sincerely and solemnly promise and swear, without the least equivocation, mental reservation, or secret evasion of mind, in me whatever, binding myself under no less penalty than to have my throat cut across, [the Master at this time drew the handle of his Mallet, as I afterwards found it to be across my throat] my tongue torn out by the roots, my body buried in the rough sands of the sea, at low water mark, where the tide ebbs and flows twice in twenty-four hours. [The oath closes with the legal form, I believe] So help me God and keep me steadfast in the due performance of the same.

FELLOW CRAFT'S OATH.

Mr. Hazard.—Be so good as to state what additions there were in the oath you took, in the degree of Fellow Craft.

Witness.—The candidate swears to obey all signs and summons of a fellow craft Mason—to support the Constitution, and by-laws of the Lodge, and of the Grand Lodge under which it is held. I was told, as in the preceding degree that the oath was not to interfere with my religion or politics.

Mr. Hazard. I will read you the Fellow Craft's Oath from Allyn's Ritual, and ask you if it is the same you took? [Mr. Haile read it accordingly.]

Witness.—The oath I took was to support the Constitution of the Grand Lodge; not the Grand Lodge of the United States; The oath read from Allyn is the substance of the one I took.

Mr. Hazard.—What did you understand by the length of your cable tow?

Witness.—At the time the degree was given, I did not understand what that expression meant. I afterwards learned from a Mason, that it meant a certain distance, according to the degree. In the Master's degree, it is understood to mean three miles. It was not explained to me at the time.

MASTER MASON'S OATH.

Mr. Hazard.—Will you point out the difference in the Master Masons oath, with the preceding oaths?

Witness.—The Master Mason swears to keep the secrets of a brother of the same degree, murder and treason excepted, and they left to his election.

Mr. Hazard.—I believe that is the only essential difference.

Witness.—There are several others.

Mr. Hazard.—Well, will you point them out?

Witness.—I will point out some of them as far as I can recollect. In addition to his former obligations the candidate swears that he will not give

the Master Mason's word, which he is hereafter to receive, to any but a Mason of the same degree, [I do not here pretend to give the precise language of the oath,] except upon the five points of fellowship, and then not above his breath. That he will not give the grand hailing sign of distress, except he is in real distress, and when he sees that sign given, or hears the words accompanying it, he swears to fly to the relief of the person giving the sign or uttering the words, unless there is a greater probability of losing his life, than saving the life of the person in distress.

The candidate in this degree also swears that he will not speak evil of a brother Master Mason, either before his face or behind his back, but will apprise him of all approaching danger, if in his power.—Another addition in substance is he promises and swears that the secrets of a brother Master Mason, given to him in charge, as such, and he knowing them to be such, shall remain as secure and inviolable in his own breast as in that of the person communicating them, murder and treason excepted, and there left at his election.

(Mr. Haile—discretion?)

Witness.—Election I think it is.

The penalty also varies, in this degree. It is that the body be severed in two in the midst, and the bowels burnt to ashes, and these ashes scattered before the four winds of heaven, that there might not the least trace or remembrance remain, among men or Masons, of so vile and perjured a wretch as I should be if I were ever wilfully to violate any part of this my solemn oath or obligation, of a master mason. That is the substance of the penalty. I am not positive of every word.

Mr. Hazard. Is it not a part of the oath that you will not violate the chastity of a Master Mason's wife, daughter, &c.?

Witness. Yes Sir, "I further more promise and swear, that I will not violate the chastity of a Master Mason's wife, mother, daughter or sister, knowing them to be such, or suffer it to be done by others if in my power to prevent it."

A question in writing having been handed to the committee, Col. T. Rivers, a (Mason) here asked, "will the Committee receive questions from bystanders? I appear for no one."

Mr. Hazard.—We will receive any information from any citizen, and will be obliged to any who will give information to aid in this investigation. We shall be glad to receive any from yourself.

Mr. Rivers. I have none to make. [Wm. Wilkinson, Esq. a high mason, and Mr. Rivers here held some conversation aside.]

Mr. Hazard then read the Mark Master's oath from Allyn, Mr. Simmons reading the conclusion. Is that the substance of the oath? It is so far as I can recollect. I believe the phraseology is different in reference to the Mark and the Jewish Shewel of silver.

[B. F. Hallett presented questions in writing, relative to the ceremony representing the killing of Hiram Abiff in the Masters degree, and the reference it had to the penalty. The Committee did not put the questions.]

Thomas Rivers, Esq. here presented a question in writing for Mr. Hazard to put, but before it was put, Mr. R. said he would waive it for the present, and it was returned to him.

Mr. Simmons read the Most Excellent Master's oath from Allyn, and asked if that was correct.

Witness.—That was substantially as I received it, so far as I can recollect.

[Mr. Hazard was again requested to put the question relative to the ceremony of killing Hiram Abiff, but declined.]

Witness here said there was a point in the Master Mason's oath, relative to obeying all signs and summonses, which he believed he had omitted to state before. He then stated that part of the obligation.

ROYAL ARCH OATH.

Mr. Simmons.—Do you recollect the variations of the Royal Arch oath from the preceding oaths? It would be preferable for you to give them.

Witness.—They do not readily occur to me, and I should probably omit some in pointing out the differences. I can state them as far as my recollection extends.

Mr. Hazard.—Do you recollect any clause to keep the secrets of a brother Companion, murder and treason not excepted?

Witness.—I do not recollect that phraseology.

Mr. Simmons then read the oath from Allyn, and asked if that was correct. [The clause in the oath, as given in Allyn, is to keep all the secrets, without exception.]

Witness.—The oath, so far as I recollect, is substantially the same as was administered to me. I do not recollect the words "right or wrong" being administered to me. The words murder and treason not excepted, were not in the oath I took. I do not recollect the promise to employ a Companion Royal Arch Mason, in preference to another person.

On being further questioned, witness replied, I am confident that I was sworn to assist a companion Royal Arch Mason when in any difficulty, and to extricate him from the same, if within my power.—I have no recollection of any kind of difficulty being excepted. He was to be assisted when in difficulty. The penalty I recollect distinctly as read, to have my skull smote off, and my brains exposed to the scorching rays of the sun. I do not recollect any further material variation from the oath as now read to me.

Question put by request.—What was the form in which you were sworn to keep the secrets of a Royal Arch Mason?

Witness.—To the best of my recollection it was to keep all secrets of a Companion Royal Arch Mason, communicated to me as such, and I knowing them to be such.

Mr. Simmons.—Were there no exceptions as to the kind of secrets you were to keep?

Witness.—No. I recollect there were exceptions in the preceding degrees, but I do not recollect any in this.

[A question in writing was here handed to the Chairman, asking the situation in which witness was placed to receive the oath, and the nature of the ceremony of representing God appearing to Moses in the burning bush. The Chairman did not put the questions.]

Mr. Simmons put the following question by request. Did you ever take a check degree and if so please explain it?

Witness.—After I had taken the three first degrees in Masonry, which I received in one night, the Master of the Lodge said to me, before you leave the hall it is necessary for you to take an oath, in consequence of a book which has been published, revealing the secrets of Freemasonry or of the Order, I do not remember which. He further said that it was necessary for me to do this in order to visit other Lodges, and said "if other folks get our keys, we must put on new locks." That was his expression. The oath was then administered to me, the general terms of which were that I would not give the word or sign about to be communicated to me, except in a Lodge, or at the door of such, when about to be examined for admission. It was intended as a key for admission into Lodges. I never made use of it but once.

Mr. Hazard.—I don't see but they will have their hands full of making new secrets.

Question by request. Was there any penalty attached to this oath?

Witness. No corporeal penalty. I think the penalty was to be disgrace or expulsion for disclosing this sign.

Question by Thomas Rivers. (Mason.)

After taking these several obligations, did you not receive a charge, and did you not consider it binding?

Witness.—After taking each of the two first degrees, a charge was read to me [Mr Moses Richardson here handed to Mr Simmons Webb's Monitor and referred to the charge.]

Mr Simmons.—If I read the charge to you from Webb, will you recollect if that was the charge you received in the first degree.

Witness.—I presume I can.

Mr. Simmons here read the following from Webb's Monitor a book published to the world by Masons.

Charge at initiation into the first Degree.

Brother, As you are now introduced into the first principles of Masonry, I congratulate you on being accepted into this ancient and honorable order; ancient as having subsisted from time immemorial; and honorable, as tending in every particular, so to render all men, who will be conformable to its precepts. No institution was ever raised on a better principle, or more solid foundation; nor were ever more excellent rules and useful maxims laid down, than are inculcated in the several masonic lectures. The greatest and best of men in all ages have been encouragers and promoters of the art, and have never deemed it derogatory from their dignity to level themselves with the fraternity, extend their privileges, and patronise their assemblies. There are three great duties which, as a mason, you are charged to inculcate, to God, your neighbor, and yourself. To God, in never mentioning his name, but with that awe and reverence which is ever due from a creature to his creator; to implore his aid in all your laudable undertakings; and to esteem him as the chief good;—to your neighbor; in acting upon the square, and doing unto him as you wish he should do unto you;—and to yourself; in avoiding all irregularity and intemperance, which may impair your faculties, or debase the dignity of your profession. A zealous attachment to these duties will ensure public and private esteem. In the state, you are to be a quiet and peaceable subject, true to your government, and just to your country; you are not to countenance disloyalty or rebellion, but patiently submit to legal authority, and conform with cheerfulness to the government of the country in which you live. In your outward demeanor be particularly careful to avoid censure or reproach; and beware of those who may artfully endeavor, to insinuate themselves into your esteem, with a view to betray your virtuous resolutions, or make you swerve from the principles of this institution. Let not your interest, favour, or prejudice, bias your integrity or influence you to be guilty of a dishonorable action; but let your conduct and behaviour be regular and uniform, and your deportment suitable to the dignity of your profession. Although your frequent appearance at our regular meetings is earnestly solicited, yet it is not meant that masonry should interfere with your necessary vocations; for these are on no account to be neglected, neither are you to suffer your zeal for the institution, to lead you into disputes with those who, through ignorance, may ridicule it. At your leisure hours you are to study the liberal arts and sciences; and that you may improve in masonic disquisitions, converse with well-informed brethren, who will be always as ready to give, as you will be to receive, instruction. Finally; keep sacred and inviolable the mysteries of the order, as these are to distinguish you from the rest of the community, and mark your consequence among masons. If, in the circle of your acquaintance, you find a person desirous of being initiated into masonry, be particular by attentive not to recommend him, unless you are convinced he will conform to our rules; that the honour, glory, and reputation of the institution may be firmly established and the world at large be convinced of its good effects.

After reading the charge from Webb's Monitor, in the first degree, Mr. Simmons inquired of the witness if that charge was delivered to him?

Witness. I think that was read to me, or the substance of it.

Mr. Simmons. Did you consider it binding?

Witness. I paid but little attention to it at the time. I knew it was printed, and I could read it at my leisure.

Mr. Simmons. Did you consider the charge binding on you as a Mason?

Witness. A portion of it I considered binding on me before I was a Mason—so far as it enjoined moral obligations.

Mr. Hazard. You paid but little attention to it, but considered it was binding on you as a Mason?

Witness. I do not recollect I had any distinct impression of the charge. I received it as advice in connexion with the oaths. My attention was more particularly turned to what were called the secrets of Masonry, than to what I knew had been published, and could be examined another time.

Mr. Simmons. Was a Lecture read to you in the Fellow Craft's degree?

Witness. I distinctly recollect receiving a charge in that degree to be always ready to assist in seeing the laws and regulations of Masonry duly executed.

Mr. Simmons then read the charge from Webb, in the Fellow Craft's degree, p. 71, and also the charge in the Master Mason's degree, from Webb, p. 75, as follow:—

Charge at Initiation into the Second Degree.

BROTHER,—Being advanced to the second degree of Masonry, we congratulate you on your preferment. The internal, and not external qualifications of a man, are what masonry regards. As you increase in knowledge, you will improve in social intercourse. It is unnecessary to recapitulate the duties which, as a mason, you are bound to discharge; or enlarge on the necessity of a strict adherence to them, as your own experience must have established their value. Our laws and regulations you are strenuously to support; and be always ready to assist in seeing them duly executed. You are not to palliate, or aggravate the offences of your brethren; but, in the decision of every trespass against our rules, you are to judge with candour, admonish with friendship, and reprehend with justice. The study of the liberal arts, that valuable branch of education, which tends so effectually to polish and adorn the mind, is earnestly recommended to your consideration; especially the science of geometry, which is established as the basis of our art. Geometry or Masonry, originally synonymous terms, being of a divine and moral nature, is enriched with the most useful knowledge; while it proves the wonderful properties of nature, it demonstrates the more important truths of morality. Your past behaviour and regular deportment have merited the honour which we have now conferred; and in your new character, it is expected that you will conform to the principles of the order, by steadily persevering in the practice of every commendable virtue. Such is the nature of your engagements as a fellow craft, and to these duties you are bound by the most sacred ties.*

Charge at Initiation into the Third Degree.

BROTHER—Your zeal for the Institution of Masonry, the progress you have made in the mystery, and your stedfast conformity to our regulations, have pointed you out as a proper object of our favor and esteem. You are now bound by duty, honor and gratitude, to be faithful to your trust, to support the dignity of your character on every occasion: and to enjoin by precept and example, obedience to the tenets of the Order. Exemplary conduct is expected from you, to convince the world, that merit is the title to our privileges, and that on you our favors are not undeservedly bestowed. In the character of a Master-Mason, you are authorised to correct the errors and irregularities of your unini-

formed, brethren and to guard them against a breach of fidelity, and every allurement in vicious practices. To preserve the reputation of the fraternity unsullied, must be your constant care; and for this purpose, it is your province, to recommend to your inferiors, obedience, and submission: to your equals, courtesy and affability; to your superiors, kindness and condescension. Universal benevolence you are always to inculcate; and, by the regularity of your own behaviour, afford the best example for the conduct of others less informed. *The ancient land-marks of the Order, entrusted to your care, you are carefully to preserve; and while you caution the inexperienced against a breach of fidelity; never suffer them to be infringed, or countenance a deviation from the established usages and customs of the fraternity.* Your virtue, honor and reputation, are concerned in supporting, with dignity, the respectable character you now bear. *Let no motive, therefore, make you swerve from your duty, violate your vows, or betray your trust, but be true and faithful, and imitate the example of that celebrated artist, whom you this evening represent.* Thus you will render yourself deserving of the honor which we have conferred, and merit the confidence that we have reposed.*

The question which had been previously handed to the Chairman of the Committee was again written and handed to Mr. Sprague, one of the committee, the first question having been torn up by the Chairman. Some conversation passed between Mr. Hazard and Mr. Sprague.

Mr. Hazard. It seems to be insisted on that this question must be put. What celebrated Artist is referred to in the Master's Charge just read to you whom you represented, and in what manner did you represent him, and has it any reference to the penalty?

Witness. It refers to Hiram Abiff, or Hiram the Widow's Son, who was said to have been slain, for refusing to reveal the Master Mason's Word, and whom the candidate is made to represent by being knocked down, and laid out as if he were dead, and is then brought to life. That is a part of the history of the degree as explained to me that evening, in connexion with the penalties of the three first degrees.

Mr. Moses Richardson (Mason) here turned to another charge in Webb.

Mr. Hazard. Here is another charge, I read it to know if it was read to you. It is in Webb's Monitor, page 99.

You agree to be a good man and true, and strictly to obey the moral law. You agree to be a peaceable subject, and cheerfully to conform to the laws of the country in which you reside. You promise not to be concerned in plots and conspiracies against government, but patiently to submit to the decisions of the supreme legislature. You agree to pay a proper respect to the civil magistrate, to work diligently, live creditably, and act honourably by all men. You agree to hold in veneration the original rulers and patrons of the order of masonry and their regular successors, supreme and subordinate according to their stations; and to submit to the awards and resolutions of your brethren in general chapter convened, in every case consistent with the constitution of the order. You promise to respect genuine brethren, and to discountenance impostors, and

* The above charges, upon which much stress was laid by Masons in this investigation, are given verbatim, (except a part of the first charge,) in Bernard's Light on Masonry, pages 25, 52, and 74. In the account there given of the three first degrees, it is said, "the following charge is, or ought to be delivered to the candidate, but he is generally told, "it is in the Monitor and you can learn it at your leisure." Thus it will be seen that Masonry has had the credit of all the maxims conveyed in these charges, from the time of the first disclosures of her ceremonies and obligations, made in this country.

all dissenters from the original plan of masonry. You agree to promote the general good of society, to cultivate the social virtues, and to propagate the knowledge of the art. You promise to pay homage to the Grand Master for the time being, and to his officers when duly installed; and strictly to conform to every edict of the Grand Lodge, or General Assembly of Masons, that is not subversive of the principles and ground work of masonry. You admit that it is not in the power of any man, or body of men, to make innovation in the body of masonry.

You promise a regular attendance on the committees and communications of the Grand Lodge, on receiving proper notice, and to pay attention to all the duties of masonry, on convenient occasions. You agree that no visitors shall be received into your Lodge without due examination, and producing proper vouchers of their having been initiated in a regular lodge."

Witness. I do not recollect hearing that read to me.

[The above charge is given to the Master of a Lodge, on his installment as such, by the Grand Master, and not to individual members.]

Mr. B. F. Hallett, here requested the Committee to notice the Masonic qualification given to the injunction to obey the civil laws. He referred Mr. Hazard to Dermott's Ahiman Rezon (the book of Constitutions so highly extolled by Deputy General Grand High Priest Poinsett, at his inauguration in Washington) On page 81 of that book, the following qualification is given of the Masonic injunction to obey the civil Magistrate, which Mr. Hazard read.

"Of old, kings, princes and states encouraged the Fraternity for their loyalty, who ever flourished most in times of peace; but though a brother is not countenanced in his rebellion against the State, YET IF CONVICTED OF NO OTHER CRIME, his relation to the Lodge remains indefeasible."

The same principle is fully recognized in the following extract from a book of the highest Masonic authority in Rhode Island and Massachusetts.

SECTION II. Of Government and the Civil Magistrate.

"So that if a brother should be a REBEL AGAINST THE STATE, he is not to be countenanced in his rebellion, however he may be pitted as an unhappy man, AND IF CONVICTED OF NO OTHER CRIME, though the *loyal* Brotherhood must and ought to disown his rebellion and give no umbrage or ground of political jealousy to the government for the time being, THEY CANNOT EXPEL HIM FROM THE LODGE, AND HIS RELATION TO IT REMAINS INDEFEASIBLE."—See Massachusetts Book of Constitutions, p. 168. Edited by Thaddeus M. Harris, and published by the sanction of the Grand Lodge.

So says James Hardie, in his Masonic Monitor, p. 163, of the distinct duties of a Mason as a citizen and a Mason. "In civil government, he is to be firm in his allegiance, yet steadfast in defence of our (the Masonic,) laws, liberty, and constitution."

NOTE. [It will thus be seen, that by the constitutions and the practices of Masonry, TREASON AGAINST THE STATE, and the MURDER of a Mason who violates his oath, are not accounted crimes of sufficient magnitude, to authorize expulsion from a Lodge!! It well becomes a Society, avowing and practising such principles, to talk of "submission to the civil magistrate," and requiring its members "to be true to their government, and just to their country," when they have the full sanction of the Lodge to rebel against that government, and retain entire fellowship with Masonry. It will also be seen by the above extract that the *loyal* brethren only are required to disavow the rebellion, but those who desire to be disloyal, are left at entire liberty to aid the traitor, and join in his treason, without any censure from Masonry!!]

Mr. Hazard (after reading the extract from Dermott.) Yes I see how it is. To the witness. Is this book of Constitutions by Laurence Dermott, called the Ahiman Rezon a standard authority in the New England Lodges?

Witness. I have never known it Masonically to be a standard authority in the N. England Lodges. It is an authority highly respected by Masons.

Mr. Hazard. Is the Free Mason's Monitor by Thomas S. Webb, a standard authority among masons?

Witness. I understand it to be so, but superseded, in some measure by the Chart of Jeremy L. Cross. I do not know Masonically that Cross is used in the Lodges. Webb and Cross are understood to be used by Masons as authority, indiscriminately without preference.

Mr. Simmons. When you speak of not knowing Ahiman Rezon, to be an authority, masonically, what do you mean?

Witness. I mean I never was informed as a Mason, by a Mason, that it was such.

Mr. Hazard. Here produced several newspapers and pamphlets. In the Providence American of Sept. 17, 1831, is an Address to the Grand Lodge of Rhode Island signed Moses Thatcher. Were you the author of that Address?

Witness—after examining it. I was.

Mr. Hazard. Here is a pamphlet addressed to the Church of North Wrentham in 1829, published in Boston. Is that yours?

Witness—It is.

Mr. Hazard.—Here are Letters addressed to a brother, in the Church on seceding from Masonry, signed Moses Thatcher 1829.

Witness.—I published those letters.

Mr. Hazard. In the American of Sept. 27, 1831, is a letter to you signed Caleb Sayles, taken from the Masonic Mirror. Have you seen that statement?

Witness. I have seen it in the Masonic Mirror, and I believe in the Microcosm.

Mr. Hazard.—I have alluded to these papers, because the Committee may wish to ask you some questions in explanation of these statements.

Witness. I will give the committee all the information in my power.

Mr. Hazard. The testimony in this investigation is of immense importance to every body. To the Masons themselves and to the community. It is the intention of the Committee to conduct the examination so that no one shall have cause to complain, and with that understanding it is desirable that no more questions should be suggested in writing for the Committee to put, than are absolutely necessary.

Question by request. Are the statements of the ceremonies of imitation, &c. give in Barnard's Light on Masonry, and Allyn's Ritual, correct so far as you have taken the degrees?

Witness. They are substantially the same I have received and seen administered in Lodges. I have been in the Lodge in Providence where I received the lower degrees, in St. Albans Lodge, Massachusetts, and once attended the Grand Lodge in Boston. The Lodges I have examined agree in their ceremonies and mode of working.

I never attended the Chapter after I was initiated in the Royal Arch degree.

Question by request. Was the declaration that your oath was not to interfere with your religion or politics made to you, previous to taking the Royal Arch oath.

Witness. I have no recollection whether it was or was not used in that degree. I recollect it distinctly in the first degree.

Mr. Simmons. Did you have Morgan's illustrations in your pocket or about you, when you went into the Lodge at Providence to take the degrees?

Witness. I had not. I had casually seen Morgan's book, after I was propounded, but on being assured by a Mason of good standing that it was not true, I paid but very little attention to it.

[The above question appeared to have been asked by Mr. Simmons, at the verbal suggestion of one of the by-standers, who was a Mason. It being a quarter before 2 o'clock, the Committee adjourned. In the course of the examination this forenoon that part of Mr. Thatcher's testimony, as taken down by Mr. Haile, as far as the inquiry into the check degree, was read to witness by Mr. Haile, but no farther.]

Wednesday afternoon, Dec. 7.—The Committee met at 3 o'clock, and resumed the examination of Mr. Thatcher.

[Mr. Hazard handed to Mr. Simmons a number of interrogatories, in the hand writing of Thomas Rivers, Esq. a Mason. They were put as follow:

Mr. Simmons. Were all the degrees conferred on you, on account of your profession, (as a clergyman) gratuitously?

Witness. They were. I paid no fee for them.

Mr. Simmons. Did you ever consider yourself bound to favor a mason to the injury of others, in consequence of your masonic obligations?

Witness. I never considered myself so bound.

Mr. Simmons. While a member of the Lodge, did you know of any higher punishment being inflicted, for a violation of Masonic obligation, than expulsion?

Witness. No; nor had I any personal knowledge of any member having been expelled.

Mr. Simmons. Did you ever hear the question of higher penalties than expulsion discussed in the lodge; if so, when and where, and under what circumstances?

Witness. Yes I did. In St. Albans Lodge, in Wrentham, the last time I was in the Lodge, this subject was talked about. The members present, who had taken the higher degrees were silent on the subject, except one. Those of the lower degrees expressed their opinions. They were various.

Mr. Simmons. At what time was this?

Witness. The 13th of May, 1829, in St. Albans Lodge in Wrentham.

[Witness here referred to a note he had of the transaction.]

Mr. Simmons. Was it a meeting of the Lodge?

Witness. It was a regular Lodge meeting, I do not know if there was a Tyler at the door. I think on reflection that Esquire Fiske, a high Mason, who was present, was the one who expressed an opinion on the subject. The question was proposed in this form. In what light are Masonic penalties to be considered, not whether they had been inflicted, but in what light they were to be considered. There was no vote taken.

Mr. Hazard. Did you not say just now, that you knew of no higher penalty than expulsion?

Witness. Personally I did not, nor was I ever present when any one was expelled. I have been informed that I have been expelled myself.

Mr. Hazard. Who were present when this matter was talked about, and was it not after the Lodge was closed?

Witness. It was in open Lodge. There were present, Josiah J. Fiske,* Rev. Luther Wright, Anson Mann, Samuel Druce, Esq. and Asa Ware, Jr. Secretary, or acting as such. Others were present.

* Mr. Fiske is the second member of the Honorable Council of the State of Massachusetts. He was chosen the present year, having the highest number of votes, while Russell Freeman, Esq. charged with the crime of opposition to the Masonic candidate for Congress from Bristol District, was not re-elected.

Mr. Hazard. That is sufficient. How was the subject introduced?

Witness. As a matter of discussion and inquiry. No motion was made. The sense of the Lodge was not taken.

Mr. Hazard. Was any member of the Lodge present who expressed his opinion that the Lodge had power to inflict any penalty but expulsion?

Witness. No sir. I do not recollect that the term expulsion was used at all. The explanation was given by one member that the candidate swears that rather than reveal, he will suffer thus and so, according as the penalties read; and I do not recollect that any other definite opinion was expressed. I did not understand it as the prevailing sentiment. No other explanation was given. [Witness here suggested to Mr. Haile, who was writing down the substance of his answers, that he wished to be understood as saying that the Mason referred to, who explained the penalty, said, that rather than reveal Masonic secrets he would suffer his penalties, so and so.]

Mr. Simmons here resumed the standing interrogatories. While a Mason did you ever give your vote for a Mason, on account of his being such?

Witness. I did not, nor do I remember if I ever was placed in that situation. I do not know any clause in the Masonic obligations I have taken that literally obliged me to vote for a Mason.

Mr. Simmons proposed the following, by request of Mr. Rivers.

Did you ever know a political question to be discussed in a Lodge, or a nomination for a political office to be made there?

Witness. I did not.

Question. Did you ever know a public officer to release or discharge a person accused of crime, upon making himself known as a Mason?

Witness. I never did, of my own personal knowledge. I suppose this question has reference to my personal knowledge of the fact. Otherwise I should state differently.

Question. At the time of taking the oaths, did you consider that there was any thing in them inconsistent with your civil duties?

Witness. After I had examined the oaths, I became satisfied that I could not conform to them literally, without violating my duty as a citizen.

Mr. Simmons. What, at the time you took them?

Witness. I have previously stated the circumstances under which the oaths were received, and have said I had not the means to consider them properly.

Mr. Simmons. How long after did you make this discovery?

Witness. Sometime after, I cannot state precisely, circumstances led to my examining the oaths, and after giving the subject a thorough investigation I came to the deliberate conclusion that they would interfere with my civil and religious duties.

Mr. Simmons. How many degrees had you taken before you came to that conclusion?

Witness. I formed this conclusion after I had taken all the degrees I ever took. I had never thoroughly examined the subject before, and relied upon the fact that conscientious men had taken these oaths before me.

Mr. Hazard. Will you explain for what reason you considered these oaths to conflict with your civil and religious duties?

Witness. I supposed that the oaths were in themselves unlawful, and so far I understood them as conflicting with my religious duties. I considered that I had no moral right to bind myself under a barbarous penalty to keep such secrets as those of Masonry. I supposed too that my Masonic oaths might in certain circumstances conflict with a judicial oath, particularly in regard to that part of the oath where the candidate swears to keep a Mason's secrets, murder and treason only excepted,

and these left to his election. If brought upon the stand as a witness in a Court; I might be called upon to testify against a brother, under my civil oath, where I had sworn Masonically not to testify, and where my Masonic oath expressly bound me not to testify. Also that part of the oath which bound me as a Mason to warn a brother Mason of all approaching danger, if in my power. He might be in danger of being arrested as a thief, and my Masonic oath would bind me to warn him of the approaching danger, so that he might escape.

[A question was here handed to Mr. Simmons, whether the Master of the Lodge explained these oaths at the time they were given, or any other.

Mr. Hazard. Can you point to that part of your Masonic oath which is intended for the purpose of screening a thief from justice, or may be used for that purpose?

Witness. I have reference to the clause I have repeated in the Master Mason's oath.

Mr. Hazard. What part of it.

Witness. This part, "I furthermore promise and swear that I will not speak evil of a brother Master Mason, neither behind his back nor before his face, but will apprise him of all approaching danger, if in my power." I consider the plain import and meaning of that oath, would bind me to aid a brother Mason to escape from justice or screen him from punishment, if I could do so by warning him of his danger.

Mr. Hazard. You say your Masonic oath would oblige you to aid a Mason to escape from justice.—Am I also to understand you to mean that your Masonic oath would bind you to conceal any crime a brother Mason should communicate to you?

Witness. In the Master Mason's oath murder and treason are the only crimes excluded, which I understand to include all others.

Mr. Hazard. That is true. All crimes less than murder and treason are certainly included by that phraseology. That is true. It should be so stated—turning to Mr. Haile.

Witness. Another part of the obligation I had in my mind was, that I will not give the grand hailing sign of distress unless I am in real distress, and should I see that sign given, or hear the words accompanying it, I will fly to the relief of the person making that sign or uttering the words, if there is a greater probability of saving his life than losing my own. If I were on a jury and the criminal on trial should make that sign, it would be in my power to afford him relief, and my Masonic oath would literally bind me to do so by preventing a verdict, or using my influence to cause a verdict in his favor. [It was here remarked to Mr. Haile (the Scribe of the Committee) by a by-stander that he had not written down Mr. Thacher's explanation. The witness, on hearing Mr. Haile's note read on this point, said that was not as he stated it. Mr. Haile finally wrote it down in this form, "by preventing a verdict or influencing others to give a verdict in his favor."

Witness.—My meaning is that if I was a juror, and a brother Mason on trial should give the Grand hailing sign of distress, my Masonic oath would require me to answer him, and afford him relief if it were in my power.

[T. Rivers, Esq., (Mason) here presented a question, which Mr. Hazard looked at, observing it is the same thing he has said before. He however put the question, the purport of which was to inquire whether he received his Masonic oaths as literally binding.]

Witness.—I did receive them under their literal construction, as far as I understood them, and I know of no other standard by which to construe them, except by their plain import, in the same manner I do the civil oath I have taken to day, literally to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

Mr. Hazard. If you had been appointed a judge of a court while you were a Mason, or drawn on a jury

to try a case between a Mason and one not a Mason, should you have considered, or do you now consider, that there is any oath that would require you as a judge or a juror, to favor a mason to the injury of one not a mason?

Witness. I do not consider there is any oath that would bind me so to act, because I would not so be bound; but if I were to receive the oath, and were to construe it in the same manner I have the oath you have administered to me as a witness, I should be required so to act if called upon masonically.

Mr. Hazard. Did you so consider it when you took it.

Witness. I did when I examined the oaths, and for that reason I renounced them, because I found that I must either conform to them, if required, and violate my civil duties, or violate my masonic oath if I complied with my civil oath.

[A question was here handed to Mr. Hazard from Masons. Mr. H. said, it comes back to the same thing he has answered before. Mr. Haile said, that is fully explained before, and he then read to the witness what he had taken down on that point.]

Mr. Hazard. Did you ever know any instance of a masonic judge or juror or Sheriff, or other officer, practicing upon that iniquitous construction of Masonic oaths, which binds him to favor a mason to the injury of one not a Mason, or to screen him from justice?

Witness. No such transaction ever passed under my personal knowledge. There are many things which I have been informed of, and have good evidence to believe, but I presume the inquiry is made in reference to my personal knowledge.

Mr. Hazard. Did you ever know the Grand hailing sign of distress to be given under trial, to a judge, juror or sheriff?

Witness. I never did. I do not know that I have been in a Court of Justice, since I was a mason, when there was a trial between a Mason and one not a Mason.

Mr. Simmons. One of the Committee (Mr. Sprague) wishes this question to be put: Did you ever hear the oaths, at any time, explained to you masonically, to mean any thing other than what their terms import? [This question had been previously handed to Mr. Simmons, and laid aside.]

Witness. I never heard them explained in any way. They are administered literally, and there left.

Mr. Simmons. You said you had charges delivered to you, and did you not consider them binding? Here is one, "you agree to be a good man, and true, and strictly to obey the moral law."

Witness. To what degree does that appertain?

Mr. Simmons. Mark Masters, I believe.

[This charge is not given in any degree, but to the Master of a Lodge, on his installation.]

Witness. I have no recollection of having it given to me.

Mr. Moses Richardson.—(a Mason) I ought to know something about it. That was given to me.

[The Masonic Chart by Jeremy L. Cross, Grand Lecturer, was here handed to Mr. Hazard with a request that he would ask an explanation of the symbol on page 33, which represents God appearing to Moses in the burning bush. Mr. H. handed the book to the witness, and asked what that meant.]

Witness. It represents one of the ceremonies as performed when I received the Royal Arch degree. The candidate is lead round the chapter blind folded, and a passage of scripture is read. "Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian; And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire, out of the midst of the bush; and he looked and behold the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed." The bandage is then removed from the eyes of the candidate, and he sees a representation similar to this, (in Cross's Chart.) When I saw it a bush was

prepared, so that it was made to blaze up, without burning the bush. A person who is made to represent the Deity, stepped behind the bush, and called out "Moses, Moses." The conductor of the candidate answers "Here am I." The person behind the bush, says, "draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, [the candidate's shoes are here taken off] for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground. I am the God of thy fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." The bandage is then put over the eyes of the candidate, and the person says, "And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God."

[Mr. Hazard here turned to Allyn's Ritual, p. 148, and read a part of the description of this ceremony. Witness said he believed it was accurately described in that book. Mr. Haile had not written down any of this description. Mr. Hallett requested that it might be made a part of the deposition. He said, we consider it as a blasphemous exhibition degrading the character of the Deity, and therefore wish it may be known to the General Assembly that Masonic bodies are guilty of such practices.]

Mr. Hazard. Very well; but is there any way we can get it before the General Assembly. We can't make these books a part of the deposition? It was replied that the books could easily be referred to, and could be produced in the Assembly, if necessary.

Mr. Hazard. Are these emblems in the Masonic Chart of Cross, correctly explained in Allyn's Ritual? The witness examined both, and said they appeared to him to be substantially a delineation and explanation of the ceremony he had witnessed, as described in Chart, p. 33, and Allyn p. 148. I witnessed the exhibition in St. John's Chapter, Providence, as described in Allyn, when I was admitted to the Royal Arch degree, except being requested to kneel, which I do not recollect. The other parts I do recollect.

Mr. Simmons. How long did you continue a member of a Lodge or Chapter?

Witness. I am unable to say how long I was considered as a Mason. I believe about two years.

Mr. Hazard here observed, that this was an investigation instituted for the information of the General Assembly. It was important to understand the circumstances and feelings under which the witnesses testified, and the committee were bound to inquire into these facts. He had prepared some questions, himself, with this view, and the rest of the committee could prepare what they pleased.—He then proceeded to read the following interrogatories.

1. Before the several oaths were administered to you, did you take all the means in your power to ascertain whether an oath would be administered, and what you would be required to swear to?

I made no inquiries into the nature of the oaths, nor did I understand I could be permitted to do so. The Master of the Lodge said they would not interfere with my religion or politics. The oaths in the three first degrees were administered to me in one night. I had no understanding in regard to the oaths, at the time they were administered.

Mr. Hazard. Did you not know that an oath would be administered?

Witness. It did not occur to me before I was introduced to the Lodge, whether an oath would be required. I say this in reference to the first degree. I afterwards inferred that an oath would be administered in all subsequent degrees.

2d. *Interrogatory.* When taking the oaths did you strictly attend to them, and endeavor to comprehend their meaning, and what were the obligations you were subjecting yourself to?

Witness. I did, as fully as the circumstances under which they were administered would admit.—It required an effort, situated as I was, to repeat them after the Master.

3d. Interrogatory. Did you at the time when you had taken the oaths, think you understood them? Did you immediately make any inquiry to learn how they were understood?

Witness. I did not suppose that I understood the oaths. I did not at that time for this reason, that I had no [Mr. Hazard—let him get that down] that I had no opportunity for reflection, and was sensible it would take considerable time to render the oaths familiar. When I left the Lodge I did not immediately reflect much on the meaning of the oaths I had taken.

Mr. Hazard. Had you any doubts, and did you make any inquiry?

Witness. I had some doubts, and I conversed with a Master Mason relative to some clauses in the oath. I took it for granted, without understanding the oaths, that they must be harmless.

Mr. Hazard. How? From the fact that men of principle had taken them before me and from the assurance of the Master that it would not interfere with my religion or politics, and I did not turn my attention to them particularly for some months after.

Mr. Hazard. On what particular account did you do so?

Witness. The circumstances that led me more particularly to examine the subject were the intelligence received from the West respecting the Morgan outrage, and the disclosures at Le Roy of seceding Masons, at the meeting held there in the summer of 1828 [July 4th and 5th, 1828.]

Mr. Hazard. Upon having then reconsidered the oaths, did you immediately announce to the Lodge that you were dissatisfied and should secede?

Witness. I did not. I proceeded to examine the subject, but did not announce my intention till 1829, when I delivered an address on the subject.—I had some scruples in regard to the oaths, before I was aware they were so exceptionable, but did not communicate my views, until I proceeded thoroughly to examine them. I then stated to the Lodge the principal reasons I had at that time in my mind, why I wished to withdraw.

4th Interrogatory. Did you reflect after taking each oath upon the nature and extent and force of it, and if you had any objections, did you state those objections to the Lodge?

Witness. That question I have already answered. Mr. Hazard assented.

5th Interrogatory. Was it your understanding when you took the oaths, that thereby, as far as was in your power, you gave jurisdiction to the Lodge, to execute upon you the penalties, or to take your life in the manner described in the penalties, and did you consider that you shared in the same power and jurisdiction with the Lodge, over others?

Witness. When I took the oaths I did not so consider them, for as I have before stated, I had no opportunity to form a correct conclusion, but when I took the subject seriously into consideration, I certainly came to that conclusion.

Mr. Hazard. But did you when you took the oath consider you gave jurisdiction to the Lodge over your life?

Witness. I say no, in the form the question is put to me. The circumstances under which the oaths are given, render it impossible to understand them at the time, but when I came to give my attention to a consideration of the oaths, I received that impression of their import.

Mr. Hazard. You have said that no man can understand the oath when he takes it. I should think so too.

Mr. Haile. I understand Mr. Thacher to say he did not then consider when he took the oath, that he gave jurisdiction to the Lodge to inflict the penalty, because he had not time to consider the oaths, but when he did examine them, he came to that conclusion.

Mr. Hazard. And because it was not until some

time after, he gave attention to the import of the oaths as expressed.

Witness. That is correct, as I have before stated. The circumstances under which the oaths are administered, render it impossible for the candidate to take the real sense of them without further reflection.

6th Interrogatory. What do you consider the secrets or mysteries of Masonry to be? Do you know of any others than those disclosed in Bernard and Allyn?

Witness. I consider that those works contain all the secrets to the 7th degree inclusive, so far as I was instructed. I know of no others that are called Masonic secrets.

7th Interrogatory. Are the Constitutions and By-Laws of Lodges printed and published?

Witness. The Book of Constitutions so called is published. There is also a Charter which each Lodge holds from the Grand Lodge, and each Chapter from the Grand Chapter. I never saw them published. The Charter in St. Alban's Lodge is engrossed on parchment, and the By-Laws are in writing, and were read at stated times. I know of no other By-laws in any other Lodge.

Mr. Hazard. When you were initiated here, did you not sign the By-laws?

Witness. I do not recollect writing my name.

8th Interrogatory. Do you know of any other oath or obligation up to the 7th degree, except those you have specified?

Witness. I know of none.

9th Interrogatory. Did you understand the oaths you had taken were in conflict with your civil and religious duties?

Witness. That question I have answered before.

Mr. Hazard. You say in your address to the Grand Lodge of Rhode Island, "that you had a conversation, just before you joined the Lodge, with an intelligent Mason in Providence, concerning reports from the West, who assured you that it was nothing but a political manœuvre, and that there was nothing of Masonry in Morgan's Illustrations." Who was that gentleman?

Witness. Is it necessary for me to answer that question?

Mr. Hazard. It is.

Witness. My only objection arises from personal feeling.

Mr. Hazard. There need be none. You are called upon under your oath.

Mr. Moses Richardson, who was standing near the table, said, There is none on my part.

Witness. I had that conversation with Major Moses Richardson, my uncle, who stands before me, and from whom I received those assurances and was perfectly satisfied with them at the time. [It should here be observed, that the remark made by Mr. Richardson, before the name of the individual with whom Mr. Thacher held the conversation had been mentioned by any one, furnishes conclusive evidence that Mr. Richardson knew of that conversation, and anticipated that Mr. Thacher would name him.]

Mr. Hazard. You also say in that address that on coming out of the Lodge, you expressed your surprise to some one that you had received three degrees in one night, and that he replied you could not have got off very well without. Said they did not formerly give but one in an evening, but since the Morgan book came out, the Grand Lodge had issued a dispensation to all its subordinate Lodges, that they should not confer the first degree, without the second and third the same evening. Who was that person?

Witness. My cousin Wm. E. Cutting, of Providence.

11th Interrogatory. In that same address you say, "Masons of high standing in Lodge and Chapter have repeatedly declared that if Morgan was put to death, he had met his deserved fate, and had

paid no more than the life he had forfeited by the infraction of his Masonic vows." All men must consider that you should not have made so heavy a charge as this, of a justification of murder by your fellow citizens unless you were fully warranted in it. It is a very important charge.

Witness. I stated that, as one of the considerations which brought me to the conclusion that it was a principle in Masonry that the violator of Masonic oaths ought to suffer death. I stated it from what I had heard from others, and believed, as I considered, on sufficient authority. I did not say I had heard it myself.

Mr. Hazard. You made that assertion then on information from others, upon whom you thought you could depend?

Witness. I stated it on the ground I should any other historical fact I believed.

Mr. Hazard. Who were these persons from whom you derived this information?

Witness. Mr. Warren, a clergyman of Plymouth, Mass. told me he had heard the High Priest of a Chapter express an opinion that Morgan had met his deserved fate. He did not give the name of the High Priest.

Mr. Haile. Was Mr. Warren a Mason, or a seceder?

Witness. He said he was a Mason. I never sat in a Lodge with him. He is now a seceding Mason. He was not so considered at the time he told me this fact. I had no knowledge of his being a seceder at that time.

Mr. Hazard. Do you recollect any other person?

Witness. I have heard it spoken of by others, whose names do not now occur to me, and I have seen evidence of such opinions having been avowed by Masons, sufficient to satisfy my mind.

Mr. Hazard. Had you reference to what this Mr. Warren had said, in your address?

Witness. I had, and also to publications from the West, and other statements in newspapers, that Masons had made use of similar expressions.

12th Interrogatory by Mr. Hazard. In your Address to the Grand Lodge of R. I. you state a conversation with a Mr. Sayles respecting the alleged murder of a man who illegally made a Mason, some years ago, in or near Providence. The conversation alluded to is stated in Mr. Thacher's address, thus:

In the summer or autumn of 1823, a Mr. Sayles, a gentleman of high standing in the masonic fraternity, who is considered what is technically called a 'bright mason,' riding with me on my return from St. Alban's lodge in Wrentham, related, substantially, the following circumstances:—A member of the masonic institution, some years since, whom I will call A. B., and who lived in one of the back towns of Rhode Island, took C. D. and made him a mason, as the masons would say, "illegally," giving him such instructions that he "worked himself into a lodge." C. D. retained this illegal standing for some time, and rendered himself so familiar with the 'work,' that he obtained an office, I think that of junior or senior warden. By and bye, however, it 'leaked out' that C. D. had been made a mason illegally, and by whom; when the lodge 'made him over again,' and he was suffered to retain his standing with the fraternity. Soon after this, A. B. who had thus violated his masonic obligations, happened to be in Providence at the time the grand lodge was in session, which summoned him to appear before them. A. B. obeyed the summons, and was by the grand lodge 'put out of the way,' so secretly, that his friends thought he had absconded, and this was the general report. The manner in which this last act was conducted, I understood Mr. Sayles to be this: The grand lodge appointed certain resolute masons to act as executors, who inflicted upon A. B. the penalty of his obligation, and consigned his body down the river.

The narrator of these circumstances expressed his regret that the 'Morgan affair' had not been conducted as secretly, and thereby prevented all this noise and commotion.

Mr. Hazard inquired if this was correct?

Witness. The conversation was in substance as there stated. I related it, not as any thing I knew myself, but as a conversation I heard. I stated it deliberately to the best of my recollection.

13th Interrogatory. You say you have seen Caleb Sayles' address, purporting to be a denial of your statement, in some material particulars. Did you address Mr. Sayles on this subject, or have any explanation with him.

Witness. I never addressed Mr. Sayles on this subject, except through the medium of the press.

Mr. Hazard. You say that Mr. Sayles communicated this circumstance to other persons besides yourself: did you ever have any conversation with those persons?

Witness. I did not confer with them, after Mr. Sayles came out with his reply. I conversed with them sometime before. One of them is a Physician, Dr. Wm. W. Pride, and has removed to Gibson, Pennsylvania.

Mr. Hazard. Well, wherever he is, we will have that man's deposition.

Witness. Rev. Luther Wright was the other I particularly referred to. He now resides in Holliston, Mass.

Mr. Hazard. Were these persons Masons?

Witness. Yes.

Mr. Hazard. At what time did you converse with them?

Witness. The conversation with Dr. Pride was in the Summer or Autumn of 1823, and with the others subsequently.

14th Interrogatory. Did you immediately after your conversation with Sayles, communicate what you had heard him say to the Grand Lodge, and did you make any enquiries of them, in relation to this transaction?

Witness. I did not. I do not know that I was acquainted with any member of the Grand Lodge, except Moses Richardson.

Mr. Hazard. Did you place any reliance on the account Sayles had given you?

Witness. I did.

Mr. Hazard. How long did you continue a Mason after this?

Witness. Perhaps four or five months after. I dissolved my connexion with the Institution publicly in May. I am unable to state the precise time of the conversation with Mr. Sayles.

15th Interrogatory. You have stated that the Royal Arch Oath taken by you, did not contain the exception in the clause as given in the Master Mason's oath, requiring you to keep the secret of a brother, murder and treason excepted, and that at your election. This exception being omitted in the Royal Arch oath, did you construe it you were to keep all secrets, including murder and treason?—Did you of course construe that oath that you had not the privilege of any exception?

Witness. That was my impression and inference when I came to consider the oath. At the time of taking it, I had no distinct understanding or opinion. There were several circumstances that led me to an examination. One was that it was stated to me by a Royal Arch Mason, that the oath was administered to him as it is given in the disclosures by the Le Roy Convention, murder and treason not excepted. I was satisfied I had not taken it in that language, but on subsequent examination I considered that the oath as I had taken it, required the concealment of murder and treason.

Witness here objected to the language Mr. Haile (the Scribe of the Committee) had used in putting down his answers. Mr. H. then wrote it over again in this form. At the time the oath was administered to me I had no distinct impression or

opinion, but on subsequent examination I supposed that the literal expression of the oath required the concealment of murder and treason.

Witness. The word construction would be preferable to expression. Mr. Haile then added it so as to read expression and construction.

[This and similar occurrences are noted, to show the difficulty the witnesses against Masonry found in having their answers put down in their own language.]

16th Interrogatory. Were you called before an Ecclesiastical Council on account of excluding Masons from your Church?

Witness. I never was called before an Ecclesiastical Council on that or any other account.

Mr. Hazard. I ask did you exclude some of your Society from your communion, who were masons?

Witness. No Sir, I had no power to exclude. A dissatisfaction arose in the Church. The offender was a mason. The Masonic part of the Church favored him, or joined with him. It was a matter of Church discipline, but I have no objection to stating the particulars if it is desired.

Mr. Hazard. Every thing that goes to show the feelings under which the witness testifies is important. The inquiry is made without intending any impeachment of your conduct.

Witness. The circumstances alluded to was a case of Church discipline. A member of the Church, who was a Mason, was dealt with and tried before the Church upon three charges. They were not brought by me, but by a brother in the Church.

Mr. Hazard. What were they.

Witness. One was for abuse of me in my family. It related to Masonry, and was abuse of me on that account, in the presence of my family.

Mr. Hazard. What were the other two charges?

Witness. One was for assisting in preparing and publishing a report of St. Alban's Lodge, which was considered slanderous. The other was for becoming angry in Church meeting, and uttering there improper and contemptuous language.

Mr. Hazard. That was actually a Church trial of strength between Masons and Antimasons.—What was the result?

Witness. He was tried and found guilty by a small majority of the Church, on two of the charges, and to the other he plead guilty. I would state here, that if it is necessary for the Committee to go into a case of Church discipline in my Church, there is a pamphlet published, which contains a full statement of the transaction.

Mr. Hazard. We have nothing to do with your Church discipline. My object is to ascertain whether there has been a Masonic quarrel in your Church, that would have an effect upon the feelings under which the witness would testify.

Witness. The offence related to Masonry, but the same offences, in reference to any other matter, would have been examined.

Mr. Hazard. I don't pretend to judge which party was right. Whether your party was right or not, it may have impressed you with feelings that may have some bearing at this time.

Witness. The Church of which I am pastor have published the proceedings in this case in full, which the committee can examine, if they please.

Mr. Hazard. What took place after he was found guilty?

Witness. He requested an Ecclesiastical Council. He was not excommunicated, but required to make an apology; he had plead guilty to the charge of becoming angry and using improper language in Church meeting. The Church, however, complied with his demand for an Ecclesiastical Council.

Mr. Hazard. What was the result.

Witness. It would take half an hour to state it fully. Both parties have published their account of the proceedings. The committee, I presume have one on the other side. If it is not material, I should

a little rather not go into this subject, lest I might do the Church an injury by not stating the matter correctly.

[The witness alluded to a pamphlet which had been handed to Mr. Hazard, by Moses Richardson, a mason, at whose suggestion Mr. Hazard appeared to have gone into this examination of matters of Church discipline.]

Mr. Hazard. Well, let us know the result.

Witness. The result was, that he was required by the Council to make an apology, with which the Church could not be satisfied, and they regarded it as virtually an acquittal. If the committee will listen to it, I am perfectly willing to go over this whole case, though it relates exclusively to a matter of Church discipline. The only objection I have to stating it in this form is, that unless the whole ground is gone over, it may leave a wrong impression.

Mr. Simmons inquired if all this controversy was published on both sides?

Witness. Yes, but I perceive you have nothing there on our side. [Referring to Mr. Hazard's pamphlets.]

Mr. Hazard. Will you furnish me with it?

Witness. I will with all my heart, when I get home.

Mr. Hazard. Did this lead to a division in the Church between Masons and Antimasons?

Witness. Those who went with me, were none of them Masons. Those that went with the member were part Masons and part not.

[In the course of this examination, there was a pretty clear indication of disapprobation from the spectators, at this inquiry into a matter of Church discipline. Mr. Hazard saw it, and said]—Now Mr. Thacher, as to this, I did not intend to go at all into the subject. There shall be no use made of that trial by the Committee, I assure you, to prejudices you or your Church in any way; but I should be obliged to you if you will furnish me with the statement on your side.

Witness. I will, sir, with pleasure.

Mr. Hazard here had some conversation with the rest of the Committee. He then said, that he was willing for one, to strike out of the deposition all that part relating to this affair in the Church. The Witness said he had no objection to its being either retained or stricken out. Mr. Hazard then directed Mr. Haile to erase all from and after the 16th Interrogatory.

[A few days after the examination, Mr. Thacher forwarded to a friend, the pamphlet referred to by Mr. Hazard, and it was placed in his hands. A reference to Mr. Hazard's report, will show the very special pains he took to procure every thing he could, connected with Mr. Thacher, in his private or ministerial relations, in order, if possible, to discredit his testimony against Masonry. Mr. Hazard after the examination, avowed his hostility to Mr. Thacher, and his determination to serve him up in his report, though professing great candor and respect, while he was before the Committee. A very considerable portion of that report, as presented to the General Assembly, was devoted to a personal attack upon Mr. Thacher. These facts are not unimportant in forming a fair opinion of the proceedings of the Committee, especially the Chairman.]

17th Interrogatory. Before you made your address to the Church, and communicated your intention to secede from Masonry, had it been intimated to you that it was expected of you to secede?

Witness. No, sir, I did it of my own accord.—The members of the Church did not intimate to me that they expected or wished me to secede, nor was it intimated or expected, to my knowledge.

Mr. Hazard. You are desirous of giving the oaths accurately, and here is one part I suppose is considered material. Furthermore, I promise and swear, that if any part of my obligation is omitted in this time, I will hold myself amenable, whenever

informed.

Witness. I have no recollection of that clause in the oath administered to me.

Mr. Moses Richardson, [who has held some of the highest Masonic offices in Rhode Island, and was a delegate from that Grand Chapter to the General Grand Chapter which assembled in New York in 1826, just about the time of Morgan's abduction,] here addressed the Committee verbally, and said that as his name had been mentioned by the witness, he asked the liberty to ask him a few questions, without writing them.

Mr. Hazard. Our rule has been that if any citizen has questions to ask, he should do it in writing. Mr. Richardson considers his case different, as he has been personally alluded to. I have no objection.

Mr. Haile. I have none.

Mr. Hazard, to the Witness. Did Mr. Sayles mention the name of the person who made a mason illegally in one of the back towns in Rhode Island?

Witness. He did not.

Mr. Hazard directed Mr. Haile to go back and put that answer in its proper place.

Mr. Moses Richardson here commenced asking a question, relative to the number of times witness had stated his conversation with Sayles.

Mr. Hazard interrupted him. He considered it improper for a bystander to put a question verbally. The witness had referred to many persons, and if they were admitted to come and question the witness, they would take the examination out of the hands of the Committee. He was perfectly willing on his own part, but there was a propriety which must be observed. If Mr. Richardson wishes to state any thing, he can become a witness, or present it in writing.

Mr. Richardson said he submitted, but he declining reducing his questions to writing. *Mr. Hazard* said if Mr. Richardson would suggest to the Committee any relevant question, he would put it. Some side conversation here passed between Mr. H. & Mr. R.

Mr. Hazard. Mr. Richardson wishes that you may be asked whether you have stated the conversation of Sayles with you, in print, on any other occasion than your address to the Grand Lodge?

Witness. Yes. It is mentioned in a note in my renunciation.

Mr. Hazard. Have you related your aforesaid conversation with Mr. Sayles, in any other publication, and in what?

Witness. I made it in my address to my congregation. It was contained in a note to that address. It was also published in the proceedings of the Antimasonic Convention at Philadelphia. That statement did not pass under my examination before it was published. I made the statement verbally in the Convention.

[*Mr. William Wilkinson* (Mason) here made some remark to Mr. Hazard which was not heard. Mr. Hazard replied, that will show for itself.

Mr. Hazard. Did you make that statement at an Antimasonic Convention in Providence, in May 1830.

Witness. I have no recollection of it. Do not think I did.

Mr. Hazard. Did you make it at a Convention in Boston?

Witness. Did not recollect that he did. He had gone over so much ground in this examination, it was possible he might not be able to recollect whether he had or had not so stated.

Mr. Hazard said it was not material. Not of any consequence. [It being now 10 o'clock in the evening. Mr. Hazard inquired if no other gentleman of the Committee wished to ask any more questions. Mr. Simmons asked if witness had seen the Royal Arch degree administered to others.—*Witness* replied he had not, except so far as he had seen it given to the persons who took it with him.

Mr. Hazard handed the paper Mr. Haile had written on, to Mr. Thacher and requested him to sign it. *Witness* said he did not precisely know what the paper contained. Mr. Hazard told him he must sign it, or they should consider it very extraordinary. He asked if it was not satisfactory?

Witness replied he did not know but that it was, but he was so much exhausted with an examination of twelve hours, that he did not feel entire confidence in his powers to discriminate, whether the evidence was taken down correctly or not. He should prefer having an opportunity to examine it. Mr. Hazard insisted upon his signing it, and used language of intimidation toward witness, giving him to understand it would be considered a contempt of the Committee if he did not sign it, and he would be treated accordingly. Mr. Thacher replied that he certainly should not sign it, unless he heard it read in connexion. Mr. Hazard said it had been read sufficiently.

Mr. Hallett here said that the witness ought not to be pressed on this point. It was apparent to every one that in many instances Mr. Haile had not taken down the answers of the witness in his own language, nor in his meaning fully. It would be very extraordinary to press a man to sign a paper he did not know the contents of, under such circumstances. Mr. Hazard said he did not thank Mr. Hallett for his interference. The Committee understood their duty. Mr. Thacher said he was obliged to Mr. Hallett for the suggestion, and felt that he ought to be protected against signing the paper, in ignorance of its contents. He certainly should not sign it so. Mr. Hazard said very well. The Committee would put a proper construction upon such a refusal. He then asked the witness if he would hear the testimony read all through, and then sign it? *Witness* replied that his mind was not in a proper state for such a task, but he would listen to it as well as he could. Mr. Haile then proceeded to read the testimony he had taken down. It was found to be incorrectly stated in many very essential particulars, which were generally corrected, though in very many instances the witness could not succeed in having his own ideas expressed in his own words. The reading was not finished until after twelve o'clock at night. Mr. Thacher then put his name to the paper, with a written reservation, that it contained the substance of his statement, to the best of his knowledge and belief.

COMMENTS.—[This attempt to force Mr. Thacher into a heedless signature of a statement drawn up in this manner, was obviously made by the Chairman with a view to involve the witness in some contradiction, which might furnish him with materials for discrediting this witness, as he afterwards labored hard to do, in his report. A candid examination of Mr. Thacher's testimony as it is here presented almost verbatim, is invited. It is believed that on looking it through, it will be found that few witnesses have ever sustained so long and close an examination, with more uniform accuracy and consistency. At the close of the examination Mr. Thacher was excused by the Committee from further attendance, for which act of courtesy he thanked them.

The next day, after Mr. Thacher had left the State and returned to his residence, some Masons were busy in circulating an infamous handbill, assailing his character, which had been published some time before in Massachusetts. They took this Masonic method to discredit the witness, not daring to attempt to touch his character while he was under examination. The disposition uniformly evinced by Masons, to traduce the character of Mr. Thacher, and their declining to bring any testimony to discredit him, which they had full opportunity to do, while he was under examination as a witness, furnish conclusive proof that his enemies have no grounds for their aspersions, which they dare not

by legal investigation. Another attempt was made to discredit Mr. Thatcher's testimony, by declaring in Masonic newspapers and elsewhere, that he had stated a great many things in his speeches and writings on Masonry which he did not dare to swear to under oath. The reason is obvious. In his speeches and writings Mr. Thatcher had used facts which he believed sufficiently proved by others, as he had a perfect right to do; but when under oath, he was bound to assert nothing that was not within his own personal knowledge. The care and caution with which he confined himself to this rule, in his examination, will give to any candid man, an additional confidence in the truth of his declarations.

Another attempt to evade the force of Mr. Thatcher's testimony, was made by representing in the Masonic paper at Providence, that he had really stated nothing against Masonry, in his examination. The reflection will readily occur, that if Mr. Thatcher had really testified to nothing against Masonry, for what reason has he been so severely villified by Masons for stating when not under oath, the very same facts touching Masonic oaths and principles which he swore to in this examination?

TESTIMONY OF REV. LEVI CHASE.

Thursday morning, Dec. 8.—The Investigating Committee met at 9 o'clock: Present the same as yesterday. The second witness,

Levi Chase, was called, and sworn to tell the whole truth. In answer to general interrogatories, says—

I reside at Fall River, town of Troy, (Mass.) am by trade a machinist, now the operator of a mill—a manufacturer. Am an ordained minister of the Gospel. I have been a Mason, but am not now.—Have taken the six first degrees. I was a Most Excellent Master. I was made a mason in Manchester Lodge, in Coventry, R. I. in the year 1815: I think in December, or first of 1816. I took three degrees in that Lodge—all that Lodge was authorized to confer. The other three I received in Warren, at the Royal Arch Chapter, in the fore part of the year 1822. I was never made a member of a Chapter. I continued a Mason up to 1828, in the fall, I think, when I publicly seceded. There was an obligation administered to me at the time of taking each of these degrees. I could not repeat the obligations verbatim. I could the penalties. I could write the oaths out, on reflection.

(Mr. Simmons read the Entered Apprentices' oath from Bernard's Light on Masonry) page 20.

Witness. That is correct as administered to me by John Greene, Agent of Warwick Manufacturing Company, in Warwick, who was at that time Worshipful Master of the Lodge.

Mr. Simmons then read the Fellow Craft's oath, from Bernard, pages 44 and 45.

Witness. It agrees with the oath I took—except I was not to wrong a Brother one cent, (not two) dispersed (not disposed) over the globe, and so help me God—(not keep). Otherwise it is substantially the same. The words "square or angle of my work," I am confident were not administered to me.

Mr. Hazard. Keep instead of help; that must be a typographical error.

Mr. Simmons then read the Master Mason's oath from Bernard, page 61.

Mr. Simmons. Was any explanation given?

Witness. No explanation or intimation was given, until I was brought and placed in a proper situation to receive the oath. I had no knowledge till then, that an oath was administered in the Lodge. I was first prepared by being stripped of my apparel.

Mr. Simmons here suggested that that part of the ceremony was immaterial.

Witness. With the permission of the Committee I will give it in my own way. My apparel being taken off,—

Mr. Hazard. I would suggest to the witness that it is not necessary for him to relate the ceremony.

The Committee have no objection, but you will be asked if all the previous ceremonies are correctly stated in Bernard, which will embrace your whole answer.

[*Note.* The design of this ingenious suggestion was apparent. It would obviate giving a detail of the degrading ceremony in the deposition, which it was then expected would be openly read before the General Assembly. The reference to the ceremonies in Bernard would not be understood, because not one in fifty of the members had ever seen that book.]

Witness. I was placed in a very curious position to receive the oath and should like to explain it, as a reason why I took it, and others after it, without proper reflection.

Mr. Hazard. Is not the whole of this contained in Bernard's Light on Masonry?

Witness. I do not know but it is just as I received it. In the first place I was informed that it was necessary I should be prepared. I was prepared by being divested of my apparel except my shirt, and a pair of drawers provided and put on. I was then hoodwinked by a bandage across my eyes, a cable tow or rope round my neck, and—

Mr. Hazard. I SHOULD BE ASHAMED TO ACKNOWLEDGE THAT!

Witness. I am willing to confess how degraded a situation I was placed in to receive the oath, and you must remember I am sworn by you, to tell the whole truth. My shirt was stripped off my left arm, and my left breast naked. [Grand Master Cook, and Past High Priest Wilkinson, who were sitting at the table, gave indications of great uneasiness here.] In this situation I was led into the Lodge Room, and made to kneel, at the altar, on my naked left knee, my hands clasping the bible. Then I was informed by the Worshipful Master, that I was placed in a proper situation to receive the oath or obligation, which he informed me was not to infringe upon my religious nor political sentiments. He asked me if I was willing to receive it on that condition. My answer was, that I was. Then he ordered me to repeat my own name, Levi Chase, and repeat after him the oath that has been read to me. A similar assurance was given before each of the three first degrees he conferred on me, only the phraseology may be a little different. He would assure me as before, &c.

Mr. Thomas Rivers, here said it was very easy for the witness to learn the oath or write it out of Bernard.

Witness. I never saw Bernard's Light on Masonry, until last Friday (six days before) when it was handed me by Mr. Shove. I wrote out the oath long before I ever saw Bernard's, as it is given in my Address to the Grand Lodge of Rhode Island, published in June 1831: I could not therefore have written it from Bernard, as you say.

Mr. Hails. Is that substantially the oath you took?

Witness. It is, excepting two variations. Murder and treason excepted, and they left to my own free will and choice, was the way I took it.

Mr. Hazard. It is immaterial whether it is election, or free will and choice. The meaning is the same.

Mr. Rivers, said he wished to explain. He did not mean to intimate, that the witness had taken the oath wholly from Bernard, but he (*Witness*) said that he could not remember the oaths, and he inferred the witness had written them from Bernard.

Mr. Hallett remarked that witness said he could not repeat the oaths verbatim at once, but could write them out, on reflection.

Mr. Hazard said this interference was improper.

Mr. Hallett replied that he was aware of it, but if Mr. Rivers was permitted to make an insinuation against the witness, he had a right to repel it.

Witness. The words "and they left at my own free will and choice, or election" instead of "at my own election," were used in the oath I took. Then as to the penalty—"were I to prove" guilty, instead of "ever to prove" guilty. I recollect distinctly receiving the words "if any part of my obligation is omitted at this time, I promise to hold myself amenable thereto whenever informed."

Mr. Simmons then read the Mark Master's oath, from Bernard, page 98.

Witness. That is substantially the same. I have no recollection that the word *swear* was used.

Mr. Simmons then read the Past Master's oath, from Bernard, page 109.

Witness. That is substantially the same, except ~~so~~ help me God and *keep me*, instead of "make me."

Mr. Simmons then read the Most Excellent Master's oath, from Bernard, page 120.

Witness. That is substantially the same—(no variation was mentioned.) After I was initiated, a charge was read.

Mr. Simmons read from Webb's Monitor, p. 41, the charge at initiation in the first degree, (the same as given in the testimony of Mr. Thacher.)

Witness. That was read to me from Webb's Monitor.

Mr. Simmons. Did you consider it as binding as your oath?

Witness. I did not.

Mr. Hazard. I shall begin to think Masonry is worse than I ever thought it was, if Ministers will take these oaths and charges, and then not consider them binding.

Witness. I did not consider the charge as binding in every particular.

Mr. Hazard. Who gave the charge to you in the Chapter?

Witness. I have no recollection of any charge given to me in the upper degrees, in particular. I did not consider this charge binding, where it came in contact with my religious principles, in saying that no institution was ever raised on a better foundation than Masonry, none ever established better rules, &c. I considered the christian religion a better institution. That was the only part which struck me as objectionable at that time.

Mr. Hazard. Did you make any protest against it at the time?

Witness. No sir, I did not.

Mr. Hazard. Then you left it to be understood you had no objections to it?

Witness. I would observe that I was brought in that situation where I was like a slave, with a rope around my neck. I felt a fear to protest against any thing, situated as I was.

Mr. Hazard. What was your objection to that part of the charge?

Witness. I had embraced the religion of the Son of God, an Institution I considered far superior to that of Masonry. A circumstance impressed my mind much. I was asked, "whom do you believe in?" My answer was, in Jesus Christ, the Son of God. I was checked, and ordered to say, in God. This impressed my mind that the Institution wished to exclude the religion of the Son of God.

Mr. Hazard. You were checked by the presiding officer?

Witness. The conductor told me to say, in God. *Mr. Hazard.* I want to go to the bottom of this business. It seems to be an imputation upon the religious belief of this whole class of your yellow citizens. What I wish to know is, did you infer that they were deists, and wanted to exclude Jesus Christ?

Witness. I do suppose that they wished to exclude the name of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and the religion of the Savior, as being no part of Masonry.

Mr. Hazard, to *Mr. Haile*—Put that down, and let us see what it all comes to. To the witness—

When you first replied Jesus Christ, was it your intention to exclude God and the Holy Spirit?

Witness. It was not.

Mr. Hazard, (considerably excited.) It don't say well, Mr. Witness.

Witness. Well Sir, I am willing you should make it say as you please. It says with Masonry.

[*Note.* If Mr. Hazard had studied Masonry in her own constitutions, he would have found no difficulty in understanding the witness. Masonry is designed to be universal, to include Turks, Pagans, Jews, and Gentiles. Consequently she excludes all religions but natural religion. She acknowledges a God, it is true, but he may be Juggernaut, Brama, Allah, a Chinese Josh, or the God of the Christian. It is all the same in her universal creed. Mr. Hazard should have recollected too, that Moses Seixas, a thorough professed Jew, was long Grand Master, High Priest, &c. of Masonry, at Newport, Rhode Island, and could he have presided over a society that professed belief in Jesus Christ, whom he regarded as an impostor?]

Mr. Hazard. Do you consider that the words Jesus Christ, include God, the Father, and the Holy Spirit?

Witness. Do you wish to know my belief respecting Deity?

Mr. Hazard, (vehemently.) Do you consider that the words Jesus Christ, the Son of God, include God the Father, and the Holy Spirit?

Witness. I do not, Sir, in every sense of the word. If the Chairman is going into an investigation of my belief of divine things, I shall wish an opportunity to explain.

Mr. William Sprague, (senior) here remarked, that he believed it was unusual in this state, to press witnesses on their religious opinions.

[The numerous spectators present, evinced no little surprise, at the course the Chairman was pursuing. Mr. Hazard said, that some persons might think that the witness was hardly pressed. His object was to inquire if he meant to charge Masons with being Atheists. The witness said he had made no such charge.]

Mr. Hazard—with emphasis—Do you or do you not consider that the word God also includes Christ and the Holy Spirit?

Witness. I do not in every sense. If you will give me an opportunity, I will explain. First, as to the reasons why I do not understand that Jesus Christ does not, in every sense comprehend God the Father.

Mr. Hazard. It is a short question, and requires a short answer.

Witness. I must answer it my own way.

Mr. Simmons. How long will it take you?

Witness. It may take me three hours; I will explain my reasons if the Committee wish it.

Mr. Hazard You don't frighten us. We will sift this matter to the bottom.

Witness. You have placed me in a situation to make me out an Unitarian or Trinitarian, as you please.

Mr. Hazard. You have undertaken to impeach your fellow citizens as heathens, and it is our duty to protect them.

Witness. Very well Sir. You can protect them, if you choose, only allow me to explain.

Mr. Hazard. You have placed yourself in this situation, and you must take the consequence.

Mr. Sprague, Jr. One of the Committee, objected to going into an investigation of a man's religious creed.

Mr. Hazard persisted, and the witness said he was ready to proceed, as fast as Mr. Haile would take down his explanation. Mr. Haile said he had written it down, thus—The reasons why I do not consider that Jesus Christ includes God and the Holy Spirit, are, first, because he is called the son of man.

Mr. Simmons. Would you prefer to explain this, here, or to write out your reasons, some other time?

Witness said it was immaterial to him which.—He only wished not to be left in a situation for the spectators to draw an unfavorable inference from his not being allowed to explain. When he received the degree, he was as he hoped, a christian.—Had he first been told to say he believed in God, he should not have thought of it, but their rejection of his use of the words Jesus Christ, brought an impression to his mind, that they meant to make a distinction, unfavorable to the christian religion. He could not see the difference, but they evidently meant to make one. He was willing to leave it there.

Mr. Hazard—(Here began to soften a little).—That will do very well, if you will say you don't believe so now. You ought to extend charity to your brethren.

Witness. I will say, in all charity, that I do not believe they were Deists, but that such is the tendency and design of the Masonic Institution. I find by searching the six degrees administered to me, that the word Christ or Son of God, is excluded, and I believe there was a design in it, to exclude his religion.

Mr. Hazard (with warmth.) Then you mean to call them Deists.

Witness. No Sir. I do not wish to condemn any man's opinions. I do not speak of the individuals, but I say the Institution is founded on Deism.

Mr. Hazard. I now understand you to say that it is the fault of the Institution and not of the individuals?

Witness. I did not intend to impeach the members, but the Institution as designed to exclude the christian religion.

Mr. Hazard. The design to exclude the Christian religion you impute to the founders of the Institution, not to those who are now its members?

Witness. To the Institution, as well as its founders.

Mr. Simmons. Would you prefer at your leisure to write out your answers to the questions Mr. Hazard has asked you, or will you have them taken down now.

Witness. Either way. [Up to this time Mr. Haile had not written down the answers of witness to the question touching his belief in the distinct existence of the different persons in the trinity.—He now wrote it down in the following form.]—"The design to exclude Jesus Christ and the Christian religion, I impute to the Institution (of Free Masonry,) and not to the members of it with whom I am acquainted, many of whom I believe to be christians. I also find, on examination, as far as I have gone in the six degrees, that Jesus Christ and his religion are excluded.

[Mr. Moses Richardson, a Mason here made some remarks to Mr. Simmons,] upon which Mr. S. inquired. Did you ever hear it explained that the Scriptures were to be the rule and guide of your whole life?

Witness. Does not remember ever to have heard it so explained. Is confident he never did in the Lodge. Has heard portions of scripture read there.

Mr. Hazard. Did you ever attend the lectures in a Lodge?

Witness. I never did, except the parts used at the opening and closing of a Lodge.

Mr. Hazard. I am certain I have seen lectures in which the holy scriptures are acknowledged to be the guide for Masons.

Mr. Hazard. Do you know if at the meeting of Lodges for Lectures, &c.; do you know if the scriptures are referred to?

Witness. I do not, for the reason that I never attended or heard of such lectures. I never heard it explained in any Lodge, that the scriptures were to be the guide of Masons. I know of no lectures given there for that purpose.

Mr. Hazard—(turning to Mr. Joseph S. Cooke

Grand Master of the Grand Lodge, who was sitting at the table,) how is it, Mr Cooke? Don't you have lectures.

Mr. Cooke replied that the Lodges were in the practice of holding meetings for lectures. I do not know whether in opening and closing Lodges the scriptures are read or not.

Mr. Hallett here asked whether Grand Master Cooke intended to say that meetings of the Lodges were held for the delivery of lectures upon morals, science, the arts, or any subject of that nature?

Mr. Cooke said, they were in the habit of having lectures in the Lodges.

Mr. Hallett asked: did you ever know lectures given in Lodges for any other purpose than to explain the signs, grips, and ceremonies?

Mr. Cooke said he could not precisely tell what the lectures were.

Mr. Hazard said the examination was not to be taken out of the hands of the Committee in this way.

Mr. Hallett replied that Mr Cook had intimated that meetings of Lodges were held for scientific and literary lectures, and he wished the Committee might understand what these lectures were. [He here held up an old pamphlet printed in characters, under Masonic sanction, containing the lectures and oaths in the three first degrees. This book was afterwards proved to have been contrived by Masons, and used in Rhode Island Lodges, for studying the lectures.] Mr. Hallett said, that pamphlet contained the lectures in the three first degrees. They taught how to *tuck up* and *tuck down the apron*, and how to kill Hiram Abiff, but they contained neither science or morals. He challenged the Grand Master to show that any other description of lectures were delivered in Lodges. Mr. Hazard here interposed, and the examination proceeded. The Grand Master was afterwards personally requested by Mr. Hallett, to furnish evidence, if there was any, that any other lectures were delivered in Lodges except those that related to the ceremonies of initiation, and those read to the candidates from Webb's Monitor. The G. M. did not pretend there were any others.

[COMMENTS.—The substance of these pretendedly scientific and moral lectures, as delivered in Lodges, will be found in Barnard's Light on Masonry. The Grand Master (if not corrected) would have conveyed the impression which is so often falsely entertained, that regular courses of lectures from which valuable information could be derived, are given in Lodges and Chapters; and the Investigating Committee not only permitted this inference to be drawn from his statement, but the Chairman was evidently displeased at an explanation which demonstrated the fact that these lectures, instead of conveying information, are made up of questions and answers about the childish ceremonies and profane oaths of the degrees.]

Mr. Simmons inquired of the witness if the charges read from Webb, in the three degrees, were delivered to him, and if he considered them binding?

Witness had not read Webb for fifteen years, but thinks the charges were read to him. Without giving them much attention at the time, it occurred to him that there were some things not altogether systematical. He considered them binding as a man, so far as they did not interfere with his religious opinions, and as a Mason so far as they did not interfere with his more solemn obligations.

Mr. Simmons. What part did you consider not systematical?

Witness. I alluded there to the first sentence, 'your zeal for the institution of Masonry, the progress you have made in the mystery, and your conformity to our rules, have pointed you out as a proper object of our favor.' I was hurried through the degrees. I took the first degree on Tuesday evening, and the two next on Saturday following, so that I could not have made much progress in the mystery.

[Mr. Hazard had spent some time in looking over Webb's Monitor, which had been handed to him by Mr. Richardson, a Mason, for some purpose. Having apparently found what he was looking for, he said

Here is the clause. Have you ever read from Webb,—from the Masonic Monitor, in an Address to Master Masons the following section in the Monitor, 'The Holy Writings, that great light in Masonry, will guide you to all truth; it will direct your paths to the temple of happiness, and point out to you the whole duty of man.' Now, Mr. witness, it is truth we want. It is the duty of the Committee to protect their fellow citizens, who are charged in this loose manner with excluding the christian religion. Was that charge given to you? [It will be observed that Mr. Hazard was particularly close in his cross questions when Masonry or Masons were implicated by the testimony. It will be useful to see hereafter, how he applied this rule when adhering. Masons were under examination.]

In reply to Mr. Hazard's question, relative to the Holy writings being the guide of Masons, witness said he did not remember to have heard that sentence in the Lodge.

Mr. Hallett proposed a question in writing, "were you ever present at the installation of the Master of a Lodge?"

Witness said no.

Mr. Hallett then referred Mr Hazard to page 97 of Webb's Monitor, showing that the address from which he had read the expression about the 'Holy Writings,' was not made to a Master Mason, but to the Master of a Lodge, on his installation, by the Grand Master.

[Mr Moses Richardson here whispered to Mr Simmons.]

Mr Simmons (addressing the witness).—Is it not usual, to give the same charge in the Past Masters degree as at the installation of the Master of a Lodge?

Witness. I do not know.

[This could not be the case with the Address Mr Hazard read from, because that commences, 'You are now to be installed Master of this new Lodge.']

[NOTE. As Messrs. Hazard and Simmons were so anxious to prove that Masonry was, as she has pretended to be 'the Handmaid of religion,' and censured Mr. Chase so sternly for alleging that Masonry excluded the christian religion, it may not be out of place here to refer to what the Masonic Book of Constitutions understands by Holy Writings. We quote from the original charge at Initiation into the first degree, p. 175 of the Massachusetts Book of Constitutions, edited by a learned and pious divine, Thaddeus M. Harris, D. D. and approved by the Grand Lodge. 'As a gentleman and a Mason, you are to be a strict observer of the moral law, as contained in the Holy Writings.' Note by Dr Harris. 'The Bible, and in countries where it is not known, ANY OTHER BOOK, WHICH IS UNDERSTOOD TO CONTAIN THE WORD OF GOD.'

MR. HAZARD'S INTERROGATORIES.

Mr Hazard here proposed to witness the interrogatories, with some variations, he had put to Mr. Thacher. To the first whether he inquired as to the nature of the oaths, before he took them.

Witness said he did not, because he did not understand even that an oath was to be administered, before he took the first degree. If he had known and understood the nature of the oaths and what he was to go through, he should not have taken the degrees. After taking the first degree, he did endeavor to find out if there were any more oaths, but he could not. He asked a brother Mason when going up to the Lodge to take the 2d degree, and he replied. 'O, you go forward and take the other degrees and you will be satisfied.' He was dissatisfied on taking the first degree, but he went forward.

The Committee here adjourned at quarter before 11 o'clock.

Thursday Afternoon December 8th. Met again at 3 o'clock, and continued Mr. Hazard's interrogatories. Witness was confident he did not understand the oaths, when he took them, as he did afterwards. The reason was they were given one word or sentence at a time, and he did not know what was coming next, and could not keep up the connexion in his mind. The mallet was drawn across his throat, to remind him of his penalty. The oath was given to him the same as a master learns a child his letters, who don't know what is coming for him to repeat. I can only compare it to this.

Mr. Hazard. How old were you?

Witness. About 29 years of age.

Mr. Hazard. How long did you remain in a Lodge?

Witness. I was a Mason from 1816 to 1828.

Mr. Hazard. Were you a child all that time?

Witness. I am a child yet I hope, of the Son of God, and I wish all men were the same.

Mr. Hazard. It is very well for the community to know what kind of Masons there are who come here to charge their fellow citizens with being atheists.

Mr Simmons. Have you answered that part of the 1st Interrogatory, whether you made inquiries before taking the oath?

Witness. I have answered that before. I did not.

Mr Simmons. Did you reflect, after you had taken each oath, upon its nature, force and extent?

Witness. I had no chance to reflect. I have given the reasons before.

Mr Simmons. If not satisfied with the oaths, did you complain or object?

Witness. I have answered that I made inquiry of a brother.

Mr. Hazard. The question I ask is, whether after you took the first oath, you reflected on it, before you took another?

Witness. I did so far as I have stated, and asked a brother, but could get no explanation.

Mr. Hazard. Were you satisfied with the oath, upon the reflection you did give to it?

Witness. I was not. That is answered before, if I understand language.

Mr. Hazard. Did you then make any inquiry of the elder Masons, as to how they construed their oaths, to remove these doubts?

Witness. All the inquiry I made was of the brother when going up to the Lodge, between Tuesday and Saturday.

Mr. Hazard. If these people come here to run down their fellow citizens, let us see what they know about it.

Mr Sprague, of the Committee, here objected to this course of examination. Some observations passed between him and Mr Hazard, which were not heard.

Mr Simmons. Upon taking the other oaths, were you satisfied?

Witness. I was not. Mr. S. did you complain or object to the Lodge?

Witness. I never complained or objected in the Lodge, because I never afterwards attended that Lodge, and I should have feared the consequences if I had complained.

Thursday Afternoon December 8th. The Committee met at 3 o'clock, and resumed the examination of Mr. Chase.

Mr. Hazard. Was there any thing in your Masonic oaths which made it dangerous for you to secede, or dissolve your connection with the Lodge?

Witness. If you mean not to attend the Lodge, I did not so understand them. I did discontinue visiting the Lodge, but I considered if I seceded or disclosed the secrets, my Masonic obligations would not tolerate me in so doing, and I was afraid the penalties of the obligations might be inflicted on me.

Mr. Haile repeated the question.

Witness. I did not consider the quitting of the Lodge, dangerous, but I did consider it dangerous to secede and renounce Masonry.

Mr Hazard. I will put the question, which you don't seem to understand. Was there any thing that rendered it dangerous for you to dissolve your connection with your Lodge?

Witness. Not in quitting the Lodge in the way I did, but I did consider it would be dangerous to secede. There is a difference between leaving the Lodge and seceding.

Mr Simmons. The question is whether you considered it dangerous to dissolve your connection?

Witness. I have answered that.

Mr Simmons. Do you perfectly comprehend the meaning of the question?

Mr Hazard. No matter. We have got it. (To the witness.) Did you think there was any thing dangerous in complaining in the Lodge [of your oaths.]

Witness. I did at that time. Equally as much so as complaining out of the Lodge.

Mr Hazard. This is a serious examination, and I ask you to point out what part of your Masonic obligations forbid you to complain?

Witness. I thought that part which bound me to keep the secrets inviolable and not to speak evil of a brother in the Lodge or out of it, neither behind his back nor before his face, rendered it dangerous, for I could not speak against the Institution without speaking against those who support it.

Mr Hazard. Well. Was there any thing in your Masonic oaths that compelled you to go on, taking further degrees.

Witness. No, Sir, there was not.

Webb's Monitor was here handed to the witness by Mr. Turner, open at page 30, and this question was put to him by request. Previous to taking the oath in the first degree, while in the preparation room, were you required to give your assent to several declarations one of which was, 'Do you seriously declare upon your honor, that you will cheerfully conform to all the ancient established usages and customs of the Fraternity?'

Witness. These questions were asked before I took the Entered Apprentice's oath, and I was bound to submit.

Mr Hazard. But what part of this did you consider would prevent your complaining to the Lodge?

Witness. That part where I have bound myself to conform to the usages of Masonry, without knowing what they were.

Mr Hazard. Was obedience to the Lodge inconsistent with your right to complain.

Witness. I considered that complaining to the Lodge would be complaining against those who uphold the Lodge, and I had submitted myself to the usages of the Lodge and could not complain.

Mr Hazard. I said nothing about that, but I will ask you whether you had that on your mind before the book was handed to you?

Witness said he had owned that book, Webb's Monitor, since 1816, and that the preparatory obligation in the Entered Apprentice degree, together with his other obligations, certainly did occur to his mind, as reasons why it would not be safe to complain. The Chairman, he said, had treated him as if he were a child, in this examination.

Mr Hazard. I asked you if you were a child, because you represented yourself so, as learning your letters, when taking the oaths.

Witness. In one respect I was like a child when taking the oaths; an infant is naked, and I was nearly so.

Mr Simmons. Did you consider these preliminary objections, and the oaths and charges to be all connected, and all binding upon those who took them, and did you so masonically consider them when you took them?

Witness. After reflection I so considered them Masonically, as all in connection, and do at this time. I considered the charges were the trap laid to draw persons in to hold and bind them by the oaths.

Mr Hazard then proceeded with the interrogatories, as propounded to Mr Thacher. In answer to 5th, whether witness considered he gave the Lodge jurisdiction as far as he could, to inflict the penalties, if he violated his oaths, &c. Witness says after mature reflection he did consider them of that nature. He came to that conclusion about a year after he took them (say 1817.) He then considered that he ought to be cautious as to what he said against the Institution. The word *caution*, is used in the Lodge.

In answer to the 6th, 7th and 8th Interrogatories, witness says he knows of no secrets except such as are explained in Bernard. Has not seen Allyn's Ritual. He did consider his Masonic oaths conflicted with his civil duties, immediately upon reflecting on them.

In answer to 10th Interrogatory, what induced him to secede from Masonry,

Witness says he seceded in 1828. Various circumstances lead to it. The principle one was the following which he wished to have taken down.— In the latter part of September, 1827, going from Dighton to Pawtucket, I stopped at the house of Capt. Baker, I do not recollect his other name.— Elder Daniel Greene of Pawtucket came in and after the first salutations said he wanted to speak with me.

[*Note.* Mr Greene is a respectable Baptist Clergyman. He has gone as high as the Knight Templar's degree, and has been, and is still believed to be, a strenuous advocate of Masonry. He stopped the R. I. American, which he had taken for a long time, immediately after that paper opened its columns to investigate Masonry. Aside from Masonry, he is a very respectable citizen.]

Witness proceeded to state that they then retired into a room by themselves: and he asked me if I had visited a Lodge lately. I told him no, and did not think I ever should again. He then asked me if I knew that I could not get into a Lodge. I observed to him that I thought I could work in, as my memory was good. He observed that he had reference to a particular circumstance that had taken place. I asked, what circumstance? He observed, he had reference to Morgan's Illustrations, a book so called. That on that account the lodges had passed another degree or check-word, I think he styled it, in order to stop *book masons*, having reference to the book before mentioned; but observed, if you had been here last evening, I could have vouched for you, and you could have took the check word or degree, I don't recollect which he used. I then asked him if that book was true? He answered by a nod of his head, giving assent in that way. I then asked him if *Morgan was murdered?* He said he dare not answer me upon that subject no further, (having reference to my not having taken the check degree) no otherwise than he would there say to me, *no doubt he has suffered his just deserts, according to his obligations.* He then took me so, (grasping both arms above the elbows) and said, *I suppose he had his choice.* This was what first led me to serious meditation to seek for a fit opportunity to secede. I then went home, and secretly borrowed that book, (Morgan's.) The owner would not let me have it, except in secret, under a promise to return it. He was not a mason. I read it through and found it substantially the penalties and oaths that had been conferred upon me. This was the final cause of my seceding. In the Fall River Monitor I published my first public renunciation, in 1828 in the fall I think.

Mr Hazard. Were you a member of a Lodge then?

Witness. I conclude I was considered a member of Manchester Lodge, from the notice I received from the Secretary of the Lodge, summoning me, after my renunciation, to show cause why I should not be expelled. I understood I was expelled.

Mr Hazard. Did you make any communication to the Lodge—they were your brethren for many years before you seceded—of your intention to secede?

Witness. I made no communication to the Lodge, because I was afraid to do so, before I came out publicly.

Mr. Hazard. How many did the Lodge consist of?

Witness. 30 or 40, or perhaps more, when I was initiated. Among them were Dr. Allen, Dr Knight, John Green, and a Mr. Merrill.

Mr Hazard. Were your brethren of Manchester Lodge, with whom you associated, men of such character that you should have been afraid of your life, if in their power, when you seceded?

Witness. I could not say what they would feel bound to do, as Masons. In their moral character I considered them as good men, as other men, and some of them I hope are christians. They showed me in the Lodge what they did to traitors, in the murder of the ruffians who killed Hiram Abiff, and I thought I had some cause to fear, from the nature of the penalties. I could not tell what their Masonic obligations would lead them to, as far as they adhered to their oaths, and I stood in fear, masonically.

Mr Simmons. Did you as a Mason, consider you were bound to execute such penalties upon others?

Witness. I considered myself masonically bound to perform all oaths and obligations to the Lodge, if adhering to them, but not morally and virtually bound to execute such penalties.

In answer to 11th, 12th and 13th Interrogatories, witness says he never heard the nature of Masonic penalties discussed in a Lodge, and that he knows nothing about the deliberations of the Lodge on politics or religion, but never knew these subjects discussed in the Lodge. Mr. Bliss, a Mason, once requested him to vote for Mr Hodges for Congress in 1827.

14th Interrogatory. Did you consider or believe that there was any thing in your Masonic obligations binding you as a Freemason to vote for a Freemason, in preference to a better man, not a mason.

Witness. You say as a Freemason. I answer in two capacities. If the grand hailing sign were given, I should consider myself bound as a Mason to support a Mason for office, in preference to another not a mason, but as a citizen bound by my civil obligations, I should disdain the idea.

Mr Hazard repeated the question. You can evade it or answer it as you please.

Witness said if Mr Hails would take it down he believed it would be a full answer. I considered myself standing in a two fold relation, and that if I were to see the grand hailing sign I should be bound Masonically to aid him with my vote as I was bound to obey the sign, and to go on a master mason's errand bareheaded and bare foot, and to relieve him if there was more probability of saving his life than losing my own. I say this as a Free Mason. As a free man and exclusive of Masonic signs I could not do it. As a seceder I should not.

In answer to 15th Interrogatory, whether he would give a preference to a Mason, witness says he should masonically be under obligation by his oath, to favor a mason in preference to those not Masons. He had never practiced so, for he had never had the grand hailing sign used to him by a Mason in distress.

16th and 17th Interrogatories—Witness knows nothing about.

18th. Have you frequented Lodges in other States, and are they the same as in this State?

Witness. Was never in any Lodge out of the State. He had been present at a funeral when the Attleborough Lodge buried Dr. Ballou, and there were Masons present from seven different States, who passed the same signs.

Mr. Simmons. What induced you to apply for the higher degrees, if you considered the three first irreligious and Deistical?

Witness.—When I applied for the three last degrees, I considered the three first irreligious and deistical. The reason of my applying was this: I was informed by Rev. Thomas W. Tucker that he had been dissatisfied in the lower degrees, but was informed that the upper degrees were more agreeable to a christian's feelings, and he was going to take them, and thought I had better. A Book was also placed in my hand, the purport of which appeared to be more agreeable to the Christian religion. It was a poem in praise of Masonry. He observed, if I would join he would recommend me, and they would not charge any thing, as I was a Minister, and I should be satisfied. I had expressed to him my dissatisfaction on account of its irreligion, and he told me the Methodist brethren in Bristol were considerably engaged in religion, and were mostly Masons—and he was satisfied, and rather urged me to come in, and see how pleasant it was. I was a minister of the Methodist order at that time, and Mr. Tucker was the same. I went, and they opened a Lodge on the Master's degree—they satisfied my mind some—and seemed to have a very pleasant time—talked some about religion,—but I afterwards rather doubted if it was not all a catch, as they did not seem to close the lodge in very regular order. I had also conversed with Elder Case about my dissatisfaction about the three first degrees—he made but very little answer to it. I worked into the Lodge in Bristol. I never knew before then that clergymen were admitted gratis.—I paid for my three first degrees. Was not then a minister.

Mr Simmons. You have several times qualified your answers by saying you considered your oaths Masonically binding, but not morally or virtually. What do you mean by it?

Witness. I have explained that several times. In the oaths I promise and swear such and such things, without any equivocation or mental reservation, &c. I cannot get rid of that in any way Masonically, but to do just as the oaths direct.

Mr Simmons repeated the question.

Witness again said he did not consider the oaths morally or virtually binding.

Witness. I have given a Masonic answer, without self evasion or equivocation.

Mr Hazard. How long after you determined to withdraw from Masonry, before you did so?

Witness. About one year. I made my mind known to my wife, soon after my interview with Elder Greene, and she persuaded me not to secede, from fear that I should be exposed to injury.

Mr Hazard. I have a poor opinion of Masonry, but I have a good opinion of Masons.

Witness. I have no enmity against any Mason in the world. It is the Institution is all I have any thing against. I would do a good turn to a Mason as soon as any other man.

Mr Hazard. If on any occasion when a Mason, your Masonic obligations had conflicted with your civil, religious or social duties, which should you have obeyed.

Witness. I should obey the obligation due to my Maker, even at the sacrifice of my life, if required. In other respects I cant tell how I might have been influenced as a Mason.

Mr Hazard. Did you ever hear a Mason justify the murder of Morgan except Elder Greene? If so, when and where? [asked by request]

Witness. I have. At the time of the Dedham

Antimasonic Convention, three years ago, at a tavern about 10 miles this side of Dedham, I heard a Mason say, if there ever was such a man as Morgan, and he had taken such oaths as he had published, he was a damned perjured wretch, and deserved to be killed! This man said he was a Mason. He was a stranger to me. Messrs. Brayton, Slade and Luther Lincoln of Norton, were present at this conversation. Mr. Lincoln said to the man he ought to be careful what he said for there was a seceding Mason present. He replied he did not believe there was a seceder, but if there was *he was a perjured wretch and deserved to die.*

Mr. Hazard. I wonder you staid in such company that.

Witness. I did not. I left it.

Question from Mr. Paine. (Antimason.) Had any person seceded from Masonry in this quarter before you did, and did this circumstance add to your fears respecting the penalties of the oaths?

Witness. Yes. I believe I was the first Mason who seceded from a Lodge in Rhode Island. No one had done so publicly. I seceded about a year after the conversation with Elder Greene. [The examination of Mr. Chase, which had occupied from 9 o'clock, A. M. to the same hour P. M. was here closed, the notes of Mr. Haile were read to him, and by him signed, and the Committee adjourned.]

COMMENTS.

[It will be observed that the interrogations put to Mr. Chase, were varied considerably from those put to Mr. Thacher. The ingenuity of Mr. Hazard, who is one of the most acute cross questioning lawyers in the country, was exerted to its utmost to entangle Mr. Chase in his examination. The latter, as will be apparent from his answers, is a plain conscientious, pious, single minded man, with no reproach on his whole life, but secession from Masonry; with no guile in himself and suspecting none in others; and yet it is obvious that straight forward common sense and truth, enabled him successfully to baffle all the Chairman's efforts to involve him in contradiction, or render him ridiculous. Those who witnessed the anger and occasional fierceness of Mr. Hazard toward this witness, and the perfect coolness and good nature of the latter under wanton insult, were well satisfied that the former felt himself completely foiled at his best weapons.

Another point in the examination of this witness, should not escape remark. Mr. Hazard and Mr. Simmons attempted to call this witness in question as to his religious creed, with a view to discredit his testimony. No people on earth are so jealous of the slightest interference in matters of religious concernment, as the people of Rhode Island, and but for the protection given the Committee by Masonry, this attempt to call a witness to account, for his religious belief would have roused an universal indignation. To prove this assertion, and also to show how far Benjamin Hazard, Esq. could act inconsistently, *even with himself*, in order to uphold Masonry, and brow beat Antimasonic witnesses, we will relate one fact. At the November term of the U. S. Circuit Court in Providence, 1828, Judge Story presiding, the old common law objection to the competency of two witnesses was taken, on the ground of their disbelief in a future state of reward and punishment. The Judge examined testimony touching the irreligious belief of the witnesses, and being proved to be deists, if not atheists, they were both set aside. This decision, though in strict conformity to common law precedents, was declared to be an infringement of the rights of conscience secured by the Bill of Rights of R. I. The press of that State was universally roused against the decision of the Judge in this case, and a general indignation pervaded the community. At the subsequent session of the Legislature of Rhode Island, in January, this same Benjamin Hazard, Esq. *himself* introduced a bill, explanatory of the bill of rights, declaring that no witness shall be called in question in any Court in

this State (Rhode Island) touching his belief or disbelief in matters of religious concernment. Mr. Hazard advocated this bill, (which passed unanimously) at the same time censuring the conduct of Judge Story, toward the witnesses in the case referred to, with no little severity. Not a word was uttered in the House of Assembly in vindication of the Judge, who had just cause to complain (and we understood at the time did complain) that not one of his friends would explain to the House the precedents of common law, upon which the Court had felt bound to exclude the witnesses. The reason they did not do so, is the *old reason* that usually governs the conduct of politicians: *it would have been very unpopular to have done so!* Mr. Hazard availed himself fully of the popular feeling. He introduced the bill, he censured the Judge, and *he, himself*, was the first one, after that act passed, to call in question the religious opinions of a witness under civil oaths before *him*, sitting as a Judge!—With this glaring fact before them, the candid portion of the public will not be surprised at any inconsistency; any outrage upon the feelings or opinions of witnesses; any *bargains* with Masonic witnesses; any perversion of testimony; any severity and bitterness of denunciation, which they may find in the department and report of Benjamin Hazard, Esq. touching his connexion with this investigation into Masonry.]

With a view to establish the identity of masonic oaths throughout the country, as far as the notice given previous to the meeting of the Legislative Committee would admit, the Antimasonic State Committee took measures to procure depositions to that effect. They accordingly forwarded to the proper officer at Worcester, Mass. a commission signed by Mr. Sprague, Jr. one of the Committee, to take the deposition of Pliny Merrick, Esq. His deposition was accordingly taken, sealed up by the officer, and placed in the hands of the Legislative Committee, with the seal unbroken, on December 8, at noon. In the afternoon of the same day, Mr. Hazard, the Chairman, handed the deposition, after he had examined it, to Mr. Joseph S. Cook, Grand Master of Rhode Island, with permission to take it home.—The Preparation Room of the Masonic Hall was lighted up that evening, and this deposition was unquestionably discussed there. A similar indulgence to take papers and documents for examination, was extended to the antimasons, at first, until the Masons began to hand in written statements, which were not permitted to go out of the hands of the Committee.

Other depositions were taken, and presented to the Committee. None of them were read aloud, and all were handed over to the Grand Lodge.

DEPOSITIONS.

This may certify whom it may concern that I, TABER CORY, in the town of Troy, and county of Bristol, have taken seven degrees in masonry. I received them in Portland, state of Maine, in the years Eighteen Hundred and fifteen and sixteen. I have perused Bernard's Light on Masonry, and can certify the obligations and penalties are the same as those conferred on me.

TABER CORY,

Bristol, ss. December 3, 1831. Then personally appeared the above named Taber Cory, and made oath that the foregoing certificate by him subscribed is true, before me, JOSEPH GOODING,

Justice of the Peace.

This may certify whom it may concern that I, ISRAEL CHACE, in the Town of Westport, State of Massachusetts and County of Bristol. That I have taken three degrees of Freemasonry. I received them in North Carolina, Hyde County Mattamuskeet, Franklin Lodge in Feb. or March 1827. I have perused Bernard's Light on Masonry and can certify the obligations and penalties are the same as those conferred on me, excepting the words angle and square of my work, mentioned in the Fellow Craft

obligation: N. B. Bernard's Light on Masonry, page 45th. ISRAEL CHACE.

Bristol, s. s. Westport, December 3d, 1831.

Then personally appeared the above named Israel Chace, and made oath that the foregoing statement by him made and signed is true.

Before me, ABNER B. GIFFORD,
Justice of the Peace.

DEPOSITION OF PLINY MERRICK, Esq.

I Pliny Merrick of Worcester, in the State of Massachusetts, Counsellor at Law, do testify and say, that sometime in the course of the winter of 1820-21, as nearly as I can recollect, I was admitted a member of the Masonic Lodge held in the town of Taunton in the county of Bristol, as I understood by virtue of a charter from the Grand Lodge of the State of Massachusetts. That until my removal from Taunton, which was in the summer of 1824, I occasionally attended the meetings of the Lodge; and during some part of the time, frequently, I was admitted in the Lodge to the degrees of Entered apprentice, Fellow Craft, and Master Mason. In the summer of 1824, as nearly as I can recollect, I was admitted to the degrees of Mark Master, Past Master, Most Excellent Master, and the degree of Royal Arch Mason, in Adoniram Chapter in Attleborough, in the County of Bristol in this state; that I took the four last mentioned degrees in one afternoon and evening, and and have not since, to my recollection, been in any chapter in the county of Bristol. I removed to the town of Worcester, where I now reside, in the summer of 1824, and afterwards attended occasionally the meetings of the fraternity in this place. During my absence from town on one occasion, I was elected to the office of High Priest, which is the highest office in the Chapter: On being informed of my election to that place, which was wholly unexpected, I consented to accept, and Dr. Benjamin Chapin of Worcester, who had been the former High Priest, agreed to make me acquainted with all the forms, ceremonies, oaths and obligations of the several degrees of the Chapter, and I accordingly visited him several times and learnt the same from him, and committed the same to memory. I attended several meetings of the chapter during the first part of the year, and discharged the duties of my office. Besides the communications made to me by Dr. Chapin, I have heard him repeat the oaths in the chapter as its presiding officer. During the last half year while I was elected to office, I believe I was not once present at any meeting: and I have not been, I believe, in any meeting of the Masonic Fraternity since, except that I once went in for a few moments for the purpose of seeing a gentleman who I understood was there. On one occasion, after my admission to the chapter, I heard Mr. Gleason, who was introduced to me as the Grand Lecturer, employed by the Grand Lodge of the state, to teach the Lectures of Masonry, repeat the Royal Arch Mason's oath. These are all the opportunities which I have had by attendance on lodges and chapters, of ascertaining what were its oaths or obligations. I was however once present at a meeting of the Grand Chapter of this state in Boston, but I do not recollect that the oath of the degree was repeated.

The several obligations of the three first degrees of Freemasonry were formerly quite familiar to me, from having frequently heard them repeated in the Lodge meetings at Taunton. These obligations are faithfully given in a Book called "*Light on Masonry*," by David Bernard. I do not mean to state that the exact expressions which I heard in Lodge meetings, are given, because the words used were not precisely the same on different occasions; but I mean to state, that the oaths as given in the Book referred to, are substantially the same with those which I often heard administered to initiates by the presiding officer of the Lodge. I do not mean herein to specify all the variations which on

the perusal of that Book have occurred to me; but I state those which seem to me in any way material. I do not recollect to have heard in the Lodge any such part of the Master Mason's oath as the following, viz: "*I will go on a Master Mason's errand, whenever required, even should I have to go bare headed, if within the length of my cable-tow.*" "*If any part of this my solemn oath or obligation be omitted at this time, I will hold myself amenable thereto whenever informed.*" With these exceptions, I do not know of any variations between the oaths of these three degrees as I formerly heard them in the Lodges and as I find them in the Book before referred to, which seem to me in any way essentially to affect the sense.

I do not distinctly recollect the oaths and obligations of the four degrees of Mark Master, Past Master, Most Excellent Master, and Royal Arch Mason, as they were administered to me, at my initiation at the Chapter in Attleborough. Owing to the great variety of the ceremonies through which I passed on that day, and the great number of the parts of the several oaths, it was impossible for me to retain a distinct recollection of the whole. Besides this, when the Royal Arch degree was administered to me, I was very much overcome, both by the previous fatigue I had undergone, and the nature and character of the obligation; and becoming faint, was removed from the room before its administration was finished. On my recovery, I returned to the Chapter, and passed through the remaining ceremonies; but I have no recollection that the remaining part of the oath was administered. Among the persons present on that occasion, I recollect Mr. John Baylies of Taunton.

I believe that the oaths and obligations of the four degrees of Mark Master, Past Master, Most Excellent Master, and Royal Arch Mason are given in the book before mentioned, substantially, as I learnt and heard them administered, as I have before mentioned. The words are not in every particular precisely the same in that book, as I recollect to have heard them in the chapter; but I do not know of any variation, which materially affected the sense in any other particular than those which I shall mention hereafter.

I distinctly recollect that the following expression was made use of in the Chapter as part of the Royal Arch oath, viz: "*I WILL ESPOUSE THE CAUSE OF A ROYAL ARCH COMPANION WHEN IN ANY DIFFICULTY, SO FAR AS TO EXTRICATE HIM FROM THE SAME, IF IN MY POWER, WHETHER HE BE RIGHT OR WRONG.*" I never heard any explanation of that clause in the Chapter. On one occasion, when that part of the oath was repeated to a person then passing through the ceremonies of initiation, he hesitated and asked if it could be so? A Reverend companion standing by replied, that it was, and advised him to go on, and it would be explained to him. He did go on but I heard no explanation given.

I do not recollect to have ever heard the following words, or any similar thereto, introduced into any of the obligations of any of the degrees of Freemasonry as they were administered, viz: "*I will promote a companion Royal Arch Mason's political preference in preference to another of equal qualifications.*"

The following clause makes part of the obligation of a Royal Arch Mason as I have heard it administered, viz: "*A COMPANION ROYAL ARCH MASON'S SECRETS GIVEN ME IN CHARGE AS SUCH, AND I KNOWING THEM TO BE SUCH, SHALL REMAIN AS SECURE AND INVIOLEABLE IN MY BREAST AS IN HIS OWN.*" To these words I believe are also added, "*murder and treason not excepted.*"—With respect to these last words, I must say, that at this time, my recollection is not so perfect, as to enable me to speak with absolute certainty. Formerly, after I had left visiting the Chapter, I had no doubt on this point. But in conversations which

I have not unfrequently since had with adhering members of the Masonic Institution, their frank admission of the accuracy of the disclosure of the masonic obligations as contained in the book I have referred to, on other points, and their earnest and apparently sincere denial of its accuracy on this point, have lead me to doubt whether my recollection was perfect. I have taxed my memory to the utmost of my power; and I can now only say, that while I do not feel certain, I yet believe that the words "MURDER AND TREASON NOT EXCEPTED" were used; but the belief is founded on a variety of considerations distinct from a precise recollection of the fact. All those members of the Masonic Fraternity who denied the use of the words last quoted in the conversations to which I have alluded, stated that the following words are used in their stead, viz: "*murder and treason only excepted, and they left to my election.*"

The check degree, as it is sometimes called, and I believe usually, I never heard repeated and explained but once by any member of the Masonic Fraternity. Being in Boston, I accidentally met Dr. John Homans, now resident in that city, near the old Court House. He asked me to walk into the office of Mr. Powers, the Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts. After some conversation, Mr. Powers proposed to communicate and explain this degree or ceremony, to us, and accordingly did so. The explanation was the same which is given in the eighty sixth page of Bernard's Light on Masonry. I have, since it was communicated to me, heard it spoken of by members of the Institution as a matter added to its ceremonies; but I have never since heard it repeated.

And further this deponent saith not.

PLINY MERRICK.

WORCESTER, ss. On the fifth day of December, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and thirty one, the aforesaid deponent was examined, and cautioned and sworn, agreeably to law, to the deposition aforesaid, by him subscribed, taken at the request of William Sprague, Junior, and to be used before a Committee of the Legislature of Rhode Island.—The residence of the deponent in the state of Massachusetts is the cause of taking this deposition.

ISAAC DAVIS,

Justice of the Peace.

[Among the documents presented to the Investigating Committee, to aid their inquiries, was a report of the New Berlin trial, in which the Sheriff of the county, General Welsh, and Mr. Pike a Justice of the Peace, both adhering Royal Arch Masons, had sworn to the oath of that degree in the form it is given in Bernard. Accompanying the report was an Affidavit of Phillip Peck, who was present at the trial, certifying to its correctness in every particular; with a view to present further evidence on this point, and to elicit other important facts which had been stated, but, as we believe, never before been sworn to, interrogatories were forwarded to New York, and the following affidavit received in reply, from Jarvis F. Hanks, a high renouncing Mason of eighteen degrees, and an unimpeachable citizen of New York.]

AFFIDAVIT OF JARVIS F. HANKS.

Gentlemen:—In compliance with your request, I proceed to narrate such facts and circumstances as come within my knowledge, on the subject of Freemasonry, and such as will accumulate the testimony of which you are in pursuit. So far, however, as my experience goes, in relation to its oaths, ceremonies, &c. I cannot speak with certainty, of more than eighteen degrees, into whose mysteries I have been introduced. Of its usages, as a society my remarks will illustrate the conduct of Lodges and Chapters only. In this communication, I wish it to be distinctly understood that when I relate a fact, or make an assertion, I intend it to assume the character of positive testimony; but when an opinion is given, it is to be taken only as the judgment of

one whose experience is large, and whose former standing among the fraternity was honorable, and, therefore, is not to be received as absolute evidence.

Bernard's Light and Allyn's Ritual, in the account of the degrees I have taken, are substantially correct. The genuine book of the first three degrees by William Morgan, and the publication of the Le Roy Convention, up to and including the Royal Arch degree, are true revelations of the first seven degrees of Freemasonry as they existed in 1825, throughout the United States. I say *genuine*, because a spurious book, purporting to be the work of Morgan, has, I believe been introduced into the market. Verbal variations did ever exist in the phraseology of the masonic lectures and work; but as great a similarity has prevailed as could be expected or hoped for, in oral traditions; yet the substance was the same in all places, among all Masons. I would here state that I received the first three degrees and Union Master, in Charleston, Kanawha county, Virginia; the Mark Master, Past Master, most excellent Master, Royal Arch, Royal Master, and Ark and Dove in Philadelphia; the Select Master at Point Pleasant Virginia; Secret Monitor and Knight of Constantinople at Zanesville, Ohio; Heroine of Jericho, Mediterranean Pass, and Knight of the Round Table, in Cleveland, Ohio; Knight of St. John at Euclid, Ohio, and Intimate Secretary in Warren, Ohio. I was High Priest of Webb Chapter No. 13, and Worshipful Master of Concord Lodge No. 15 at Cleveland, Ohio, each during the year 1826. Within this period I presided at the installation and advancement to the Royal Arch degree, of about twenty five persons, whose names I could furnish, if expedient, and one of whom at least resides in this city. I have visited various Lodges and Chapters in New York city and State, in Philadelphia and numerous towns in Pennsylvania; in Ohio and in Virginia; probably fifty in all. I have conversed with intelligent Masons from nearly every State in the Union, as well as from many parts of Great Britain and am well satisfied that the essence of Freemasonry is everywhere the same.

The oath of the Entered Apprentice binds the recipient to keep all the secrets of the whole system from the world. The words are "I will always hail, ever conceal, and never reveal; any part or parts, art or arts, point or points, of the secret mysteries of ancient Freemasonry, which I have received, am about to receive, or may be hereafter instructed in, to any person or persons in the known world, except it be to a true and lawful brother Mason," &c.

The Master's oath contains two or three clauses, the force of which adhering Masons have, I believe, uniformly denied. "I will fly to the relief of any person giving the grand hailing sign of distress of a master mason, or uttering the exclamation belonging thereto, and relieve him if in my power, if there is not more danger of losing my life, than hope of saving his." I understand this obligation to be capable of influencing a master mason to do for a brother, many things which would be illegal. For instance, a masonic Sheriff has in custody a brother who has committed a capital crime, and is sentenced to death,—he gives the grand hailing sign of distress—the Sheriff is bound to "relieve him if in his power," and suffers him to escape, as if by accident. A jailor turns the key upon a brother. At a convenient time, the potent sign is displayed—the huge iron doors, massive gates and impassible barriers, are overcome, with the facility of magic, and the culprit is let loose to commit new depredations upon society. 2d—"I will warn a brother master mason of all approaching danger." I quote only parts of the oath; not, however, destroying or perverting the real sense. Reference may be easily had to standard revelations. This warning may mean that one is obliged to give notice to a brother, of any fraud about to be practised upon him by a

swindler assuming the character of an honest man, and therefore not suspected of evil; or it may equally bind a mason to notify a *criminal* who has sworn the same oath, of his danger of apprehension by an officer of justice, and urge his immediate flight to regions beyond his jurisdiction. If the points be capable of such interpretation, bad men will always be ready to take advantage of it. Indeed there seems to be ample proof that masons have understood these obligations as constraining them to extend relief, if possible, to those of their brethren who have violated the laws of the land, and have not only become obnoxious to the penalty of those laws, but also deserving the indignation of all good men.

But the Royal Arch occupies an elevation which Mr. Webb calls "the summit and perfection of ancient masonry." It is sought as the ultimatum of the mystery by the votaries of secret societies.—Those who advance beyond this, are as a drop of water to the ocean. Two points in this obligation are worthy of remark. The first runs thus:—"I WILL AID A COMPANION, ROYAL ARCH MASON, WHENEVER I SEE HIM ENGAGED IN ANY DIFFICULTY, SO FAR AS TO EXTRICATE HIM FROM THE SAME IF IN MY POWER, WHETHER HE BE RIGHT OR WRONG."

Mr. Strong, late editor of the Antimasonic Intelligencer, at Hartford, Conn. has explained this clause as it was explained to me when I took it.—[The explanation is this: Suppose a companion is engaged in a dispute or quarrel, you are to take him by the left arm, grasping him with both your hands; saying who are you? *I am that I am, come along with me.*" When thus accosted he is bound to leave the place and accompany you.] But I have always understood it was capable of a wider latitude, and verily believe most American Masons have so understood it. No doubt, in many instances, it has been construed in a manner prejudicial to the wholesome regulations of society, and favorable to the most unrestrained commission of crime.

The second is thus:—"I WILL KEEP ALL THE SECRETS OF A COMPANION ROYAL ARCH MASON WHEN CONFIDED TO ME AS SUCH, OR KNOWING THEM TO BE SUCH, AS SECURE IN MY BREAST AS THEY WERE IN HIS OWN, MURDER AND TREASON NOT EXCEPTED;" or sometimes, "*without exception,*" but most frequently in the first form.—Now, although the candidate in the master's oath, is taught to keep the secrets of a master mason, given in confidence, "*murder and treason only excepted, and those left at his own discretion,*" yet it is reserved for the Royal Arch to require men to conceal the highest crimes, known to human laws! A master mason once told me, in confidence, of a criminal transaction, which made him a father, before his marriage, being assured that I would never mention it, but that it was as secure in my breast as it was in his own. His name has never been mentioned in connection with the fact.

I am in possession of another masonic secret, poured into my ear by a Royal Arch Mason, which I have never made known; and I reveal it circumstantially, now, not only to shew the nature of the secrets entrusted to the brethren, but also to illustrate the influence of masonry upon the course of justice. In the year 1826, Miss N. of Cleveland, Ohio, living in the family of W. O. a relative by marriage, was charged with stealing a sum of money, and, I think, a number of silver spoons. By some means or other she was removed for trial to Canandaigua, N. Y. Mr. O. was a Royal Arch Mason, and attended her. R. W. the Attorney employed to defend her, was a Mark-Master Mason.—My informant, R. S. a Royal Arch Mason, was present at the trial as a spectator. The guilt of Miss N. was clearly proved. R. S. remarked that "she was guilty in the opinion of every person in the Court House." It was a trial of great interest, and attracted crowds of persons anxious to know

the result of it. The verdict being "*not guilty,*" she was *honorably* acquitted. The conclusion was irresistible in my mind that the jury was corrupted through the influence of masonry. R. W. the young lady's advocate, and R. S. are now, both judges of Courts of Common Pleas, one in Cuyahoga county, and the other in Medina county, Ohio.

The proportion of charitable donations to the whole disbursements of the order, so far as my knowledge extends, will be best illustrated by relating a few facts. I was a member of Kanawha Lodge, No. 104 Virginia, about three years, during which time I do not recollect that more than twenty dollars was paid out for charitable purposes:—that was in a single sum, to a brother's widow. It was, however, the semi-yearly practice of this lodge to eat a dinner, which was paid for out of the lodge funds, and cost from 80 to 150 dollars each. A brother was paid 66 dollars out of the same funds, for transcribing the records into a new book.

The Lodge and chapter, at Cleveland, spent several hundred dollars to erect a hall for their meetings, for furniture, dress, &c. I do not remember any charitable appropriation within 1826, except a loan to Mr. Williams of New York; on his note, for a few months. There was a small amount paid for the funeral expenses of a poor brother, who died friendless, and without the means of interment.

I visited Royal Arch Lodge, No. 2, of this city, (New York,) in 1827. During the evening, three or four petitions for charity were presented and read. The applicants were represented as members of that lodge, in sickness and extreme poverty, and *worthy* men and masons. All the petitions were rejected, but one, on the ground that there were no disposable funds in the treasury! The gentleman occupying the senior Warden's seat, proposed to lend the *poor* lodge five dollars, for the relief of one of the applicants, which was accepted. It was a received opinion among the masons, that Royal Arch Lodge was the richest in the city, having, at that very time, invested in stocks, 20,000 dollars.—The regular meetings of this lodge were semi-monthly, at each of which Mr. Pardessus, lessee of the masonic hall, furnished a supper at the stipulated prices of sixteen dollars!!

One more fact will suffice. Sometime in the autumn of 1827, I visited Jerusalem Chapter No. 8, of Royal Arch Masonry, of this city, in company with a mason from Cleveland, Ohio, with whom I have since had a conversation on this subject. We concur in the following: During the meeting, a resolution was adopted by said Chapter, TO PAY OUT OF ITS FUNDS 500 DOLLARS, FOR THE RELIEF OF THE WESTERN SUFFERERS, OTHERWISE THE KIDNAPPERS OF WILLIAM MORGAN! The money was to be placed in the hands of a *worthy* companion, destined to Rochester, who it was said, was also to be the bearer of considerable sums from other masonic bodies in the city, for the same purpose.

Thus, I have given you a brief account of such of my experience of masonry, as will probably be of service to you, in your investigation of this subject, and am
Yours Respectfully,

JARVIS F. HANKS.

New York, Dec. 9, 1831.

City and county of New York, s. s. Jarvis F. Hanks of said City being duly sworn, says that the foregoing statement is in all respects just and true.

JARVIS F. HANKS.

Sworn before me this 10th day of December, 1831.

WILLIAM S. SEARS,
C. of Deeds.

COMMENT.

[The last fact related in this important deposition, is sufficient in itself, to establish the character of Masonry, as it is now disclosed to the world. The same fact was stated in Mr. Whittlesey's report on the Abduction of Morgan, made at the Philadelphia

National Convention, 1830. See proceedings of said Convention, page 17. It has never since been attempted to be disproved by the members of Jerusalem Chapter. It is now stated under the sanction of a civil oath, and another person referred to who will testify to the same fact, thus confirming the statements of the able and convincing report above referred to. It was also stated in Mr. Whittlesey's report, that there was reason to believe that the Grand Chapter of New York, in 1827, placed considerable sums of money, for like purposes, at the disposal of their Grand Scribe. This has since been proved to have been the fact, in the trial of Gould and Weed, and it has also been proved that \$100 were voted to Eli Bruce, and a similar sum to other masons implicated in the Morgan conspiracy. In the same report by Mr. Whittlesey, (a document, the most minute statements of which have since been established by legal testimony, in a remarkable manner,) another important fact is related in this connection; viz. that "Richard Howard (one of the supposed murderers of Morgan,) came to the city of New York, in February or March, 1827, and attended a masonic meeting at St. Johns Hall, in that city, where he confessed in open Lodge, that he assisted in putting Morgan to death, and that he was furnished with funds by the Knights Companions, then present to escape to Europe, and that after being secreted from pursuit by members of the fraternity, he did escape. Certain it is, that he information has been received of this Howard, since he absconded, and that the officers of justice have never been able to penetrate the veil of secrecy, which concealed his flight. Page 13.]

Friday morning December 9.—The Committee met at 9 o'clock, Messrs. Hazard, Simmons, Sprague and Haile, as before. The third witness, Anson Potter, a Friend, whose name had been handed to the Committee on the list of witnesses, was called.

TESTIMONY OF ANSON POTTER.

Mr. Hazard put to this witness some of the general interrogatories, which had been put to the two preceding witnesses, but with material variations. This witness was not a Friend during his connexion with Masonry. By a printed rule of the Friend's Meeting, of many years standing, no person can belong to the society called Freemasons, or visit their parades, feasts, &c. and at the same time retain his connexion with the Society of Friends.

I reside in Cranston, R. I. am a farmer by occupation. I have been a Mason of three degrees. Took the degrees in St. Johns Lodge, Providence. I did not consider myself a Mason 20 years ago. I have not known any thing of the movements of Masonry in a Lodge since that time. At the time of taking each degree an oath or obligation was administered to me.

In answer to 3d Interrogatory, if he was told, previous to taking the oaths, that they would not interfere with his religious or political opinions, witness says—I have no recollection of such being the case, I may possibly have forgotten it as it is so long since, nearly twenty years.

In answer to 4th Interrogatory whether he could repeat the oaths, witness says—I think not literally correct, the substance of them is in my mind.

In answer to the 5th, if charges were delivered after each oath, and if he considered them equally binding with the oaths, witness says—That I cannot answer strictly. I have some faint knowledge of one or more charges. I did not consider the charges binding. I considered it as fatherly advice. The oaths I considered of a different character.

Mr. Hazard read the charge from Webb, in the 1st degree; and inquired if that was read to him?

Witness. A portion of it I recollect. I should think a part of it was used. My impression was that the charge was good. I think the principles and duties inculcated were similar to those.

In answer to the 6th, whether he endeavored to

learn previous to initiation, if he was, to take an oath, and what the nature of it was.

Witness. I cant say I labored much, because it appeared to me to be a principle with the Fraternity to keep every thing in perfect darkness. It would have been no use to inquire. About twenty years ago I left the Lodge, ceased going, and I have been told that since my views have been expressed of the transaction in New York, I have been expelled. I never had any notice to appear. I did not consider myself a Mason twenty years ago. It was a quiet withdrawal. Not notified to the Lodge.

Mr. Hazard. I think you showed your sense.

To the 7th, if he comprehended the force and effect of the oaths, when taking them—

Witness. I did not at first. I presume few do. I cant say that I did, for under the circumstances the oaths are administered, the mind is occupied in repeating the oaths as they are deaconed off, and looking for something wonderful to come.

Mr. Hazard. Did you find it?

Witness. I found nothing that I wished to continue with. There are perhaps some men of firmness enough to attend exclusively to the moral import of the oaths while taking them. But very few can. Had I done so, I should not have taken them.

In answer to the 8th—if he had any doubt of the meaning of the oaths, &c. I had but little doubt of the meaning of the oaths, after I looked them over. I considered I had placed my life at stake, if I did not comply with the oaths. I took the three degrees within about six months, from the first to the last.

In answer to the 9th—if he applied to the Lodge to satisfy his mind respecting the nature of the oaths, and if he examined them immediately after taking them, for that purpose?

Witness. I should think not. I some time after studied the Lectures with a friend, and then I did not give them so much weight as I have since. I had a sense of the awful penalty I had incurred: I did not read them, because they are not allowed to be written or printed, and are transmitted from one to another by memory.

In answer the 10th—if he considered he gave jurisdiction to the Lodge to take his life if he violated his oath, and also shared in the same jurisdiction over others?

Witness. Not particularly at the time of taking the oaths, for at that time there was not a clear perception, in consequence of the circumstances under which the oaths were taken. On examination, they appeared to be framed for that object.

Mr. Hazard here held up a written paper in his hand, (the first intimation given from the Committee to any but Masons, that such a document would be or had been furnished by the Masons)—and said—I will read you an oath furnished to the Committee at their request, by the Grand Lodge of Rhode Island, the Rhode Island oath, as it is administered in Lodges in this State and no doubt as you received it. I will read to you the Entered Apprentice's oath, and you may then say if it is the same you took. *Mr. Hazard* then proceeded to read the Entered Apprentice Oath from a written sheet of paper, marked A.

COMMENTS.

[This paper bore no date, nor the name of any person, or any certificate where it came from, and no one knew the hand writing, except the masons, and probably a majority of the Committee. It will appear in the course of the Investigation, and it is known from other sources, that the masons, on the first day of the meeting of the Committee, Dec. 7, were very earnest to persuade *Mr. Hazard* not to require them to state their oaths, because they had generally been considered among masons, as a part of the secrets they were bound not to disclose. *Mr. Hazard* was resolute on that point, and insisted that they should hand in their oaths, as it would be worse for them to have their oaths proved by e-

ceding masons, than to give them themselves. Doubtless this consideration had much weight, for it was well known to them that there was a sufficient number of seceding masons summoned as witnesses, in addition to those who had already testified, fully to substantiate the oaths of the three first degrees. The result of this negotiation between Messrs. Hazard, Haile and Simmons of the Committee, and the principal masons, was, that the latter were to hand in their oaths on condition that they should be protected by the Chairman, from answering any questions respecting their secrets and ceremonies. Mr. Sprague, one of the Committee, had no knowledge of this bargain, and was not consulted. Mr. Cornell, another of the Committee, had not taken his seat with them, until after the negotiation was concluded. Mr. Hazard, after the first examination at Providence was concluded, said to one of the reporters of this testimony, on the 18th of December, that the masons would have fixed themselves, if they had refused to give their obligations, as they talked of doing at first, or words to that effect. It also will be seen, in the future testimony, that these oaths were prepared and written out in the preparation room, by an agreement as to the several points among a number of leading masons, acting as a committee. Some difficulty was experienced in inducing some of the committee to consent to giving in their oaths at all. Col. John Andrews, a high mason, and an honorable man, said to the writer, in the presence of John Hall, Esq., that he was on the committee relative to handing in the oaths to the Investigating Committee. He was for giving them in, and wrote some himself. Some of the committee were opposed to it, and one said he would have his arm cut off sooner than he would tell the oaths. Col A. added, "a great many masons consider the oaths as much the secrets as any part of masonry." The masons, however, finding Mr. Hazard resolute to get the oaths, (the only point on which he pressed them through the whole investigation) and perceiving that they would be proved by others, suddenly arrived at the conclusion that their oaths were not a part of their secrets, and that they had no where sworn to keep the terms of the oaths themselves, secret. Under these circumstances, the paper containing the oaths of the three first degrees as agreed upon by the masonic committee, was handed in on Friday.]

[The following is a correct transcript of the three oaths in the three first degrees of Masonry, as furnished by a Committee of the Grand Lodge of Rhode Island, in the manner heretofore stated, and delivered to the Chairman, Mr. Hazard, by Grand Master Cooke.]

OBLIGATION OF ENTERED APPRENTICE.

"I, ———, of my own free will and accord, and in the presence of Almighty God and this Right Worshipful Lodge, erected to him and dedicated to holy St. John, do hereby and hereon (that is on the Holy Bible, square and compass) solemnly and sincerely promise and swear, (or affirm) that I will always hail, forever conceal and never reveal, any of the secret arts, parts or points, of the mysteries of Free Masonry, to any person, under the canopy of Heaven, except it shall be to a true and lawful Mason, or within the body of a just and [lawful] regular Lodge of such; and not unto him or them until after due trial, strict examination, or by the lawful information of a brother, I shall have found him or them as justly and lawfully entitled to the same, as I am myself. I furthermore promise and swear, (or affirm) that I will not write, print, cut, carve, paint, stain, or engrave them, [or cause the same to be done by others] upon any thing moveable or immovable, whereby the least letter, figure or character may become legible or intelligible, so that the secrets of the Craft may at any time be unlawfully obtained.

All this I promise and swear (or affirm) with a

fixed and steady purpose of mind in me to perform the same, without any equivocation, mental reservation or secret evasion of mind in me whatever—
BINDING MYSELF UNDER NO LESS PENALTY THAN THAT OF HAVING MY THROAT CUT ACROSS FROM EAR TO EAR, MY TONGUE TORN OUT BY ITS ROOTS, AND THAT BURIED IN THE ROUGH SAND OF THE SEA, AT LOW WATER MARK, WHERE THE TIDE RISES AND FLOWS TWICE IN TWENTY FOUR HOURS. So help me God, and keep me steadfast in the performance of this my Entered Apprentice's Oath and Obligation."

FELLOW CRAFT'S OBLIGATION.

I, ———, of my own free will and accord, in the presence of Almighty God, and this Right Worshipful Lodge of Fellow Crafts, erected to God, and dedicated to St. John, do hereby and hereon, in addition to my former obligation, solemnly and sincerely promise and swear, (or affirm) that I will always hail, forever conceal, and never reveal, any of the secrets of Freemasonry appertaining to the degree of Fellow Crafts, to any person under the canopy of heaven, unless it shall be to a true and lawful Fellow Craft, or within the body of a just and [lawful] regular Lodge of such, and not unto him or them, until after due trial, strict examination, or by the lawful information of a Fellow Craft, I shall have found him or them to be as justly and lawfully entitled to the same, as I am myself.

I furthermore promise and swear, (or affirm) that I will aid and assist all worthy distressed Fellow Crafts, so far as I can do it without injury to myself. I furthermore promise and swear, (or affirm) that I will answer all lawful signs or tokens, which may be given or sent unto me from a true and lawful Fellow Craft, or from the body of a just and lawful Lodge of such, if within the first angle or square of my work.

[All this I promise and swear, (or affirm) with a firm and fixed resolution to perform the same, BINDING MYSELF UNDER NO LESS PENALTY THAN THAT OF HAVING MY LEFT BREAST TORN OPEN, MY HEART TAKEN FROM THENCE, AND GIVEN AS A PREY TO THE BEASTS OF THE FIELD AND FOWLS OF THE AIR.

So help me God, and keep me steadfast in the performance of this my Fellow Craft's oath or obligation.

[The words "If within the first angle or square of my work," are understood to have an allusion to operative masonry, and to mean a straight line from one corner of a building to the other.]

MASTER MASON'S OBLIGATION.

"I, ———, of my own free will and accord, and in the presence of Almighty God, and this right worshipful Lodge of Master Masons, erected to Him and dedicated to St. John, do hereby and hereon, in addition to my former obligations, solemnly and sincerely promise and swear (or affirm) that I will always hail, forever conceal, and never reveal, any of the secret mysteries of freemasonry, appertaining to the degree of Master Mason, to any person under the canopy of Heaven, except it shall be a true and lawful Master Mason, or within the body of a just and [lawful] regular Lodge of such, and not unto him or them until after due trial, strict examination, or by the lawful information of a Master Mason, I shall have found him or them to be as justly and lawfully entitled to the same as I am myself.

1st. I furthermore promise and swear, (or affirm,) that I will answer all lawful signs and summonses, which may be given or sent unto me from a true and lawful Master Mason, or from the body of a just and lawful lodge of such, if within the length of my cable-tow.

2d. That I will aid and assist all worthy distressed Master Masons, their widows and orphans, so far as I can do it without injury to myself or family.

3d. That I will keep a brother's secrets

AS MY OWN, WHEN COMMITTED TO ME IN CHARGE AS SUCH, MURDER AND TREASON EXCEPTED.

4th. That I will abide by and support the by-laws of the Lodge of which I may become a member, the constitution of the Grand Lodge under which the same is holden, and the general regulations of Masonry.

5th. I furthermore promise and swear (or affirm) that I will not be at the making of a woman a Mason, a young man under age, an old man in dotage, an atheist, a mad man, or a fool, knowing them to be such.

6th. That I will not wrong a brother or deprive him of his good name or suffer it to be done by others, if in my power to prevent it; BUT WILL APPRIZE HIM OF ALL APPROACHING DANGER, SO FAR AS IT SHALL COME TO MY KNOWLEDGE.

7th. That I will not violate the chastity of a brother's wife, daughter, sister or mother, knowing them to be such.

8th. That I will not give the Master Mason's word, except on the five points of fellowship, and not then above my breath, unless absolute necessity shall require it. All this I promise and swear (or affirm) with a firm and fixed resolution to perform the same, BINDING MYSELF UNDER NO LESS PENALTY THAN THAT OF HAVING MY BODY SEVERED IN TWO, MY BOWELS TAKEN OUT AND BURNT TO ASHES, AND THOSE ASHES SCATTERED TO THE FOUR WINDS OF HEAVEN, MY BODY QUARTERED, AND DISPERSED TOWARDS THE FOUR CARDINAL POINTS OF THE UNIVERSE, SO THAT THERE SHOULD BE NO MORE REMEMBRANCE HAD OF ME AMONG MEN OR MASONS FOREVER.

So help me God and keep me steadfast in the performance of this my Master Mason's oath or obligation."

[*Note.* Appended to this obligation was the following sentence, but it was not read or sworn to by any one, during the examination, nor was there any evidence as to the source from which it came, or the authority on which it was founded.]

"Succeeding each obligation a charge is given which may be found in Webb's Monitor, and which explains the duty of a Mason under the obligation. The Monitor is used as a book of reference by Masons, and is always depended on, for correct information respecting the seven first degrees."

[*Note.* In the same manner the following sentence appeared, appended to the entered Apprentices oath. No witness testified that this explanation had ever been made in any Lodge, or by what Masons it was ever so explained. The Committee did not read it or ask any question respecting it, nor was it known except to those who furnished it and the Committee, to be attached to the oath, until some time after. It should therefore be understood that this explanation is in reality no part of the testimony, because no inquiry was made respecting it, and no witness vouched for its accuracy. On the contrary every Masonic witness as well as seceders, swore that the oaths were no where explained different from what they read, in or out of the Lodge. This paragraph was thrown in, as a mere supposition of the opinion of Masons, without stating what Masons; an explanation got up, without a shadow of Masonic authority, to soften the oath, since the murder of Morgan. The only explanation of this sort ever given by Masons, was given in the Address of the Rhode Island Grand Lodge, put forth to quiet the jealous inquires of the people. The reference to the by-laws has nothing to do with the oaths, as will be shown by subsequent testimony, the "transactions of the Lodge" not meaning the oaths, but the ordinary business concerns. The Chairman of the Investigating Committee stated himself that he so understood it.]

["The explanation given by Masons of this penalty is 'that I would rather have, or sooner have my throat cut, &c. than to reveal, &c.' And there is an article in the by-laws of the Lodges in Provi-

dence, which provides "that if any member shall disclose any of the transactions of the Lodge, to the disadvantage of the Craft, &c. he shall be admonished or expelled." (See 15th article of the by-laws of St. John's Lodge, and the 14th of Mount Vernon Lodge.)

TESTIMONY OF ANSON POTTER. [Continued.]

Mr. Hazard, after reading to the witness the entered Apprentice oath, from the manuscript marked A. inquired of the witness if that oath was administered to him in the first degree.

Witness. That I presume is about literally correct, as it was delivered to me. There may be some alterations that do not strike me on hearing it read.

Mr. Hazard. I now read from the same Lodge the form of the Fellow Craft Oath.

Mr. Wm. C. Barker, (Master of St. John's Lodge, and most Eminent Commandr of the Encampment of Knight Templars) said, the first part is all the same as in the entered Apprentice oath. Mr. H. then read the Fellow Craft Oath, from the manuscript form.

Witness. I presume that is the substance of the oath I took. I do not recollect the expression "square and angle of my work."

Mr. Hazard. I will read the Master Mason's oath furnished me by the Grand Master, and Mr. Wilkinson, and Mr. Grinnell. He then read that oath from the manuscript, and asked if it was correct.

Witness. I should think it was substantially the same. There are some omissions and verbal alterations. Among those to be excluded, in the oath I took, was a hermaphrodite. There was something in the oath relative to the grand hailing sign of distress.

[The clause in Bernard was handed to Mr. Hazard, which he was requested to read to witness.]

Witness. Something of that kind was in the oath. I never read the oaths in Bernard. So far as the expression, "furthermore do I promise and swear that I will not give the grand hailing sign of distress, except I am in real distress, or for the benefit of the craft when at work." I am pretty confident it was in my oath. At present it strikes me that was about all relative to the grand hailing sign.

Mr. Hazard. We have been also furnished by the same Lodge with a copy of the charge administered before taking the oath, which I will read to you.

To the candidate. "Before we proceed to give you the secrets of Freemasonry, it will be necessary for you to take an oath or obligation such as all Masons have taken before you; whereby you will bind yourself to keep inviolable all the secrets that may be communicated to you. This obligation is not intended to interfere with your religious or political opinions. And sometimes the form is changed and put in this manner: 'This obligation is not intended to interfere with your duty to yourself, your neighbor, your country or your God.' Have you any objection to taking such an obligation?"

"To the candidate who has no objection, the following obligations are administered."—Was that delivered to you?

Witness. I have no recollection of any such charge before taking the oath.

The 11th Interrogatory was put to witness; if he knew of any secrets in Masonry, except those disclosed in Bernard's Light and Allyn's Ritual?

Witness. I never read Bernard's Light Masonry or Allyn's Ritual. I have Morgan's Illustrations. The three first degrees in Morgan are substantially correct. [It was here stated that Bernard was a copy from Morgan, in the three first degrees.]

12th Interrogatory.—If the By laws were published, and if he knew of any secret by laws?

Witness. I think the by laws were written, but not printed, I think. I knew of no secret by laws. In answer to the 13th Interrogatory, witness says, he knew of no other oaths, than those he has stated. The 14th Interrogatory, he thinks he has answered before.

To the 15th—If he ever heard the subject of Masonic penalties discussed in a Lodge?

Witness. I don't recollect that I ever did in a Lodge. I recollect after the Lodge was closed, as it is called, in the sitting room of the Lodge, where we met to eat and drink, as we usually did every night, hearing Masons on more than one occasion say, that the author of Jachin and Boaz, published in 1767, or 8, had been put to death by Masons, for divulging Masonry. This book I remember hearing talked of by Masons, twenty-five years ago. The circumstances under which I received it are faintly on my mind, but I am clear as to the fact. [Note. Mr. Haile wrote down this question, leaving out "by Masons for divulging Masonry." Mr. Turner insisted on having it put down in the words of the witness. We believe it was finally done so.]

Mr. Hazard asked if he understood them to say that the author of Jachin and Boaz was murdered?

Witness. My impression now is clearly that they did not consider it as a murder, but a necessary consequence of Masonic obligations. It was mentioned, as I presume, as a CAUTION to show the binding nature of our obligations, and the importance of not divulging the secrets.

[Remark.—Some difficulty here occurred about writing down this answer. Mr. Haile made some observation, about the witness wishing to have his answer written down, which was not distinctly understood, and it is therefore omitted. The witness explained "that he meant that in the conversation after the closing of the Lodge, respecting the killing of the author of Jachin and Boaz, the suggestion was it grew out of his Masonic obligations; not that he was murdered, but that he was put to death, according to Masonic law. Witness was satisfied with leaving out this part, but that was his understanding." It is a fact that the above answer, which is here stated in the precise language of the witness, was entirely omitted in Mr. Haile's minutes. The witness added further—"I considered it then as generally understood among Masons that the author of Jachin and Boaz was put to death in consequence of publishing the book disclosing Masonic secrets, in violation of Masonic obligations."

Mr. Hazard. Was the subject talked of openly, among the members? and do you undertake to say they justified the murder?

Witness. It was never a subject of public conversation. It would be difficult to tell at this time how I received it, but it was never a subject of public remark. I do not remember ever to have heard that circumstance discussed as to its criminality. It was mentioned as a circumstance that had happened a long time ago, and probably never would happen again.

16th Interrogatory. Did you ever hear the subject discussed of the power of the Lodge to inflict any higher penalty than expulsion, and did you ever know of any higher punishment?

Witness. I don't remember ever hearing that subject touched upon at all, as to what power they had. I never knew of any punishment inflicted by the Lodge, unless the notice I had of being expelled, is such.

17th Interrogatory. Were politics or religion ever discussed in the Lodge?

Witness. Politics nor religion was never the subject of deliberation in a Lodge, when I was present. The charges appeared to be of a religious nature. My experience in a Lodge was probably not more than twenty evenings. I presume it was a principle of the Lodge at that time to exclude politics and religion from the Lodge while it was open.

18th Interrogatory. If witness ever felt bound to give his vote for a Mason, in preference to a better man not a Mason?

Witness. No. For myself perhaps I have been under as little of that influence as any one. I have no doubt it has an influence, but I never considered it as growing out of the *professed* principles of Masonry. There was nothing in the *professed* obligations or principles of Masonry that imposed upon me any political duty. Nothing in that duty as I considered, which had the least bearing on my political opinions. I speak of it as it was as I understood it, twenty years ago. I know nothing of it since then in the Lodge.

Mr. Hazard asked what influence he meant to say it had?

Witness. I meant to be considered that there no doubt was a considerable influence arising from a brother being at the head of a Lodge and making Masons, or from a brother being liberal and furnishing a supply of refreshments. It was a general influence obtained by such means. In this state I do not recollect any instance of a mason treating a Lodge.

19th Interrogatory. If witness, when on a jury, would have been influenced by his masonic obligations to give a verdict for a brother mason, in preference to one not a mason?

Witness. It never would have had that influence on my mind, I trust. I considered the obligations as leading to that; pointing that way, but they never had that influence on me.

20th Interrogatory. If witness ever knew a judge, juror, or other officer, practice upon this construction of masonic oaths?

Witness. I have been but little in courts. I never saw any thing of that kind.

21st Interrogatory.—If the forms and ceremonies of Lodges in this and other states are alike?

Witness. They are, as far as my knowledge extended. I remember in visiting a Lodge in Norfolk, Va., the Senior Warden came out to examine me. I thought I was but an indifferent mason, but I found him so rusty, I had to instruct him in the pass signs, and I was praised for my being so bright a mason. It was praise I did not covet, for I never felt much desire to become acquainted with the science of masonry as it was called.

Mr. Hazard. Masonry is the only science I know of, in which the greater the ignorance the greater the merit.

Question from Mr. Turner.—What was the nature of the subjects usually discussed among the members, after the Lodge was closed?

Witness. After the Lodge was formally closed, the subjects discussed in the Eating Room were various. There was no regular subject. Desultory conversation and songs. Usually sung about ourselves, showing what worthy men we were.

Question from Mr. Paine.—Did you promise in your Master's oath to obey the grand hailing sign of distress?

Witness. I think that in my Master's Mason's oath, I did promise to answer the grand hailing sign of distress. I am not positive it was in the oath; I think it was. I am confident it was in the oath, or that I was so charged.

Question from Mr. Paine.—If that sign was made to you, how did you consider it bound you as a mason?

Witness. I believe I never made up my mind how I should act in that case. I never made it, nor had it made to me. I wish to convey the idea that I never felt myself much bound by my masonic oaths. If it had been to the extent of a quarter or half a dollar, to a worthy brother, and perhaps more, I should have answered it; but not at the expense of principle. I trust I never should have done that.

Question from Mr. Paine.—Did you ever hear a mason justify the murder of William Morgan?

Witness. I never heard a mason fully justify the murder of Morgan. I have heard them use expressions which seemed to imply a sentiment that way.

Mr. Hazard here spoke up with some warmth. —The Committee are not desirous of hunting up scandal. I consider it no better than scandal, to sit here to hear our fellow citizens charged with justifying murder.

Mr. Turner said he presumed the Committee sat here to get at the truth, which he had always understood to be no slander.

The testimony of Anson Potter here closed, and the minutes taken by Mr. Haile, were read to the witness, and by him signed.

WILLARD BALLOU.—Fourth Witness.

Resides in Warwick, R. I. Is a throstle spinner. I am now a Mason. Have never publicly seceded. Have taken seven degrees. I was admitted and took the four first degrees in the town of Paris, county of Oneida, State of New York, in Federal Lodge No. 80. Took the other degrees in a Chapter at New Hartford, New York. I have been master of a Lodge in Rhode Island, Warwick Lodge. I think it was in 1828.

Mr. Hazard read the Entered Apprentice Oath, from the Grand Lodge paper.

Witness. "My body buried," as I received it:—(instead of *that*, the tongue buried.) The substance is the same as the oath I received in N. York. It differs some in phraseology.

The Fellow Crafts oath being read. Witness says that part stating I will always hail and never reveal, &c. is included in the Entered Apprentice oath, and not given in this. The same oaths I have taken in N. York, I have heard administered in Lodges in this State. I took the six first degrees as laid down in Bernard substantially. I have examined that book and the oaths as there given are substantially such as I received in N. York, and have seen administered in Rhode Island, up to the three first degrees.

The Entered Apprentice oath is the same, as in Bernard. The Fellow Craft is the same except square and angle of my work. I have seen the three first degrees administered in Manchester Lodge, Coventry, and Warwick Lodge, R. I. [At the request of Mr. Paine, Mr. Hazard read the Master Mason's oath from Bernard.] Witness says that part, I will fly to the relief of the person giving the grand hailing sign of distress should there be a greater probability of saving his life than loosing my own, is in the oath. He is certain that he swore in his Master Mason's oath to support the constitution of the Grand Lodge of the U. States which is not in Bernard. He also distinctly remembers that clause, that if any part of this obligation be omitted I will hold myself amenable thereto, whenever informed. That is substantially correct as I received the oaths. I have heard the oaths in the three first degrees administered in this State, in the same form in Manchester and Warwick Lodges, except some clauses in the latter oaths were left out. The omissions are, "that I will remember a brother Master Mason when on my knees offering up my devotions to Almighty God." This is left out in the Rhode Island Lodges. Also, "That I will go on a Master Mason's errand when required." No other material alteration in the oath.

Mr. Paine requested that witness might be asked a question relative to the members of Manchester Lodge having used Morgan's book to initiate a candidate.

Mr. Hazard evaded it, and among other offensive remarks, said, "The Masonic dunghill has produced a great many Antimasonic vermin."

Mr. Turner, (aside)—"And you think you are the cock of the walk to gobble them up, but you will find yourself mistaken."

Question from Mr. Paine. Did you ever receive a letter in Masonic cypher. If so state it.

Witness has received a letter in the Royal Arch cypher addressed to him at Warwick, post marked, Middletown, Uppor Houses. There was nothing in the letter but the following signs.

FL > L 77 L QV
VALLVL

The reading of the signs was 'REYENG IS SWEETE,' when interpreted by the explanation laid down in Bernard, p. 138. I have never taken the degree of R. A. Mason. I never have formally withdrawn from Masonry. I certified a paper that Ray Potter gave the penal clause of the Entered Apprentice oath correct. I gave the certificate 25th July last. I have no means of ascertaining whether the Royal Arch signs I received came from a Mason or an Antimason. I can merely give my supposition.

Question from J. S. Harris, (Antimason.) Will you state what you believe to have been the occasion of your receiving that letter?

Witness. In 1827 I think, I was at Manchester Lodge, Coventry. There were two candidates to be initiated that night. There was no one present that belonged to the Lodge, that felt competent to give the obligation. Several of the members inquired, if any of them had got Morgan's book, and they could give the obligations out of that. I told of it afterwards. That I supposed was the reason of my receiving that letter. I know of no other.

The last degree I received was Most Excellent Master. The fourth degree which I took was called the Union degree.

In answer to question from Mr. Hazard. I had seen the R. Arch Chapter cypher some years before I saw it in Bernard.

In answer to question from Mr. Wm. Harris, (Antimason) if there was a penalty in the Union degree? There was a penalty in the Union degree. It was to have my body severed from shoulder to hip, diagonally.

Question from the same. Was the word *affirm* ever used in any Masonic oath you ever heard administered.

Witness. I never heard it used or used it myself.

BARNEY PHELPS.—Fifth Witness.

Resides in Mansville Smithfield, R. Island. I am a Machinist. I have taken three degrees in Masonry. I have never publicly seceded. I am not an adhering Mason. I took my degrees in Columbia Lodge, No. 34, in Brattleborough, Vermont.—The oaths administered to me were substantially the same as those in Bernard. There is no material variation. I received the degrees in the Fall of 1826 I think. I was convinced that the obligations were not binding on me, after about two years. I considered them binding for about two years.

Question put by request. Did you ever hear any Mason in or out of the Lodge, justify the murder of Morgan?

Witness. I heard a Mason say that allowing Morgan had got his throat cut from ear to ear, and the book he had published was true, justice was done him, or words to that effect.

Mr. Hazard here began to look stern, and proposed a number of queries to the witness.

Witness. The Mason was Timothy Bracket of Guildford Vermont. It was sometime in October, 1830, in the highway near the door of his House.—His wife was present, and a sister of mine. Don't recollect that any body else was present. I stopped at his house in a wagon, and he came to the door.—The subject of Masonry was introduced among us. I thought it was not justice to murder Morgan. He did not appear to be angry. We were on friendly terms. I never heard any thing but that he was a respectable man.

Mr. Hazard. Were you on good terms?

Witness. Yes, we were always friendly.

Mr. Hazard. Ah! He was your friend then was he?

Witness. I considered it so.

Mr. Hazard. Well, this is a pretty office to do your friend, to slander him in this way. (Muttering.) These kind of tell tale things—contemptible!

[The witness who was an entire stranger, and a diffident and very respectable young mechanic, here seemed greatly distressed at the treatment he received. Recovering himself he said I was asked sir, and I thought I must tell because I had sworn to tell all the truth.]

Mr. Hazard. The Committee have no desire to listen to these slanders.

ORAN PACKARD—Sixth Witness.

Resides in Cumberland. Is a Blacksmith by profession: I suppose I am a Free Mason. I have taken five degrees. Took three in Massachusetts in Pacific Lodge, at Amherst. Took the other two in the Mark Lodge, at Cumberland, R. I. I think in 1827. [A question was put by request, what had occurred in the Grand Lodge in 1827, when he was present, relative to the murder of Morgan.] At the time they chose officers of the Grand Lodge, at a regular Lodge meeting in Cumberland, R. Island, I think in 1827, it might have been in 1828. Richard Anthony was Grand Master at the time. There was present Mr Peter Grinnell one of the officers, Barney Merry, if I am not mistaken, and I believe Samuel Greene, and some other gentlemen from Providence I do not recollect. Richard Anthony spoke about the killing of Morgan. It was the first time I heard of the death of Morgan. Mr Anthony said there was no doubt that Morgan was killed. HE SAID PROBABLY IT WOULD COME OUT IN PRINT shortly, HE SAID HE SHOULD READ IT IN HIS FAMILY THE SAME AS ANY OTHER PRINT, AND LET IT PASS, or words to that effect. Nothing else passed upon that subject in the Lodge, as I recollect.

Mr. Hazard. Are you a political Antimason.

Witness. No.

Mr. Hazard. Are you a Mason then?

Witness. I have not set in any Lodge since then.

Mr. Hazard. Have you seceded.

Witness. No Sir.

Mr. Hazard. Let us know whether you are fish, flesh or fowl. After a pause Mr H. said do you consider yourself bound by any of the obligations of Masonry?

Witness. I do not.

COMMENTS.

[Several questions had been prepared to ask Mr. Packard, who had reluctantly obeyed a special summons, obtained from the Committee by the request of Antimasons. Mr. Packard had never seceded, and though disposed to tell the whole truth, he evidently labored under strong apprehensions of the consequences of displeasing the Masons. Previous to his examination he had said to an individual that the understanding of the Grand Master and others present, respecting the killing of Morgan, seemed to be that it was the duty of Masons to pass it over and say nothing about it. Questions were prepared to bring out this fact fully, but at this time, it being after dinner, Mr Hazard had become so stern and almost savage in his manner toward the witnesses, that it seemed cruel to expose them to his sarcasms, by proposing any question. The committee shew no disposition to get at all the witness knew on this subject, and it is a remarkable fact that Past Grand Master Anthony was not called to explain away this singular circumstance, nor (to our knowledge) was any other person named by the witness, as present in the Grand Lodge in 1827, questioned at all on that point by the Committee.—The fact, as it stands unexplained, is this. That the witness, a Mason, heard the killing of Morgan first mentioned, in a Grand Lodge, by the Grand Master, who said there was no doubt he was killed,

and this too, long before it was at all believed, in Rhode Island, out of the Lodge, that Morgan had been murdered, and at the very time Masons out doors, were pronouncing the accounts from the West to be abominable lies, and declaring in their papers, that Morgan was travelling about the country, or up in Canada, selling his books! The Grand Master told the Masons then, as this witness deposes, that Morgan was killed, and *probably* it would come out in print shortly. Even he, doubted the power of Masonry to keep the murder out of print, but says he, if they do print it I shall read it in my family the same as any other newspaper story and let it pass! Without a word of censure, though he knew the penalties Morgan had sworn to and that he had been killed, by Masons, in literal conformity to those penalties. This fact shows too, that the Grand Lodges in different states, knew of the murder of Morgan, long before it was believed by the public. They could only have learnt it, at that period, from the Masonic bodies in N. York, and yet they did all in their power to keep the people in ignorance of that crime. Such is the morality inculcated in the Lodge Room! To illustrate the baleful influence of Masonic oaths, still farther, it should be stated here, that Past Grand Master Anthony, alluded to by the witness, is a highly respectable manufacturer, and a citizen whose character has always commanded the highest respect. He knew of the murder of Morgan, it appears in 1827, and yet he stopped the Rhode Island American, some time after, when that paper came out Antimasonic, and endeavored to aid in bringing the murderers of Morgan to justice, merely because it published what he knew to be facts respecting Masonry! Such facts defy comment!]

Friday Afternoon, December 9.

ABRAHAM WILKINSON—Affirmed.

Resides in North Providence. Never was a Mason, and does not think he ever shall be.

Question. Have you ever heard any Mason or Masons express their approbation of the killing of Morgan? If so, who were they, what did they say, when was it, and on what occasion.

Witness. I have a number of times, soon after the news of the abduction of Morgan. Some Masons would justify it and some would not. I recollect but one at this time, who justified the killing. That was Samuel Greene, then of N. Providence. He said that if Morgan had disclosed the secrets of Masonry, he did not see why any body need complain, for he had suffered no more than his just deserts, or what he had agreed to. Either one or the other of these expressions. It was made in the N. England Pacific Bank, or by the door. There were several present. It was sometime in 1828, I think William Harris was one who was present, I do not recollect any other. The subject of the abduction and murder of Morgan, led to this conversation.—It might have been commenced by me. I took an early interest in the subject, and was considerably excited about it. There was an argument between me and Mr Greene, at the time. He appeared to be some considerably excited. The argument was not of great length. Mr Greene spoke with his usual warmth, when in argument. Not any more as I know of. I have found in a great many conversations on this subject, some Masons justify the murder, and some not. But I never found any who did not seem to get over it very easy, with a smile at the excitement. I cannot recollect when or where I have heard other Masons express this opinion, but have frequently heard them say that Morgan was a poor, dissipated, perjured rascal, and if he was killed he had met with his just deserts, and that I was meddling with what was none of my business. And when I said what a serious circumstance it was, and mentioned his wife and children, Masons have said, she was not his wife, only a prostitute picked up in the streets of Philadelphia. I have been

threatened for my attempts to investigate this subject. I was in the Roger Williams Bank, Providence, in 1828, I think. Nathaniel Smith and Wm. Harris were present. Samuel E. Gardner, of Smithfield, Cashier of Lime Rock Bank and Master of Mount Moriah Lodge, came in. After salutation he said to me, I understand you are a patron or encourager of that Free Press, at Pawtucket. Suppose I am, said I, is there any thing in it unlawful, that I have not a right to do? Why, says he, it will do you more injury than every thing you ever did in your life. Says I, you alarm me, be good enough to tell me in what way I am to be injured for doing that. Says he, it will be done with an UNSEEN HAND.

Mr. Hazard. Are you well acquainted with Mr. Gardner, and did you consider him a hot headed young man, who would utter such expressions without any meaning, and did you consider what he said in character as a mere bravado, or did you believe it was intended as a warning, or a threat?

Witness. I have known him for fifteen years.—He is pretty free (rified)* in conversation, talks freely, and speaks his mind without the fear of any body, and never saw any thing in him but what I considered him to be a correct young man. I considered what he said to be in exact accordance with the principles of Masonry. I could not tell what he meant, but his countenance looked white, as if he spoke the sentiments of his heart. I was impressed seriously with my danger upon reflection, and have remained so ever since, having seen nothing to alter, but much to add to my cause for it.

Mr. Hazard. Were your opinions formerly friendly to Masons?

Witness. Yes. I did not withdraw my confidence from them, until this Morgan business.

Questions handed in by Masons at the table.

1st. Whether you have called the Masonic Hall in Pawtucket, *the slaughter house*? Ans. Yes.

2d. Did you ever say you did not doubt that five hundred persons had been put to death in St. Johns Hall?

Witness. I have no recollection of ever saying that I believed any person had been murdered in a Lodge in Rhode Island. I may have said that I believed the Institution had been the cause of the death of hundreds. I meant to couple it with the obligations of the institution which enjoin death.

Here Mr. Hazard went into a long cross examination respecting the reasons witness had for believing that the author of Jachin and Boaz was killed, and for his belief that other masons who had revealed the secrets, had been put to death. Mr. H. particularly pressed the witness as to the date of the publication of Jachin and Boaz, &c. Witness wished to have time to consult the publications in which he had seen these statements. His impression was that it was Samuel Prichard who was found murdered in the streets of London, about a hundred years ago, or more, and that Masonry dwindled to nothing in consequence and became the laughing stock of the boys.

The deposition was here left for the witness to produce documents on this point.

WILLIAM HARRIS of N. Providence, Manufacturer, affirmed. Was present on an occasion when Samuel Greene, (named by former witness,) of Pawtucket, a high Mason, said that if Morgan had been guilty of disclosing the secrets as had been charged on him, he had suffered justly.

Mr. Hazard. Have you heard any other Mason justify the murder?

Witness. I believe I have heard one other Mason justify the murder of Morgan. It was Mr. Barney Merry, of North Providence, recently Grand Master of the Lodge. He observed that if the account was correct, if Morgan had revealed the se-

crets of Masonry, he deserved his fate. I am not a mason and never have been. Some ten or twelve years since I was encouraged by Mr. Hezekiah Howe, then of Pawtucket, a Royal Arch Mason, to join the Lodge. I asked him this question, whether if by any means, sleeping or waking, I should be weak enough to disclose any of the oaths or secrets of Masonry, what would be the consequence? He said, very solemnly, it would be DEATH. He resides now in New York, near Albany, is a manufacturer, at the establishment of David Wilkinson, as I have understood. Said Howe is a Royal Arch Mason, as I am informed, and was at that time. He was a pretty free spoken man. He was most open on Masonry, of any man I knew at that time.

Witness. Has not had any other material conversation. About two years ago, was in conversation with a person who is a captain of a vessel.—Witness would prefer not to state his name, but could do it if it were necessary.

Mr. Hazard insisted on the name.

Witness. He had been a high Mason. His name was Chase, Joseph, I think. He now resides in Pawtucket. He stated to me that in a voyage he had made, some years before, about 25 perhaps, they were in distress, and saw a French vessel approaching. His captain gave the French vessel a Masonic signal, but could not bring her to. He came to Mr. Chase and stated that he could not bring the vessel to. He then undertook it himself as being a higher Mason, from what I could draw from him, and after hailing the ship, gave a Masonic signal.—Said Chase in relating this circumstance, suited the action to the word, and made the signal in my presence, probably not supposing that I would understand it. I then said to him I knew how he did it, by giving the grand hailing sign. [Witness here pointed out the sign in Allyn's Ritual p. 152, and said that was the sign he made.] Capt. C. then begged of me not to mention the circumstance to any one, for he was fearful that the Masons would serve him as they did Morgan. It struck me that he was alarmed. I stated to him that I would not injure him. This was my reason for declining to give the name. I then stated to him what I had seen in Solomon Southwick's paper, that he had for some time felt himself in jeopardy, but there was one consolation that Masons had already killed one too many, to attempt the like again.

Mr. Hazard asked if this remark was made by Southwick when he was a candidate for Governor?

Witness. I think before.

Mr. Hazard. It is the first time I ever heard any body quote Solomon Southwick, except John Howe.

Question by Mr. Simmons. Was Samuel Greene apt to be excited when arguing on Masonry, &c.

Witness. It is my impression that he was, and he was pretty zealous. The same remark would not apply to Barney Merry. He is a very cool man. I think there was no argument between us. I think it was produced by one question alone, and that, I think came from me about the kidnapping and probable murder of Morgan. The conversation with Merry might have been a year after the news of Morgans murder or more.

Question by Mr. Hazard (respecting his knowledge of masonic signs.)

Witness. I am troubled with rather a short memory—but at that time could give a number of them. It requires a retentive memory to be a bright mason, I have studied Barnard's Light on Masonry and I think he goes to 44 degrees including French and Prussian. My inducement in studying the signs was to watch the operation of Free-Masonry—which I have done for the last 12 years.

Question by do. Were you a signer of the late Anti Masonic memorial, and a member of the late State Convention?

Witness. I was. I was early in this subject and was at the first Anti Masonic Convention in this

*This was explained to have reference to a term common in the lumber business. A board is free rified, when a split is easy.

State. For that act in coming forward and being a member of the Anti Masonic State Committee.

(Mr Hazard here interrupts witness and says—"then you are a party")—I was accosted by a friend of mine, a high mason, who stated to me with a great deal of earnestness, that I had better keep back in the back ground—that he was persuaded that it would be very much to my injury to have my name made use of in that way—he said I might do as much in the back ground—I might push the thing as hard as I pleased against masonry, but as a friend he prayed that I would not come forward again in the way that I had.

This was Crawford Titus, with whom I have been intimately acquainted for 12 or 15 years.

Question by do. Were you present in the late Antimasonic Convention—did you vote on the question declaring the Anti-masonry a political party—or did you approve of that vote and are you attached to that party? Ans. I believe you may say all that—I was present—I think I did so vote and I approve of the vote and am attached to that party.

Question by Mr. Simmons. At what time did Mr Titus give you that advice? and what did you suppose was his object? It was about two years since, I think, before Anti-masonry assumed much of a political character in this state. I cannot say positively what his object was—but supposed it was because he was fully acquainted with the operation of masonry and out of purely friendly feelings towards me.

Mr. Hazard here went into a vexatious-examination about the state of parties. Sargeant's trench law suit and quarrels in Pawtucket where Mr Wilkinson was interested against Masons.

Witness. There was a strong party feeling in Pawtucket—there was bitterness of feeling in the community there. There was such a suit. David Wilkinson was a Mason.

Mr. Hazard. Were you present at the R. W. Bank when the conversation between Mr Wilkinson and S. E. Gardner, mentioned in the deposition of Mr Wilkinson, took place; if so what part of it did you hear?

Witness. I was present and heard the latter part of it—that part of it in which Gardner said it would be done by an unseen hand.

It being late in the evening, the Committee adjourned.

Saturday Morning, Dec. 10.—The Committee met at 10 o'clock, present as yesterday.

Dr B. W. Case of Newport, was called and sworn, and the Committee examined him for about an hour. In the mean time Rev. Daniel Greene, who had justified the murder of Morgan, as stated by Mr Chase, appeared and requested that he might be examined in regard to the conversation with Mr Chase. Whether he had been summoned by the Committee, or had appeared voluntarily, was not explained.

Mr. Hazard directed Dr Case a (seceding Mason) to suspend his testimony, and Mr Greene, (an adhering Mason) took the stand.

REVD. DANIEL GREENE, (Mason).—7th. *Witness.*

Mr Haile read to witness that part of the deposition of Levi Chase, which alleges that witness declared to him, Morgan had suffered accordingly to his obligations, and he was asked if he recollected that conversation?

Witness. I recollect if my memory serves me, of having three conversations with Mr. Chase in private, on the subject of Masonry. The first was at Captain Bakers.

[Mr. Hazard here said, "Mr Cooke, we shall want the other oaths." Mr Cooke, the Grand Master then handed a paper to Mr Hazard. It should be borne in mind that Mr Greene was the first Royal Arch Mason examined, and it was necessary to avoid having to recur to the oaths in Bernard, should any question be asked.]

Witness. The conversation is not all correctly stated by Mr Chase. After some other conversation,

I asked of the people of the house the liberty to step into some other room, by ourselves. We went into another room. I asked him if he had visited a Lodge lately. He said he had not. I told him it was doubtful whether he could get into a Lodge at that time, if he had not visited one for some time, as there was a great deal of excitement in consequence of many books that were about, and some impostors. The Grand Lodge had taken great precaution, and instituted something new among them to check these impostors, when they should appear, and that if he had not learnt that, he could not be able to visit a Lodge until he had; and I should advise him to get it immediately, if he intended to visit the Lodges. I don't remember that any thing particular took place after that. I told him if he had been there last night, I could have vouched for him and he could have taken the degree, and that he could not get it except at the Lodge of which he was a member, or by being vouched for by a brother. There was no conversation at that time, that took place with us, respecting the murder of William Morgan. I don't remember particularly.

Mr. Hazard. Was there ever any conversation between you relating to the murder of Morgan?

Witness. I would like to be asked a question on that point. I had a conversation with him on that subject, alone by ourselves, in my keeping room, after eleven o'clock at night. I can't remember just how the conversation was introduced, but the substance, I think was this. He asked me if I believed that Morgan was murdered, or his life been taken. I told him that according to the accounts I had received, the best I could get, I believed he was. He then asked me if I believed the Masons did it. I told him I believed they had, according to the accounts I had received in the papers I read. My expressions were these, that I thought it was an awful thing before God, yet we were not to blame for what others did, and that there was no society but what had its bad members, and that he well remembered that our Congregational brethren in Salem hung the Quakers, but we were not to be blamed for it. I never justified the murder of Morgan, no further, and never meant to be understood so.

[*Note.* A question was here written by Mr. Hallett, and handed to the Committee, "If a Congregational Church should retain at its communion, members who had hung the Salem Quakers, and all other Congregational Churches in the country, should continue to fellowship that Church and be bound to receive the murderers at their communion table, should you excuse them by saying they were not to blame for what others did?" While Mr. H. was writing this question, Mr Greene said that he was very unwell, and wished to be excused from having questions put to him. He had only come to explain what he understood Mr Chase had said about him. He should prefer being examined further, if necessary, some other time. The Committee did not put the question, nor was it put afterwards.]

The witness here entered into an earnest defence of himself. He said, it was the injunction of my father in law, whose ashes are now in the grave, that I was about to take an obligation which was not to interfere with my politics or religion. I was a witness in a case in Boston before Judge Wilder, in which A. Wilkinson was Plaintiff and Benson Defendant. It was between a Mason and an Antimason, and I told the truth in favor of Mr Wilkinson, (the Antimason.) I am a Mason. I have gone to the orders of Knighthood. I took the three first degrees first, then up to the Royal Arch, and then to the Knight Templar. I took them inclusive to the Knight Templar, in the Lodge of Pawtucket and Chapter and Encampment of this town. I do not recollect the names of the persons who gave me the degrees.

Question by request. Are the oaths and obligations that were taken by and administered to you, the same as those contained in Allyn and Bernard?

Witness. I could not tell you. I have never read Allyn or Bernard.

Question by request. Can you repeat the Knight Templar's oath?

Witness. The oaths of the higher degrees, I could not remember if it was to gain a Kingdom.

The oaths of the Entered Apprentice was then read to witness, as furnished by the Grand Lodge.

Witness. I should think in amount about the same. I thought there was some variations in some of the words. [The witness was not asked to point them out.]

The Fellow Craft's oath was read and Master Masons from the same paper.

Witness. According to the best of my information or memory, they seem to me to be substantially the same.

Witness does not recollect that part of the obligation, that he will hold himself amenable thereto if any part of the obligation is omitted, whenever informed. Never heard any thing of the kind.

Witness was asked, by request, if he remembered the following clause in the Master's oath. "Furthermore do I promise and swear should I ever hear the grand hailing sign of distress, and the person giving it being in distress, I will fly to his relief, &c."

Witness. My memory does not serve me, so as to be able to state correctly, whether I recollect any thing about it. He begged to be excused at this time.

Mr Hazard here said that the Committee did not contemplate examining him in full extent. The Committee had prepared interrogatories, embracing the whole subject.

Witness said as to the higher degrees he could not attempt to give them.

The witness was here excused, with the understanding that he would be called again, if wanted.

[*Note.* It was thought remarkable by some, that the witness should remember his three first degrees pretty accurately, which he took many years ago, and yet could not remember the higher degrees, which he had taken much more recently, "if it were to gain a Kingdom." It should be remembered that no masonic witness, at this time, had been examined as to any degrees above the Master, nor was it known, while he was under examination, on Saturday, that the Masons had handed in any oaths above the third degree. Several questions were written by Antimasons, with a view of drawing out the oaths in the higher degrees. The witness, however, plead indisposition, and pressed the Committee to excuse him, until some other time, and he was excused. He was called again several days after, and examined further. In this report the order of time in which each witness was examined, will be preserved, unless where it is stated to be otherwise.]

NATHAN WHITING.—8th *Witness.*

Resides in East Greenwich. Is an Attorney and Counsellor at Law. Is a Mason, has taken three degrees together with the check degree. Took them in King Solomon's Lodge, at East Greenwich. Has been Master of that Lodge. Hardly thinks he can repeat the oaths from recollection. The Grand Lodge oaths in the three first degrees, were then read to witness.

Witness. They are substantially the same, with some variations as I took, and have administered, them in said degrees. It sometimes used to be administered in the Fellow Craft, 'within the length of my cable tow,' instead of 'square and angle of my work.' In the Master's degree after 'murder and treason excepted,' is added, AND THAT AT MY OPTION.—*This was the usual form.* In other respects this Master's oath read is substantially the same witness has been acquainted with.

[The Chairman was here requested to read the oaths to witness from Allyn, but he refused. He was then requested to put to him the clauses in the oath in Allyn not given in the written oaths handed

in by the Grand Lodge. This was finally done in a very reluctant manner.]

Witness was asked by request if in the Master's oath he recollects this clause, 'That I will not give the grand hailing sign of distress, unless I am in real distress,' &c.

Witness. I think I never heard it in the oaths, as administered.

Question by request. Is it taught in the Lectures?

Witness. It is as a matter of instruction.

Question by request. Is the duty of obedience to this sign taught at the same time, as a Masonic duty?

Witness. The use of the sign and the duty to obey it are also taught, and pointed out in the Lectures.

The several clauses in the oath given in Allyn, not included in the Committee's oaths, were marked off, and the committee requested to put them to witness. Mr Hazard inquired if the committee saw any importance in putting the questions to show the difference? Some conversation took place between the Committee, on this point.

Mr Hazard, said he considered that the variations were wholly immaterial.

Mr Sprague considered that it was of some importance.

Mr Hazard insisted it was wholly immaterial; he said the difference between the oath, was merely verbal. As the oath is repeated from memory, it is impossible it should always be alike. Dr. Case has testified that.

Mr Hazard here complained of the trouble the Committee were put to, by these questions. Mr. Hallett offered to take the written oaths and compare them with the printed, and prepare questions, and point out all the differences: Mr Hazard wished he would do so, and the written oaths of the 3 first degrees, were afterwards handed to him for that purpose.

Mr Turner said it was useless to prepare questions for the Chairman to tear up. Mr Hazard said he had tore none up that ought to be put. Mr Turner said he thought differently. Mr Hazard replied that he should tear them up, if they were not considered material. Finally Mr Hazard agreed to put the omitted clauses to witness, and the following clauses from the Master's oath in Allyn's Ritual were read. 1st. "That I will not be at the initiation or raising a candidate at one communication, without a dispensation." 2d. That I will go on a Master Mason's errand even barefoot, to save his life or relieve his necessities.

Witness. The first is given in some instances, but not generally. The second. No.

3d. "That if any part of my obligations is omitted at this time, I will hold myself answerable thereto, &c."

Witness does not recollect that it was ever so administered.

Question from B. F. Hallett. Did you ever, as Master of a Lodge, explain the penalties in the three first oaths, and if so at what time, and in what manner.

Witness. I never gave any explanation of the penalties.

Question from the same. Did you ever deliver Lectures in the Lodge, and if so, what subjects did they treat of; Were they designed to explain the signs and ceremonies?

Witness. I have delivered lectures. They treated of moral subjects, and were in explanation of the mode and manner of initiation, and working in the Lodge.

Question from the same. Did you ever receive a check degree or oath, and by whom, and for what reason was it instituted.

Witness. I received a degree, called the check degree and understood it to have been adopted on account of Morgan's disclosures.

Question from do. Where did you understand it originated?

Witness. I understood it originated in and was prescribed by the *Grand Lodge of New York*, and recommended to other Lodges. I do not remember whether I took an oath in that degree, or not.
At 3 o'clock, P. M. The Committee adjourned until 10 o'clock Monday morning.

Monday Morning, Dec. 12.

Committee met at 10 o'clock, Messrs. Hazard, Sprague and Haile present Simmons absent.

JOHN BROWN—Ninth Witness.

Resides in East Greenwich, (is Clerk of the Court of Common Pleas for Kent County.) I have been a Mason. Was initiated in North-Carolina rising twenty five years ago. Took five degrees in the same winter. Never have taken but five degrees. I was told that one of the two last degrees I took, was wrong, (the Mark Masters), as I received them. Have not been in a Lodge of Mark and Past Masters since. Have been a member of East Greenwich Lodge (and Secretary of it) for many years. I do not consider myself a seceding Mason. I was expelled as I understood. I had violated no obligations of Masonry. I had even avoided reading Morgan's book that I might avoid being questioned as to its truth. I had given my opinion freely of the Institution as to its antiquity, and the truths of its traditions—that they were unfounded. I had stated to the Lodge that at the expiration of the office of Secretary, which I then held, I should no longer frequent the Lodge. I considered the obligations binding on me to conceal the secrets, until the Grand Lodge gave what I considered a dispensation, in their Address to the people in June last.

Mr Hazard inquired whether he was a political Anti-Mason.

Witness. I do not understand Antimasonry to be political as such; but I consider that it is obliged to act politically to accomplish its object in putting down the Institution of Free Masonry. I cannot repeat the obligations verbatim. I recollected enough of them to avoid the violation of them.

The Entered Apprentice oath from the G. Lodge paper was read.

Witness. That is substantially the same I think, except the body buried, instead of the tongue.

Fellow Craft's oath read from same form.

Witness. The Fellow Craft's oath, I think is substantially the same. It almost carries me back to the scenes I passed through.

The Master's oath was then read.

Witness. In the Master's degree, "AND THAT AT MY OWN OPTION," I recollect was used after "murder and treason excepted. Witness refers to the practice of administering the oath in the Lodge at East Greenwich [a Lodge subordinate to the Grand Lodge, and but 13 miles distant from the Lodge in Providence.] I think in the penalty it read that there should be no more remembrance had among men and more especially among Masons, of so vile a wretch as I shall be were I ever to violate my obligation, &c.

Mr Hazard. Have you not confounded the oaths received in one Lodge with those you have heard in another.

Witness. I received all the degrees I ever took in North Carolina, and I may have blended the oaths I there received with those administered in East Greenwich Lodge.

Question by request.—In the Lectures what is the answer to the question "what makes you a Mason?"

The only answer I ever heard is "MY OBLIGATION."

Question by do. Did you ever hear an affirmation in the Lodge?

Witness. I never heard the word affirm used in any oath.

Mr Hazard. There appears to be a *hashling* about that word. Did you ever know any one to refuse to swear in a Lodge.

Witness. I never did?

Question by request. Were you ever asked in the Lectures why you had a cable tow round your neck or body?

Witness. I remember but little of the Lectures. My impression is the question was asked.

Question by do. Was the answer that it was designed to show that as you advanced in Masonry, the oaths become more and more blinding?

Witness does not recollect.

Question by Committee. Before taking the oath were you told that it would not interfere with your religion or politics?

Witness. I have heard the question usually asked by the Master whether the candidate is willing to take an obligation that is not to interfere with his religion or politics. My impression is, it is invariably asked in the Master's degree. I am not certain as to the other degrees.

Question from B. F. Hallett. Did you ever know the penalties in the oaths to be explained in a Lodge to mean any thing but death?

Witness. Only as they were given. *I never knew any other than the LITERAL CONSTRUCTION, as they read. I never heard them explained to mean any thing but what they say."*

Question proposed by Masons. Did not the by-laws of the Lodge provide for the expulsion of a member who should disclose any of the transactions of the Lodge?

Witness. There was no article in our by-laws to expel a member for disclosing the transactions of the Lodge. There was an article in the by-laws for expelling a member who should violate them.

Question from W. Paine, Jr. Were the Oaths incorporated into the by-laws?

Witness. They were not. They were not to be written.

Question from B. F. Hallett. What is understood by the transactions of the Lodge Room? Do they include the oaths and penalties, or merely the business.

Witness. They do not include the oaths or penalties, as I have said before, and relate only to the business of the Lodge.

[Mr. Haile did not put down either the above question or answer, saying it was unnecessary, because the witness had answered it before.]

Mr Hazard was here requested by, Walter Paine, Jr. to question the witness as to the variations between the Master Mason's oath, as handed in by the Grand Lodge, and the printed oath in Allyn. Mr Hazard said this was putting the committee to a great deal of unnecessary trouble. If Mr. Paine wanted these questions put, it was his business to have them there in writing.

B. F. Hallett.—You asked me the other day, (Friday) to prepare the variations between the written and printed oaths, and I went without my dinner in order to do so, while the committee adjourned at noon. When they met in the afternoon, I handed you the variations, with all the questions we wished to have asked respecting them. You took the paper, and without reading it, immediately stripped it up so, (making the motion of leisurely tearing up paper in small strips) and threw the pieces under the table.

Mr. Hazard. Did I? Well, well.—Can't you write them out again? He was told that they could be written out again, and that in the mean time the witness could be asked respecting the variations, as they were marked off in pencil, in Allyn's form.

Mr. Hazard then read from Allyn the first clause omitted in the Grand Lodge oath; viz, "I will not give the Grand hailing sign, except I am in real

distress, or for the benefit of the Craft, when at work; and should I see that sign given, or hear the words accompanying it, I will fly to the relief of the person so giving it, should there be a greater probability of saving his life than losing my own."

Witness. I remember something about it. I remember I was charged to obey that sign as far as I could see it by day, or hear the explanation by night. I do not recollect the words "for the benefit of the Craft when at work."

Mr. Hazard next read this printed clause "I will not be at the initiating, passing or raising a candidate at one communication, without a dispensation from the Grand Lodge for that purpose."

Witness. I don't recollect any such thing.

COMMENTS.

[Mr. Haile has put this down wrong, and made the witness contradict himself by putting the wrong answer to No. 2 of the questions marked E. This witness was questioned out of Allyn, from variations marked in pencil, before the written variations were used by the Committee, they having been torn up, as above stated. The second question Mr. Hazard asked him on the variations, was as above, to which Witness answered No. Mr. Haile in his minutes here, calls the 2d variation as follows, "I will apprise him of all approaching danger," and then puts the witness down as saying "I do not recollect any such thing," when just before he has sworn to these *precise words* in the written form of the Master's oath, prepared by the Grand Lodge. This blunder of Mr. Haile was not corrected by Witness, because the questions and answers were not read over to him directly together. It however furnished a valuable hint at the time, to a looker on, by which Mr. Haile was afterwards unconsciously made to put questions in a form that caused several adhering Masons to swear to a certain expression when told it was in the Grand Lodge oath, and then afterwards to swear they never heard it, when it was read to them from a paper marked E., as one of the variations, in Allyn's printed form! This striking fact will be shown in its proper place.]

Mr. Hazard, then proceeded to put the variations to witness, viz. "I will apprise a brother Mason of all approaching danger."

Witness. Yes.

"Will go on a Master Mason's errand barefoot, &c."

Witness. Don't recollect that.

"If any part of this my solemn obligation is omitted at this time, I will hold myself answerable thereto, whenever informed."

Witness. Recollect that, and think the oath is so administered.

Mr. Hazard here put the 10th standing interrogatory, whether witness considered he gave and took jurisdiction, as far as he could, over life, by assuming the penalties?

Witness. I think I did understand the oaths, that I gave the Lodge jurisdiction over my life, as far as I had the power. I understood that I subjected myself to these penalties, and that I was to share in the same jurisdiction. That was the construction as I then understood it. I thought from the antiquity of the Institution, and that every thing that was done having been sanctioned by king Solomon and both the Holy St. Johns, it must be right. Moreover Nathan Whiting (master of the Lodge) was the first Mason I ever heard say that the penalties were not to be so understood and inflicted; and that was after the murder of Morgan. I do not now so consider them.

[Most of this answer is left out by Mr. Haile.]

14th Interrogatory. If when he took the oaths, he considered them incompatible with civil duties.

Witness. I never expected they would come in conflict with my religious, moral or civil obligations. I did not bestow much thought upon it, but as I have before said, considered the antiquity

and character of members of the Institution to be such as would sanction what it enjoined. I was to keep the secrets, I considered, *subject to the penalty.* I did not exercise any private judgment about it, but considered from the antiquity of the Institution, and its being sanctioned by such names that its obligations must be correct. And were I convinced of the truth of its traditions and its antiquity, as taught in the Lodges, I should feel that I had done wrong in answering any interrogatories. That there was no power that could be higher than such a power, to make me depart from my vow of secrecy.

24th Interrogatory. What do you consider the object of Masonry to be?

Witness. I have had different views of it. I have in former times, when I believed its traditions, and the date of its origin, had an exalted opinion of it. At other times I considered it as a mutual insurance, not as a benevolent Institution. What they call clarity is not such, but merely a right of claiming what is one's due.

16th Interrogatory. Did you ever hear the nature and extent of the penalties discussed in any Lodge.

Witness. I think I never heard the nature and extent of the penalties, discussed in a Lodge. There is perhaps some explanation in the Lectures. We sometimes had lectures after the Lodge was closed. The explanations are laid down in the Lectures.

17th Interrogatory. Did you ever hear a Lodge claim the power to inflict a higher punishment than expulsion?

Witness. I do not know that I ever heard it mentioned in a Lodge that they had power to inflict any higher penalties than expulsion, nor even expulsion except as it is mentioned in the by-laws. I never knew personally of any punishment by a Lodge.

18th Interrogatory. relative to politics and religion.

Witness. I never heard the subject of religion or politics discussed in a Lodge, and I think the by-laws prohibit it. I never knew a Lodge to nominate a candidate for political office, or combine as a Lodge, to elect him.

In answer to 21st Interrogatory.

Witness. I never practiced on the construction that my Masonic oaths bound me to favor a Mason to the injury of one who was not. If I had a favor to bestow I considered I had a right to select who I would bestow it on.

Question by request. Did you believe that your Masonic oaths bound you to assist a Mason to the injury of one not a Mason?

Witness. I considered if I could assist but one, I should give a brother the preference.

In answer to 22d.

Witness. I never knew Masonry to be used as a political engine, or to obstruct the course of justice so far as my own observation has extended, but I am satisfied it has been I now answer from my own knowledge. If the question was put to me do I know if General Jackson is President of the U. S. I should answer not of my personal knowledge. Witness wishes his answer that he never knew the grand hailing sign to be given or practiced upon by a Judge, &c. in a Court of law to be understood as speaking of his own personal knowledge. The grand hailing sign, as stated in Bernard, witness recollects to have received part of.

Question from Walter Paine, Jr. What is the manner or motion with which a Mason enters and leaves a Lodge?

Witness. By giving the due guard of that degree, a sign which he gives on entering and leaving.

The Witness was asked by Mr. Paine to explain what that sign is?

Witness hesitated. The principal Masons at the table appeared uneasy.

Mr. Hazard. If you have any delicacy about

disclosing those signs, *we have no idea of burdening any man's conscience.*

Witness. I do not know that I have gone so far as that. I do not know that I have ever violated my obligation of secrecy. I never took any obligation to conceal the oaths. [When the witness was asked to disclose the nature of this sign the Masons sitting at the table evinced a feeling something like horror at the sacrilege they seemed to anticipate would be committed. They were evidently much relieved by the reluctance of the witness to answer. The witness was readily excused by the Committee. The circumstance is worthy remark, as illustrating the wonderful power Masonic oaths have to bind down their victims. Even this respectable witness, though he was convinced Masonry was a wicked institution, and had entirely renounced it, yet (such was the force of the illegal and criminal oaths he had taken) he felt a reluctance to reveal the secrets he had improperly sworn to conceal.]

Question from W. Paine, Jr. Did you consider yourself bound as a Mason, to give a preference to a Mason, over a person not a mason, *under the same or similar circumstances?*

COMMENTS.

[Mr Hazard had uniformly put this question, and he continued to do so afterwards, in this form, which rendered it entirely nugatory, viz.—'Did you ever vote for a candidate you *least liked*, and *thought least qualified*, because he was a brother Mason, in preference to a *better man*, not a Mason, of your own political sentiments?']

Mr. Paine and other Antimasons, insisted this was an unfair question, because if Masons preferred one another over all other men, in like circumstances and acted accordingly, then men not Masons, who were just as good citizens as Masons were, did not stand an equal chance in society, and this was one of the evils of the Institution we complained of as interfering with equal privileges and equal rights. The Mason stood with those not Masons, precisely as if he was not a Mason, while with those who were Masons, he was sure of a preference. This gave him a decided advantage. It was not intended to confine this question touching Masonic preference, to *politics*, but to extend it to trade, business, misfortune, or any other situation where a preference could be given to a Mason, by Masons, to the disadvantage or neglect of one not a Mason.—Instead of putting it in the form it was presented by Mr. Paine, Mr Hazard proposed it in his own way—thus.

If two men, one a Mason and the other not, of equal qualifications, were placed in precisely the same situation as *political candidates*, is there any thing in your Masonic obligations which would oblige you to vote for the one who was a Mason, in preference to the other?

Witness. If men of equal talents both stood equally in my opinion, and the brother solicited me as a brother, I can't say but I should consider myself bound as a Mason to have preferred him. The nature of the connection is such. It was a case that never happened with me, for in almost every instance, there has been something to distinguish between candidates for office.

Mr. Hazard. Do you belong to any other society except the Masonic?

Witness. Secret Society, do you mean?

Mr. Hazard. No. Religious society.

Witness. Yes.

Mr. Hazard. Well, in cases where every thing was equal, would you not act in the same manner, between a brother in the Church, who was a candidate for office, and a person who was not a brother?

Witness. I presume I should.

COMMENTS.

[A further attempt was made to have this question put in the form Mr Paine had proposed, but without effect. It may here well be remarked that the preferences in society, arising from moral, religious and other organizations, though in many cases injurious to equal rights, by leading to combinations of one class of citizens against all others, are fully atoned for by the great good which these associations effect in community, to the preservation and improvement of which, they are essential. Besides, the members of such societies are openly known, and they have no means of secret concert and co-operation, unknown to other men. Every man, not of their society, consequently knows how to anticipate their preferences. But Masons exercise this preference in secret, even without it being known that they are Masons. They are bound to obey secret signals, with which persons who are perfect strangers to each other may be brought to co-operate secretly at any moment, and in any place. Thus a man not a Mason constantly labors under disadvantages that he knows nothing of and cannot counteract, and whenever he comes in contact with a Mason, though he stands on precisely equal footing with him, he must be the loser, because Masons will turn the scale against him. Thus when the evidence is balanced before a jury, between a mason and one not a mason, masons on the jury, however honest as men, will feel a sufficient bias from their Masonic relation to turn the scale in favor of the brother. These are every day situations in which persons not Masons, may be placed, with Masons, without reference to politics, which go to show that a man not a mason, has not a fair chance in a community where some are masons and others not. He is therefore compelled, either to become a mason, or to continue to labor under these disadvantages.]

Question by request, from Antimasons. Did you ever know a Mason or his family to receive in charity as much money, as he had paid into the Lodge for fees and quarterly dues?

Witness. I think there has been one instance, since I have been a member of King Solomon's Lodge, in which a person did receive as much and perhaps more than he had paid in. He was sick sometime. I think he received more.

Question by request, from do. How much money was paid out of your lodge for charity to distressed members, while you were Secretary?

Witness. I never knew any money paid out in charity during the four years I was Secretary of the lodge. I knew of no applications for charity, in that time.

[Allyn's Ritual, with variations from the written oath of the Grand Lodge, marked off in pencil, was again referred to by Mr. Hallett, and Mr. Hazard was requested to put these variations to the witness. Up to this time the paper marked E., containing these variations, was not in possession of the Committee, Mr. Hazard having torn up the first copy Mr. Hallett handed to him. Of course this witness could not have been questioned from interrogatories marked E. as is represented in Mr. Halle's minutes. He was questioned in part from the Master's oath in Allyn, viz: 1st. "I will not give the Grand Hailing sign of distress, except I am in real distress, or for the benefit of the craft when at work."

Witness. I recollect that part, except the words "for the benefit of the craft when at work." I do not recollect positively whether it was in the oaths or the lectures. I am positive that it was imposed upon me as a duty which I was to perform, that I would not give the Grand Hailing sign, except I was in real distress. I recollect having heard this inculcated in substance, I cannot recollect whether it was in the oath or lecture. I considered it obligatory. I have never refreshed

my memory and have avoided reading Bernard on the lower degrees.

2d. "And should I see that sign given, or hear the words accompanying it, I will fly to the relief of the person so giving it, should there be a greater probability of saving his life than losing my own." Witness was asked if he remembered that injunction?

Witness. I think I have heard that injunction given rather stronger. "As far as I could see the sign by day, or hear it by night," I was required to obey it.

The part relating to passing and raising of a candidate, witness does not recollect. To keep a Master Mason's secrets, murder and treason excepted, and that left at my option, witness distinctly recollects, as he has before stated. The clause relating to going on a Master Mason's errand, is not recollected. Witness says, I think it is not in the obligation, but I have heard it somewhere inculcated as a duty.

Mr. Hazard, inquired if he might not confound what he had heard, with what he had read in Bernard or Allyn?

Witness. I never read Bernard or Allyn.

The clause was read to witness from Allyn, "That if any part of this obligation (Master's oath) be omitted at this time, I will hold myself amenable thereto, whenever informed."

Witness. It appears to me that is done on some occasions when the person administering the oath is not perfect in it. I cannot be positive.

The examination of Mr. Brown here closed.

Tuesday Morning, December 14. The Committee met at 9 o'clock. Present as before. WILLIAM WILKINSON, Esq. was called and sworn to tell the whole truth.

[The testimony of this witness is entitled to particular attention from his high standing both as a Mason and an individual. He has held the highest Masonic offices in the State, and many out of it, and is a citizen of great respectability of character. Being one of the oldest and most intelligent members of the Order in this country, and most zealously attached to it, it is certain that if he cannot defend and explain its principles when on his oath, so as to remove all doubts, and show Masonry to be a valuable and excellent Institution, no Mason living can do so. The examination of Mr. Wilkinson occupied one whole day, and yet Mr. Haile has compressed it into four or five pages, suppressing by far the most important answers given by this witness. Throughout the examination, Mr. Haile, under the direction of Mr. Hazard, persisted in not putting down the questions and answers considered most material by Antimasons. The exculpations of Masonry, were carefully recorded to the letter, but the confessions, contradictory and confused answers of the witness on his cross examination were as carefully excluded. Not only so, but the witness was requested by the Committee to allow Mr. Haile to erase an answer already written down, which had an unfavorable bearing upon Masonry. This was the first Masonic witness fully examined touching the oaths, &c. The grossly partial conduct of a majority of the Committee on this day, put an end not only to all confidence, but to all hope that they would conduct the investigation as honest men, in search of truth rather than political partizans in pursuit of the best means to secure an election.]

TESTIMONY OF WILLIAM WILKINSON, Esq.

[10th Witness.]

Mr. Hazard commenced with the general interrogatories.

Witness, in answer to 1st. I am a Freemason — Have taken twelve degrees, viz. Entered Apprentice, Fellow Craft, Master Mason, Mark Master, Past Master, Most Excellent Master, Royal Arch, Knight of the Red Cross, Knight Templar and Knight of Malta, generally considered one degree. The Royal Master and the Select Master's degrees

I afterwards received. I know nothing about them, and I could not work myself into a Lodge of these degrees, (meaning, as was understood, the two last.) I was initiated into the first degree in this room, (the Senate Chamber of the State House, where the Committee were holding their investigation,) by Sr. John's Lodge, Providence, No. 2, on the 24th of June, 1792. [Thus it will be seen that Masonry began with taking possession of 'the Halls of Legislation,' as Orator Brainerd says, and transformed them into her Lodges. To this day the Senate Chamber of the State House in Kent county, R. Island, is alternately occupied by the Masons of King Solomon's Lodge, and the Senators of the people, and we believe is jointly owned, as far as its occupation is concerned, by the State and the Masons!]

Witness. Daniel Stilwell was then Master of the Lodge, but Moses Seixas [a Jew who disbelieved the christian religion] performed as Master at my initiation. I received the two next degrees, the same year, in the same Lodge. The Chapter was first opened in this town, (Providence,) in 1793, and I was initiated into the three next degrees in the same room, in November the same year and the R. A. in the same year. I received the other degrees except Royal and Select Master, in St John's Encampment, Providence, and the Royal and Select Master in the Council of Royal and Select Masters in Providence. I was among the first who were made Royal Arch Masons in Rhode Island, having received the degrees on the first evening a Chapter was opened in this State, and this Chapter I think was the 2d Chapter opened in New England.

2nd Interrogatory.

Witness. There was an oath administered to me when taking each of these degrees.

3d question in relation to what is said to the candidate before taking the oaths.

Witness. It is so long since I received the Entered Apprentice degree, that I cannot say whether there was, but my impression always has been that there was from the fact that when Master of a Lodge I always stated the same to the candidate. I have presided in Lodge and Chapter as high as the R. A. degree. It was merely verbal, and might have differed. The precise words I cannot remember, but that was the substance; that the oaths are not to interfere with religion or politics; that every thing relating to religion or politics is excluded. We receive the Jew as well as others. I should have rejected an Atheist. Further than that we did not go — and this practice has I believe been invariable. We considered we had nothing to do with his religion, further than to require a belief in God.

In answer to the 4th Interrogatory.

Witness. I cannot state the obligations. I never was a book Mason. It is nearly twenty years since I have heard them. When we get old we generally drop off, and only go occasionally to the Lodge. There are two degrees, Royal and Select Master, of which I can give no account. I have examined the three first degrees handed in by the officers of the Grand Lodge. They are I believe the same without variation; as I took and have usually administered myself, and which I took. — The reason why I cannot repeat them is, it is twenty years since I have been much where the lower degrees are administered. We have hitherto refrained from giving our obligations. At the request of the Committee they have been given in writing now. I know of no injunction to keep the oaths secret. I saw the obligations in Jachin and Boaz about 40 years ago, but except that, I have never seen the obligations printed or written until as read to me now.

Mr. Hazard. It is unnecessary to explain that further.

Witness. I would wish to give some reasons to the world. It has never come to my knowledge

that the obligations were ever written or printed, but handed down by tradition. I have never seen them written till now.

[Mr Hails here proceeded to read the written oaths of the higher degrees, as furnished to the Committee by the officers of the Royal Arch Chapter. The Royal Arch oath was first read to witness, then the Mark, Past and Most Excellent Masters, and the Knights of the Cross, Knights Templars and Royal and Select Masters. A request was made that the witness should first be examined from the printed oaths in Allyn, before the oaths agreed upon by the Masons, were given to him, as leaders, to inform him what he was expected to say, but Mr Hazard peremptorily refused to permit the witness to be questioned in any other way, at first, than by reading to him what he took care to inform him was the oaths agreed upon by the R. Island Masons. The oaths thus furnished in writing, are as follow.]

MARK MASTER'S OBLIGATION.

I ———, of my own free will and accord, and in the presence of Almighty God, and this lodge of mark master masons, erected to him, and dedicated to St. John, do hereby and hereon, in addition to my former obligations, solemnly and sincerely promise and swear (or affirm) that, I will always hail, forever conceal, and never reveal any of the secret arts, parts or points of the mysteries of freemasonry appertaining to the degree of a mark master, to any person under the canopy of Heaven, except it shall be to a true and lawful mark master mason, or within the body of a regularly constituted lodge of such, and not unto him or them, until after due trial, strict examination, or by the lawful information of a mark master, I shall have found him or them to be as justly and lawfully entitled to the same as I am myself.

I furthermore promise and swear (or affirm) that I will answer all lawful signs and summonses which may be given or sent unto me from a true and lawful mark master mason, or from a regularly constituted lodge of such, if within the length of my cable tow.

2d. That I will aid and assist all worthy distressed mark master masons, their widows and orphans, so far as I can do it without injury to myself or family.

3d. That I will not pledge my mark a second time without redeeming it the first, neither will I receive a brother's mark in pledge without granting him his request if in my power, if not I will return him his mark with the value thereof, which is one quarter of a dollar.

4th. That I will not alter my mark nor suffer it to be done by others, if in my power to prevent it, after it has been once recorded on the lodge book kept for that purpose.

5th. That I will abide by and support the by-laws of the mark lodge of which I may become a member, the constitution of the general, and state grand chapters under which the same is holden, and the general regulations of masonry.

All this I promise and swear (or affirm) with a fixed and steady purpose of mind to perform the same, without any equivocation, mental reservation, or secret evasion of mind in me whatever—binding myself under no less penalty, than that of having my right ear smote off, so as not to be able to hear the word, my right hand struck off, so as not to be able to give the sign; so help me God, and keep me steadfast to perform this my mark master's obligation.

PAST MASTER'S OBLIGATION.

I ———, of my own free will and accord, and in the presence of Almighty God, and this lodge of past Master masons, erected to Him, and dedicated to St. John, do hereby and hereon, in addition to my former obligations, solemnly and sincerely promise and swear (or affirm) that I will always

hail, forever conceal, and never reveal, any of the secret arts, parts or points of the mysteries of freemasonry appertaining to the degree of a past master, to any person under the canopy of Heaven, except it shall be to a true and lawful past master, or within the body of a regularly constituted lodge of such, and not unto him or them until after due trial, strict examination or by the lawful information of a past master I shall have found him or them to be as justly and lawfully entitled to the same as I am myself.

I furthermore promise and swear (or affirm) that I will answer all lawful signs and summonses which may be given or sent unto me from a true and lawful brother of this degree, or from a regularly constituted lodge of such, if within the length of my cable tow.

2d. That I will aid and assist all worthy distressed past masters, their widows and orphans, so far as I can do it without injury to myself or family.

3d. That I will not rule nor govern the lodge over which I may be appointed to preside, in an arbitrary or illegal manner, but agreeably to the by-laws adopted by a majority of the members for the government of the same.

4th. That I will abide by and support the by-laws of the lodge of which I may become a member, the constitution of the general, and state grand chapters under which the same is holden, and the general regulations of masonry.

All this I promise and swear (or affirm) with a firm and fixed purpose of mind to perform the same, without any equivocation, mental reservation or secret evasion of mind in me whatever, binding myself under no less penalty than that of having my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth so as not to be able to give the word, so help me God and keep me steadfast to perform this my past master mason's oath or obligation.

MOST EXCELLENT MASTER'S OBLIGATION.

I ———, of my own free will and accord, and in the presence of Almighty God, and this Lodge of most excellent masters, erected to Him, and dedicated to St. John, do hereby and hereon, in addition to my former obligations, solemnly and sincerely promise and swear (or affirm) that I will always hail, forever conceal, and never reveal, any of the secret arts, parts or points of the mysteries of Freemasonry, appertaining to the degree of a most excellent master, to any person under the canopy of heaven, except it shall be to a true and lawful most excellent master, or within the body of a regularly constituted Lodge of such, and not unto him or them, until after due trial, strict examination, or by the lawful information of a most excellent master, I shall have found him or them to be as justly, and lawfully entitled to the same as I am myself.

I furthermore promise and swear (or affirm) that I will answer all lawful signs and summonses, which may be given or sent unto me, from a true and lawful most excellent master, or from a regularly constituted Lodge of such, if within the length of my cable tow.

2d. That I will aid and assist all worthy distressed most excellent masters, their widows and orphans, so far as I can do it without injury to myself or family.

3d. That I will not derogate from the name now about to be conferred upon me, being that of a most excellent master.

4th. That I will not open and close a Lodge, over which I may be appointed to preside, without first working a lecture, or a section of a lecture.

5th. That I will abide by and support the by-laws of the most excellent master's Lodge of which I may become a member, the constitution of the general, and state grand chapters, under which the same is holden, and the general regulations of masonry,

All this I promise and swear (or affirm) with a fixed and steady purpose of mind to perform the same, without any equivocation, mental reservation, or secret evasion of mind in me whatever, *binding myself under no less penalty, than that of having my flesh torn from my ribs, and my body exposed to rot on a dunghill, so help me God, and keep me steadfast to perform this my most excellent master's obligation.*

ROYAL ARCH MASON'S OBLIGATION.

"I —, of my own free will and accord, and in the presence of Almighty God, and this Chapter of Royal Arch Masons, erected to Him and dedicated to King Solomon, do hereby and hereon, in addition to my former obligations, solemnly and sincerely promise and swear, (or affirm) that I will always hail, forever conceal, and never reveal, any of the secret arts, parts or points of the mysteries of freemasonry appertaining to the degree of Royal Arch Masonry, to any person under the canopy of Heaven, except it shall be to a true and lawful Royal Arch Mason, or within the body of a regularly constituted Chapter of such; and not unto him or them until after due trial, strict examination, or by the lawful information of a companion, I shall have found him or them to be as justly and lawfully entitled to the same, as I am myself.

1st. I furthermore promise and swear (or affirm) that I will answer all lawful signs and summonses which may be given or sent unto me from a true and lawful Companion, or from the body of a regularly constituted Chapter of such, if within the length of my cable-tow.

2d. That I will aid and assist all worthy distressed Royal Arch Masons, their widows and orphans so far as I can do it without injury to myself or family.

3d. That I will not be present at the opening of a Chapter of Royal Arch Masons, unless there shall be present nine regular Royal Arch Masons.

4th. That I will not be present at conferring the degree of R. A. Masonry upon any one who has not according to the best of my knowledge and belief, regularly received all the preceding degrees, viz: entered apprentice, fellow craft, Master Mason, Mark Master, Past Master, and most Excellent Master—and not then unless he is deemed a worthy man.

5th. That I will not shed the blood of a Royal Arch Mason unlawfully, knowing him to be such.

6th. That I will not reveal the key to the mysterious characters of Royal Arch Masonry to any person under the canopy of Heaven, except it be to a true and lawful Royal Arch Mason, or within the body of a regularly constituted Chapter of such.

7th. That I will not give the grand Royal Arch word in any other manner except that in which I may receive it.

8th. That I will abide by and support the by-laws of the Chapter of which I may become a member, the constitution of the General and State Grand Chapters, under which the same is holden, and the general regulations of Masonry.

All this I promise and swear (or affirm) with a fixed and steady purpose of mind to perform the same, without any equivocation, mental reservation, or secret evasion of mind in me whatever—*BINDING MYSELF UNDER NO LESS PENALTY THAN THAT OF HAVING MY SCULL SMOTE OFF AND MY BRAINS EXPOSED TO THE SCORCHING RAYS OF THE SUN. So help me God, and keep me steadfast in performing this my Royal Arch Mason's oath or obligation.*"

OBLIGATION OF THE DEGREE OF KNIGHTS OF THE RED CROSS.

I, —, of my own free will and accord, and in the presence of the Supreme Architect of the Universe, and these companions, do hereby and hereon, most solemnly and sincerely promise and swear, That I will always hail, forever conceal, and never reveal any of the mysteries appertaining to the degree of

the Knights of the Red Cross, to any person under the canopy of heaven, except it be to a true and lawful Knight of the Red Cross, or in the body of a just and lawful council of the order.

I furthermore promise and swear, that I will answer and obey all lawful signs and summonses given or sent to me from a regular council of Knights of the Red Cross, or given me by the hand of a brother Sir Knight if within the distance of forty miles, natural infirmities and unavoidable accidents only excusing me.

I furthermore promise and swear, that I will not be at the opening of a Council of Knights of the Red Cross, except there shall be present five regular members of the order, or three Knights of the Red Cross being also Knights Templars and hailing from three different commanderies, with a warrant or charter empowering them to work.—I furthermore promise and swear, that I will not be present at the conferring of the degree of the Knights of the Red Cross upon any person who has not, according to the best of my knowledge, received all the preceding degrees, viz. Entered Apprentice, Fellow Craft, &c. &c. &c.—I furthermore promise and swear, that I will vindicate the character of a worthy Sir Knight, when wrongfully traduced, and will assist him on all lawful occasions with my purse, counsel and sword, so far as truth, justice and honor may warrant.—I furthermore promise and swear, that I will abide by and support the bylaws of the council of which I may become a member, the Constitution of the General Grand and State Encampments, and the general regulations of Knighthood.—All this I promise and swear with a fixed and steady purpose of mind to perform the same; binding myself under no less penalty than that my house may be pulled down, and timber taken from thence, and being set up, I may be hanged thereon, and, until the last trumpet shall sound, I may be excluded from the society of all courteous Sir Knights of the Red Cross, should I wilfully or intentionally violate this obligation.—So help me God, and keep me steadfast to perform the same.

KNIGHTS TEMPLAR'S OBLIGATION.

I, —, of my own free will and accord, and in the presence of the Supreme Architect of the Universe, and these Sir Knights present, do hereby and hereon, most solemnly and sincerely promise and swear, That I will forever keep and conceal, and never reveal any of the mysteries appertaining to the orders of Knights Templars and Knights of Malta of the order of St. John at Jerusalem, to any person under the canopy of heaven, except it be to a true and lawful Sir Knight of these orders, or in the body of a just and regularly constituted Encampment.—I furthermore promise and swear, that I will answer and obey all lawful signs and summonses, given or sent unto me from a true courteous Sir Knight, or from the body of a just and regularly constituted Encampment.—I furthermore promise and swear, that I will aid and assist all worthy Knights Templars, their widows and orphans, so far as the same can be done without injury to myself or family.—I furthermore promise and swear, that I will not be at the opening of any regular constituted Encampment, unless there shall be present seven regular Knights Templars, or three Sir Knights, hailing from three different commanderies, with a warrant or charter from some regular Grand Encampment empowering them to work. I furthermore promise and swear, that I will not be present at conferring the order of Knights Templars upon any person who has not, according to the best of my knowledge and belief, received all the preceding degrees.—I furthermore promise and swear, that I will travel forty miles barefoot on frozen ground to relieve the necessities of a worthy Knight Templar, should I be convinced his situation required it, and I have no other way of communicating to his relief.—I furthermore promise and

swear, that I will wield my sword in defence of innocent maidens, destitute widows, helpless orphans and the Christian religion.—I furthermore promise and swear, that I will abide by and support the bylaws of the Encampment of which I may become a member, the Constitution of the General and State Grand Encampment under which the same is holden, and the general regulations of Knighthood. All this I promise and swear, with a fixed and steady purpose of mind, to perform the same, binding myself under no less penalty than that my head may be stricken off, and placed on the highest spire in Christendom—So help me God, and keep me steadfast to perform this obligation.

SELECT MASTER'S OBLIGATION.

I, ———, in the presence of this Council of Select Masters, erected to God, and dedicated to King Solomon, do solemnly and sincerely promise and swear, That I will stand to, and abide by, all the laws, rules and regulations of the Council of Select Masters of which I may become a member, and ever maintain the general regulations of the order.—I further promise and swear, that I will answer all due signs and summonses given or sent unto me from a true and lawful Select Master, or from the body of a just and regular Council of such.—That I will not assent to nor confer the degree of Select Master upon any one, except he is a Royal Arch Mason, and has taken all the preceding degrees, and has also been admitted a Royal Master in a regular Council.—That I will not enter the 9th Arch without permission of the three Grand Masters, neither will I penetrate beyond the one in which I am employed. All this I promise and swear without any equivocation, mental reservation, or secret evasion of mind in me whatever binding myself under no less penalty than that of *having my eyes torn from their sockets, my hands chopped off to the stumps, my body quartered and thrown among the rubbish of the temple—So help me God, and keep me steadfast to perform this my Select Master's obligation.*

ROYAL MASTER'S OBLIGATION.

I ———, of my own free will and accord, in presence of Almighty God; and this Right Worshipful Council of Royal Masters, erected to God, and dedicated to King Solomon, do hereby and hereon sincerely and solemnly promise and swear, That I will keep and conceal all the mysteries appertaining to the degree of Royal Master and will not reveal the same, except it be to a true and lawful companion of that order, or to a just and regular constituted council of such.—I further promise and swear that I will not be at the opening of a council of Royal Masters, unless there be seven members of that degree present.—That I will not be present at conferring the degree of Royal Master upon any one who has not, according to the best of my knowledge and belief, regularly received the preceding degrees of Entered Apprentice, Fellow Craft, Master Mason, Mark Master, Past Master, and Most Excellent Master, and been exalted to the sublime degrees of Royal Arch Masonry.—That I will abide by and support the by-laws of the council of which I may become a member, and the general regulations of the order.—That I will not give the words, grips and signs of this degree in any other manner than that in which I may receive them.

All this I promise and swear, with a firm and fixed resolution to perform the same, binding myself under the penalties of my preceding obligations with this addition, that I would sooner be buried alive, and my memory forgotten among the Craft—so help me God, and keep me steadfast to perform the same.

The oaths of Mark, Past and Excellent Master and Royal Arch Mason, having been read,

Witness said, I have no kind of doubt of the cor-

rectness of those obligations, substantially. It will be recollected, as was well said by Rev. brother Thacher, that a person at his initiation, if in the description they give you, they tell you the truth, it is difficult to remember what passes, especially, as it took place many years ago when I was a young man. The substance was precisely the same. Some variations, perhaps, but not material. The three first degrees belong to the Master's Lodge. The Royal Arch contains all above up to that degree, which are administered in Chapters. The obligations of Mark Master up to and including Royal Arch, are substantially such as have always been administered so far as my knowledge extends. That was the sun and substance, but to say they are the words used I would not. There may be some verbal variations but no substantial difference.

The oath of Knight of the Red Cross was read. *Witness said it was correct.*

Question by request—Is the word "when" or until the last trumpet shall sound may I be separated from the society of all courteous Sir Knights? *Witness.* That it is the perfect substance of it I believe. It is all I can say respecting it.

A candidate for the higher degrees must have received all the preceding degrees, from entered Apprentice up. The Knight Templar's oath was then read.

Witness. That is substantially the same, except—*Mr Hazard.* Did you ever have any occasion to make use of your sword in defence of distressed damsels? [A laugh. *Witness* did not smile nor reply.]

The Royal and Select Master's oaths being read, *Witness* says I know nothing about them above the Knight Templar.

Question by request. Did you ever know the word affirm substituted for swear?

Witness. I do not recollect. I never knew any person to apply. I was told that a Mr. Nichols once took the affirmation. As a Master of a Lodge I should not have refused to give it. I know of nothing in the principles of Masonry to prohibit it.

Mr Hazard. There are some clauses in the oaths given in Allyn's Ritual, which are not contained in the written oaths that have been read to you, and which we are requested to ask you, if you ever took. I will read them to you from this paper which has been prepared for that purpose.

[*Note.* Mr H. then proceeded to read these clauses, a part of which it will be recollected had been handed to him once before, and torn up by him. A second copy had been prepared by Mr Hallett, at Mr Hazard's request, and handed to him. They were prepared from a comparison of the printed oaths in Allyn and Bernard, with the written oaths handed in by the Masters, and embraced every thing in which the meaning and import of these oaths differed in any essential particular. An examination of them, will show how nearly the written forms correspond with the printed, and will excite surprise that men who now came forward and swore to the truth of the former, should for five years have persisted in a positive denial that there was one word of truth in the latter! ¶ One of these variations, No. 2, is in fact no variation, the same version being given almost literally in the 6th point of the Master Mason's obligation, as written out by the Masters. It was purposely inserted to mislead the Masonic witnesses, in order to test the question whether they really swore to the written oaths from perfect recollection, or because they were told they were the Rhode Island oaths; and whether they did not deny the printed variations, rather because they were told they were in the seceder's books, and not in the written oaths, than because they were sure they never took or heard them. Mr Hazard having refused to put the oaths to the Masons first out of Allyn, and persisting in telling every wit-

ness, what were the Rhode Island oaths as he called them, and what were the Seceders' oaths, it seemed perfectly fair to set this trap to catch them.]

VARIATIONS

Between the written and printed oaths, [on paper marked E.]

[In the Master Mason's Oath.]

1st. "Furthermore I do promise and swear, that I will not give the grand hailing sign of distress of this degree, except I am in real distress, or for the benefit of the craft when at work; and should I see that sign given, or hear the words accompanying it, I will fly to the relief of the person so giving it, should there be a greater probability of saving his life than losing my own."—Page 71.

2d. "Furthermore I do promise and swear, that I will not speak evil of a brother mason, neither behind his back or before his face, but WILL APPRISE HIM OF ALL APPROACHING DANGER."—p. 72.

3d. "Furthermore I do promise and swear, that a master mason's secrets, given to me in charge as such, shall remain as secure and inviolable in my breast as in his, before communicated, murder and treason only excepted; and they left to my own election"—p. 72.

4th. Furthermore do I promise and swear, that I will go on a master mason's errand, even barfoot and bareheaded, to save his life or relieve his necessities."—p. 72.

5th. "Furthermore do I promise and swear, that if any part of this obligation be omitted at this time, I will hold myself amenable thereto whenever informed."—p. 73.

In the ROYAL ARCH OATH.—6th. "I furthermore promise and swear, that I will not speak the grand omnific royal arch word, which I shall hereafter receive, in any manner, except in that in which I shall receive it, which will be in the presence of three companion royal arch masons, myself making one of the number; and then by three times three, under a living arch, and at low breath."

7th. "I furthermore promise and swear, that I will not speak evil of a companion royal arch mason behind his back or before his face, but will apprise him of all approaching danger, if in my power."

8th. "I furthermore promise and swear, that I will assist a companion royal arch mason when I see him engaged in any difficulty, and will espouse his cause so far as to extricate him from the same, whether he be right or wrong!"

9th. "I furthermore promise and swear, that I will keep all the secrets of a companion royal arch mason, when communicated to me as such, or I knowing them to be such, without exception."

10th. In the obligation of the royal arch degree, as read to you from paper marked B. is this sentence:

7th. "That I will not give the grand royal arch word in any manner except that in which I may receive it."

Is the manner there referred to the same described in this obligation as given in Allyn's Ritual, viz: "in the presence of three companion royal arch masons, myself making one of the number, and then by three times three under a living arch, and at low breath?"

PAST MASTER'S OBLIGATION.—11th. Is the penalty in this degree ever given thus:—Binding myself under no less penalty than to have my tongue split from tip to root?"

KNIGHT OF THE RED CROSS.—12th. Is this a part of the obligation:—"That I will assist him, on a lawful occasion, in preference to any brother of an inferior degree, and so far as truth, honor and justice may warrant?"

13th. In the obligation of knight of the red cross, is the expression used in the penalty, "until

the last trump shall sound," or "when the last trump shall sound?"

14th. In the knight templar's obligation is this expression used: "with a fixed and steady purpose of mind to perform the same, without any hesitation, equivocation, mental reservation or self evasion of mind in me whatever?"

15th. Do these or similar words occur in any part of the ceremony or initiation of a knight templar: "This pure wine I now take in testimony of my belief in the mortality of the body and the immortality of the soul, and may this libation appear as a witness against me both here and hereafter. And as the sins of the world were laid upon the head of the Saviour, so may all the sins committed by the person whose skull this was, be heaped upon my head, in addition to my own, should I ever knowingly or wilfully violate or transgress any obligation that I have heretofore taken, or take at this time, in relation to any degree of masonry or order of knighthood. So help me God?" &c.

The witness was questioned separately on each of the variations in the three first degrees.

The first relative to the Grand hailing sign,—he says I do not recollect any such thing in the obligation.

The second, "I will not speak evil of a Master Mason, behind his back, or before his face, but will apprise him of all approaching danger." Witness entered into an explanation at some length of this and the preceding clause without making any definite answer.

Mr. Hazard. Why cant you give a plain answer. We dont want a great long harangue.

Witness. I dont recollect any such thing in the obligation.

Question by request. Do you in the charges, or lectures.

Witness. That is the general principle, that we have gone upon in Masonry. I dont recollect where it is. It is the general principle of Masonry to assist a worthy brother in all his laudable undertakings.

3d. And that left to my election?

Witness. Those are words I never heard.

4th. Go on a Mason's errand, &c.

Witness. I never heard it in or out of a Lodge till I came here.

5th. If any thing is omitted in this my obligation, I will hold myself amenable thereto, when informed.

Witness. That I never heard. It is so inconsistent, I think it must have been put in to make us ridiculous.

Mr. Hazard here asked the witness to explain some parts of the oath (Master Mason's.) A great many phrases, he said, were not understood. What are the lawful signs and summonses you are to obey, when called upon by a brother, if within the length of your cable tow?

Witness. Within our convenience. That we were bound as far as suited our convenience or wishes. We dont profess to be any thing but men in our charities. It is left entirely optional that we will assist a brother if in our power. It is left to our will or option. Within the length of my cable tow is within my wishes and abilities. I never understood it further. It means nothing more. I look upon our first charge to be a fair exposition of the duties of Masons.

[Thus even according to this witness, a designing man may masonically go to the extent of his wishes and abilities to obey the summons of a brother mason, to do wrong, or assist a brother, right or wrong.]

Mr. Hazard. What do you understand to be the lawful signs and summonses you are to obey?

Witness. All lawful signs or summons I consider to be the summons sent to attend the Lodge, and also applications for assistance, from a brother.

* The Committee scarcely put these questions to a single witness.

A written request was banded to Mr Hazard to inquire what these signs and summonses were.

Mr Hazard. We dont wait them. The question was not put by the Chairman.

Witness continued. A brother is bound to obey the signs and come if he is summoned before a Lodge, and if he refuses to come he is liable to be expelled, according to our by-laws. This has always been my understanding and practice, and I believe it to be correct.

Mr. Hazard. IF THAT IS THE MEANING I DONT SEE BUT YOUR CABLE TOW, IS A TOW CABLE.

The witness was asked to explain that part of the oath relative to assisting the widows and orphans of Master Masons.

Witness. That is explained above. How far we have done it, the world must judge.

Mr. Hazard. The 3d point, to keep the secrets of a brother Master Mason, murder and treason excepted; how do you understand that?

Witness. My idea on that is simply this. If a brother communicated a secret we were not to tell of it.

Question by request. But if a crime less than murder and treason, had been communicated to you, what would you have done.

Witness. I dont know how I should have acted, but I was never tried. If a man who was a mason, had communicated to me that he had committed a crime, I should have said to him you are no longer a mason. I will report you to the Lodge, and you shall be expelled.

Mr. Hazard. But how do you explain it?

Witness. Why, that we should not unnecessarily or lightly reveal the secrets of a brother.

Mr. Hazard. It seems to me that the expression MURDER AND TREASON EXCEPTED includes all others, among the secrets to be kept.

Witness. That is not my construction.

Mr. Hazard. (becoming rather earnest) We dont want your partiuclar case, but how it is understood among masons.

Witness. I should consider it not to extend to crimes.

Mr Hazard. But if a crime had been communicated, would you have felt yourself bound not to make it public?

Witness. After he had been expelled, I should have done so; and I might have done so before.—I can't tell, for I never was put to the trial.

Question from W. Paine, Jr. What would you have done, before the Mason was expelled from the Lodge. Should you have felt yourself authorised to communicate a crime, less than murder or treason, given to you as a Mason's secret?

Witness. I have answered that Gentlemen will recollect that it is hard to tell what I should have done. I do not think, I should have concealed a crime against the laws of my country.

Mr Hazard. IT IS VERY CLEAR THAT YOU OUGHT NOT TO HAVE TAKEN THIS OATH. IT IS IN DIRECT VIOLATION OF YOUR DUTY TO YOUR COUNTRY!

Witness. If it was such a crime as ought to be revealed, my idea is we should have revealed it, but if any small offence, perhaps not.

[*Query.* If this highly respectable and moral man balanced his Masonic obligations so nicely, as to the quality of the offences he might conceal, what would a man whose moral principles hung rather loosely about him, do as a mason?]

Mr Hazard. How do you explain the clause, "will apprise him of all approaching danger, so far as it shall come to my knowledge."

Witness. These words got into the obligation as words of course. I never warned one in my life. I never saw it practised upon, and I am sure that I never should apprise a person, to prevent his being apprehended for crime. We have bad men and good men among us. Some might have done it, and

plead their obligation, but I think they cannot have done it as good Masons.

Mr Hazard. Do you understand it to apply to crimes, or are we to understand that you never considered it as binding you to communicate any warning that would prevent the execution of the laws?

Witness. I never put any different construction upon it. I never heard any other given, or practised upon or knew it to be done. I should consider it applied only to a worthy brother Mason, and that I was only bound to consider it in that light. I never knew it to be extended to crimes—I speak for myself. I cannot say what some may have done.

Question from B. F. Hallett. By saying a worthy brother, do you not mean that he is a worthy mason?

Witness. I so understand it. Deciding for myself, I should always inquire for myself, and if I found him unworthy I should have acted accordingly. I do not pretend to say that this is Masonic. I have never considered it, or thought much about it.

Mr Hazard. How do you construe the penalty of the obligations?

Witness. I construe the penalty merely as personal; binding on my honor as a Mason, and I never heard it otherwise among worthy Masons.—Permit me to add there is nothing in our by laws which recognizes any punishment but expulsion.

Mr. Hazard. I have looked over your by laws, and find they only apply to punishments for the violation of those by laws.

Witness. The by laws speak of expulsion as the punishment for disclosing the transactions of the Lodge.

Mr Hazard. I know it. Here is the clause—"that if any member shall disclose any of the transactions of the body, to the disadvantage of the Craft, &c. he shall be expelled." But that don't cover the whole.

[*Note.* Mr. Haile has omitted the most essential parts of the above very important explanations by this witness, which are here given verbatim, from his own mouth. Instead of giving the language of the witness, Mr Haile, in his minutes, has merely taken down the conclusions he inferred the witness ultimately arrived at.]

Mr. Hallett here offered to Mr. Hazard the Knight Templar's Masonic Chart, by Grand Lecturer, Jeremy L. Cross, a work approved by all Masons, and requested him to question the witness as to the symbol on page 17, representing the head of a Knight Templar, stuck upon the top of a lofty spire; with a view to ascertain whether this was not the Masonic construction intended to be given to the penalties, by holding up this symbol, as a warning to deter Masons from revealing the secrets. Mr. Hazard, after some hesitation, handed the book to witness, and asked if he knew any thing about it.

Witness. I never read it. I considered I knew as much of Masonry as was necessary, without studying it in books.

His attention was here particularly called to the head, on the spire.

Witness. I should look at it merely as a picture. It may do to amuse children.

A remark was made by an Antimason, that it seemed to be a curious picture for such a purpose. The following question was then put by request. Has it not a direct reference to the penalty, as expressed in the Knight Templar's oath?

Witness. In our obligation we have expressed that our heads should be struck off and placed on the highest spire in christendom, and I suppose this is a picture of it.—I dont say that it is emblematic of it. I only say that our penalty says they shall be placed there, and that is a picture of it. It will

do to please children with. I never examined Cross' Chart one hour in my life.

A request was made from Antimasons, that Mr Hazard would examine the witness relative to the clauses in the printed Royal Arch Oath, which had been omitted in the written oath, handed in by the Masons, but the witness had grown wiser than to risk any further attempt at explanation or construction.

Mr Hazard—Here are some clauses in Allyn, which are not in your Royal Arch oath?

Witness. Perhaps the general answer would best be, that what is there written is the whole as it was given to me

Mr Hazard. But it is particularly requested that we should put these questions. He then proposed the variations in the Royal Arch oath. 1st. "will destroy the key to the ineffable character of this degree, whenever it comes to my sight?"

Witness does not recollect it. 2nd. The grand Omnific word, and manner in which it is to be spoken?

Witness. I never heard the expression "grand Omnific."

Mr Hazard was requested to ask what was the manner alluded to in the written oath, in which the Royal Arch word was to be received and spoken; with a view to see if it did not conform to the oath in that respect in Allyn. He refused to put the question!

3d. "Will apprise of all approaching danger if in my power?"

Witness. The Master's oath gives all the obligation that we are bound to assist a brother.

4th. "I will employ a companion Royal Arch Mason, in preference to any other person, of equal qualifications?"

Witness. I never heard it.

5th. "I will espouse his cause, so far as to extricate him from any difficulty, whether he be right or wrong?"

Witness. I never heard it in my life.

[Mr Hazard was here referred by Antimasons, to the following authority, but he took no notice of it.

"IN WHATEVER SITUATION YOU MAY BE PLACED, sit not at a brother's call. If he be in danger, FLY TO HIS RELIEF. If he be calumniated, JUSTIFY HIS CHARACTER. Bear his burdens, allay his sorrows, and ESPOUSE HIS CAUSE!" Freemasons' Monitor by James Hardie, p. 185. "The obligations imposed upon the Order is that each member is to protect a brother, AS FAR AS HE CAN!" Ibid, p. 190. "To stretch forth your hands to assist a brother, when it is in your power; to be always ready to go any where to serve him; to betray no confidence he reposes in you; to support him with your authority—in short mutually to support and assist each other, and EARNESTLY TO PROMOTE ONE ANOTHER'S INTEREST, are duties which (well you know) are incumbent on you. Ye are covenanted by solemn promises."—General Address to Masons.]

6th. "I will keep all the secrets of a companion Royal Arch Mason, without exception, or murder and treason not excepted?" Did you ever hear that?

Witness. "No. Never to my hearing murder and treason. I should say that," [as to keeping secrets,] "that being included in the Master's oath, and referred to, it was unnecessary to repeat it in the Royal Arch." [This is the precise language of the witness]

Mr Hazard. Was the charge in Webb's Monitor, delivered to you at your initiation?

Witness. Webb's Monitor had not been published when I was initiated. We then had verbal charges. Short ones. They were usually the same as in Webb's Monitor, with an addition by him.—Webb was not published till I had received the Royal Arch degree. I should say the first edition

was in 1797 or 8. I saw it in 93. I received the charge or address, before the oath, and a charge after it. I considered them as embodying the true spirit of Masons, which ought to govern the conduct of every good brother. Binding upon me for my rule or government. The charge after the obligation is given in the course of conferring the degree, not immediately.

Question by request—Was the address made previous to taking each oath that it was not to interfere with your religion or politics?

Witness. I should say it was considered as a part of Masonry; that is the idea we have always inculcated on Masons, that it was not to interfere. I cannot say whether it was administered before every oath or not. My impression is it is.

Question by request—Are you certain that this address was always made previous to initiation?

Witness. I have no distinct recollection on the subject. My impression is it was, but I cannot say. I have always felt so, and acted accordingly.

Mr Hazard proposed the 10th Interrogatory. If witness considered he gave jurisdiction to the Lodge over his life?

Witness. I never had any such idea. I considered it as personal, as I have before stated. I never heard it so explained by any Lodge or Masons.

The 11th Interrogatory, relating to the secrets of Masonry, Mr Hazard passed over, and put the 12th. If the By-laws are published, and if there are any secret By-laws.

Witness. The constitution and By-laws of Lodges are frequently published, and also kept in Records. I never knew of any secret By-laws. I have been Master of a Lodge, Grand Master, High Priest and at the head of an Encampment.

In answer to 13th Interrogatory.

Witness. Knows of no other obligation in Masonry, than the ones he has stated.

Question from W. Paine, Jr. Do you know of any new degree in Masonry?

Witness. I know of no degree but such as I have stated.

Question from the same. Do you know of any degree established since the abduction of Morgan?

Witness. I know of nothing as appertaining to Masonry.

Mr Hazard permitted the evasion to pass, and proposed the 14th Interrogatory. If witness considered the oaths incompatible with religious, moral or civil duties?

Witness. I did not consider that they interfered at all.

Mr Hazard. What do you consider the origin and objects of Free Masonry to be?

Witness. I have been a Mason forty years. I consider the object of Masonry purely a social compact for our social comfort, and from which those were excluded we did not wish to have associated with us. Where no indecent word or oath was allowed to be uttered, nor religion nor politics allowed to be introduced. No dissension.

Question by request. At what time did Free Masonry commence?

Witness. When it was instituted I know not or care! I knew it was a society widely extended all over Europe.

COMMENT.

[**Mr Wilkinson** here asserts upon his oath that he does not know when Free Masonry was instituted! In connexion with this assertion, reference was had to Webb's Monitor, in which is a certificate signed by William Wilkinson R. A. S. where in he says "that the said (Monitor) is replete with useful Masonic information, and fully entitled to the sanction of the Grand Chapter." The first Chapter of that book, thus unconditionally approved by Mr. Wilkinson, says, "From the commencement of the world, we may trace the foundation of Masonry. Ever since symmetry began, and harmony displayed her charms, our order has had a

being." Mr. Wilkinson certified to the truth of this assertion, and yet on his civil oath, he declared that he knew nothing about the origin of Masonry!—Is not the inference plain, that respectable men who are Masons will certify to what they know to be false, in order to sustain Masonry by imposing upon public credulity? Either Mr. Wilkinson's testimony is false, or Webb is false: and yet we have Mr. Wilkinson's name for the truth of both assertions, one of which cannot be true.]

Witness continued his answer. I never was much of a book Mason. We were bound to assist all mankind, but our brethren in particular. We had no ties in politics. I speak from my own practice and feelings. As to our being a blood stained institution, it is absurd. That we should have a CAIN is not surprising, for we have had our JUDAS among us. We have also had our ALEXANDER, the coppersmith, who attempted to do us much evil. I can say the Lord reward him according to his works.

[*Query.* Did the witness here allude to the Emperor of Russia, who prohibited Free Masonry in his dominions, and whose rather sudden death, after that decree, has been involved in some little doubt. Was he rewarded by Masonry, according to his works?]

16th Interrogatory. Did you ever hear the nature and extent of the penalties, discussed in a Lodge? or know any higher than expulsion, to be inflicted?

Witness. I never did. I never heard of any penalties being inflicted, higher than expulsion.

In answer to 19th Interrogatory, witness says, I never knew any Lodge to combine to take any measures to support a candidate for office.

In answer to 20th, If he ever voted for a Mason, in preference to a better man, of his own political sentiment? witness says, I never did, and I never favored a Mason to the injury of another person.

In answer to 21st, respecting the grand hailing sign being given, he says, I never knew the grand hailing sign given in any Court, to any Judge, juror or officer.

In answer to 22d, whether he would obey his Masonic or civil obligation, if brought in conflict. Witness says I think that question is answered, I do consider that my Masonic obligations do not conflict with my civil duties.

In answer to 23d, If he has visited Lodges in other states? and if their signs, ceremonies and work are the same, or similar? Witness says, I have in the State of New York, at the meeting of the Grand Lodge in N. York, and 35 years ago I visited a Lodge in Boston and one in Charlestown. I know of no difference in the ceremonies, and presume them to be the same. I do not know any difference between their Masonic practices, signs and mode of working, and those in this state.

The following question, which Mr. Hazard had neglected, was again handed to him, by W. Paine, Jr. After turning it over some little time, he put it thus.

Mr. Hazard. It is wished to vary the 20th question in addition to mine. If you had a vote to give, or a favor to bestow upon but one, should you prefer a brother mason, to one who was not, under the same circumstances?

Mr. Moses Richardson, a Mason, who was standing near the witness, here said aloud—That is a case that never could occur. The witness made no reply, nor was he required to do so. Mr. Haile has not put down in his minutes, the question or the refusal of the witness to answer.

24th Interrogatory. Is there a chain of connexion between Grand Lodges and Masons of higher order in this and other states? Do the higher Lodges or Chapters in all other states, form one Masonic body or order under one head or Chief, called the Grand High Priest of the U. States? Is there any connexion between the higher Masonic powers in this

country and those in Europe? Please state fully and minutely all you know of any such connexion, communication, government and subordination.

Witness. As to the communication between the Grand Lodges, I presume it is kept up regularly throughout the U. States. The Grand Lodge has the supremacy of the three lower degrees of Masonry.

Mr. Hazard. I am very anxious to get at that—the connexion between these Masonic bodies in the U. States and also in other countries.

Mr. Hallett. You will find it laid down in these authorities—referring to the Constitutions of the U. States General Grand Chapter, and the U. States General Grand Encampment, in Webb's Monitor, pp. 167, 243. Also to Vinton's Masonic Minstrel, p. 399, in which is given a communication to the Grand Lodge of R. Island from the Grand Lodge of S. Carolina, setting forth that a communication had been received from the Grand Lodge of England, "relative to the union of Freemasons in England, Ireland, Scotland and America, by which events the Masonic Fraternity throughout the world have been cemented, into one happy family." At the same time the Grand Lodge of South Carolina voted, "that the Corresponding Grand Secretary shall congratulate the Grand Lodges in this country, upon the happy union of the whole Masonic family throughout the world, and particularly that this great and happy event has been effected without the smallest dereliction of principle, and that the words, passwords, signs, grips, working, forms of initiation, &c. are PRECISELY THE SAME IN ALL THE DEGREES, as has been the case from time immemorial."

When these references were handed to Mr. Hazard, Grand Master Cooke suggested to the witness, if he would not prefer to write it out, and hand his answer to the Committee.

Witness said he should prefer to have Mr. Haile take it down. Mr. Hazard proposed to adjourn till afternoon, which was done, thus giving the witness an opportunity to consult with other Masons, as to the best mode of meeting this important question.

Tuesday Afternoon, 3 o'clock.

Messrs. Hazard, Sprague and Haile of the Committee, met at 3 o'clock, and resumed the examination of Mr. Wilkinson, in reference to the government of Masonic bodies.

In answer to 26th Interrogatory, Witness says, The several Lodges in this State are under subordination to the Grand Lodge of the State. Each State has its Grand Lodge. The Grand Lodges in the U. States are independent. They communicate to each other their officers, &c. We write a circular after the elections of officers, to all the Grand Lodges, and a communication is kept up. The communications between them are complimentary, or we can write on business. They communicate any Masonic matters as they think necessary. They communicate with each other as equals, but not as superiors.

There is a higher order of masons who form a community. There is no connexion between Chapters and Lodges except this, that a person cannot receive the higher degrees, unless he has taken the lower. The same men compose both, but there is no control in point of government. I state this from what I know in practice. I have not been a book reading mason. The two degrees of Royal and Select Master, I do not know to what branch they belong, though I have taken those degrees.

Mr. Hazard. Does the Grand Lodge admit honorary members?

Witness. When the Grand Lodge was first established in this State, there were but two Lodges, and they then elected eight honorary members, to increase the number. But many years after the

Grand Lodge voted not to add to that number, but continue to elect those during life, who had been elected.

The several Royal Arch Chapters met in 1798, and a General Grand Chapter was formed, for the Northern States, by a Convention held at Hartford. Afterwards this was extended throughout the U. States. They formed at first a Constitution for the Northern States, which now extends over the U. States. This General Grand Chapter elects a GENERAL GRAND HIGH PRIEST, to which all look up as the HEAD. [Mr. Haile did not like this last admission, and got the witness to go over his answer again. He then stated it in this form.]

In 1798, the Royal Arch Chapters in the Northern States and New York, formed a General Grand Chapter for those States, which was afterwards extended over the U. States, all the Chapters having adopted it. This Association is now called the General Grand Chapter of the United States, which is governed by an officer called the General Grand High Priest.

Witness. I wish that to be corrected, so as to read *presided over*. Our Government is too Republican to say governed.

Mr. Haile. Then your Government is more Republican than your titles?

Witness. You will find it so. We are governed by no body but ourselves.

[Mr. Haile wrote down these precise words, but afterwards suggested to the witness they had better be struck out, to which the witness readily assented.]

Mr. Hazard. When did the higher degrees originate, and when were they introduced here?

Witness. I have no knowledge of the time when the degrees including the Royal Arch and above, originated. The Royal Arch was introduced into Rhode Island in November, 1793. I recollect the difficulty we had to find seven Royal Arch Masons, to open the first Chapter. Mr. John Carlile and myself are the only ones now living, who took the degree at that time. The higher degrees were introduced afterwards. I do not recollect when. A number of Master Masons being desirous of taking the higher degrees; Daniel Stilwell went to N. York and got a dispensation; but it required seven Royal Arch Masons to be present at the opening of a Chapter; there were present Moses Seixas, Peleg Clarke, Thomas W. Moore, (British Consul at Newport) Daniel Stilwell, Jonathan Donnison, Samuel Stearns, (a foreigner) and I believe Daniel Dailey. I do not like the expression "they introduced it," (as Mr. Haile had written it down.) It was introduced by them. [Mr. Haile altered it to, was introduced.]

A question was asked relative to the government of the subordinate Chapters.

Witness. There is one question you have not asked, which will explain this. Each State has a Grand Chapter, to which all the chapters in that State are subordinate. They objected to give us a Grand Chapter in Rhode Island, we were so small, but we would not join, unless they did. We are so Republican we are not governed by any body but ourselves. Our government is more republican than any civil or religious, under Heaven. The several Chapters in each State form a Grand Chapter presided over by a Grand High Priest, to which the Chapters are subordinate, and the Grand Chapters of each State are subordinate to and under the jurisdiction of the General Grand Chapter of the United States. I have never known of any communication with any foreign Masonic body, other than that of a brother coming along for charity. I believe that once or twice Masonic letters have passed between the Grand Lodge and the provincial Lodges in U. States. I say positively that there is no subordination or connexion between any body of Masons in this State and Europe. They may keep up a friendly intercourse.

In answer to the 27th. If Lodges in other states give notice of the expulsion of members?

Witness. It is the custom of Grand Lodges in each State to communicate to each other the names of members expelled. Especially if it was supposed that a person was travelling abroad where he might do mischief as an unworthy brother.

[*Query?* Howard, the murderer of Morgan, travelled to Europe, by the help of a Chapter in N. York, but was never expelled. There was no fear, it seems, that he was an unworthy brother.]

Mr. Hazard. Has your Lodge ever received any communication from the Grand Lodge, Chapter or Encampment of New York relative to the expulsion of any member of either of those bodies concerned in the abduction and murder of William Morgan?

Witness. I can give you a general answer. That I have no knowledge of any thing of the kind in any Masonic body.

29th Interrogatory. When the expulsion of a member of another Lodge is communicated, what order is taken by your Lodge, if it comes from another State?

Witness. It is entered on the Records, so that he may not be received in that Lodge.

30th. Has any Lodge, Chapter or Encampment in this State to your knowledge received any communication from any Masonic body in New York, on the subject of the killing of Morgan, and if so, what was its import.

[A written request was here sent to Mr. Hazard from Antimason, that he would summon the Grand Master, Grand High Priest and Grand Commander of 1826-27, and question them on this point. He asked Mr Cook who they were, but neither of them was summoned!]

Witness. I have no knowledge of any such communication ever having been made.

Question from B. F. Hallett. Is it not according to Masonic usage that every Mason who has not been expelled from his Lodge, Chapter, &c. is entitled to admission in the Lodges or Chapters, of all other States, as a worthy visiting brother?

[Mr Haile has perverted this question by putting in a qualification not in the original.]

Witness. It is, if the Mason makes himself known as such, and the Lodge is satisfied that his pretensions are such as he represents them, and they are satisfied he has taken the degree of that Lodge.

Mr Hazard. When any Masons in other States, especially if conspicuous, are convicted of any crime of a serious nature, is it not usual for Lodges to pass some order to guard against the intrusion of such guilty Masons?

Witness. To answer your question I should say that I think it would be their duty to do so, but I have not known such a case precisely. If a mason has done any thing for which he is expelled, it is communicated to us, and we should not admit him. We know no difference between great men and little men in Masonry, except the great men we make ourselves—men of straw I suppose.

Mr Haile. But suppose a Mason had committed a high crime, should you receive him, as a Mason?

Witness. If he was not a member of our Lodge we should consider we had nothing to do with his crimes. He must go to his own Lodge. If we knew that he had been convicted of a heinous crime, we should not admit him, but we should not undertake to judge of his guilt or innocence. If he had been convicted of a great crime, I suppose we should not admit him whether he had been expelled or not. I speak this from my own feelings, never having had any knowledge of such a case.

Mr Hazard. Have you ever heard any Mason of reputable standing in society, justify the killing of Morgan?

Witness. I never heard it justified at all in no case by any Mason. I suppose they would not have communicated it to me, if they had. I expressed

my opinion against it, if it was done by Masons. It was a very unwarrantable act if it was done, a very unwise and foolish one, as well as wicked.

Mr. Hazard. Has your Lodge, or any Masonic body, passed any vote disapproving of the conduct of the persons concerned in the Morgan business, and forbidding their admission as visiting brethren?

Witness. I know of no proceedings about it; I always considered we had nothing to do with it. We had nothing to say whether he was killed or not, or murdered or not. We were entirely independent of it, and that Masons of this State had no more to do with it as such than citizens of this State had. It belonged to another jurisdiction.

Mr. Hazard was requested to put the 11th Interrogatory, which he had passed over. He put it in this form: What do you consider the secrets or mysteries of Masonry to be? We don't ask you to point out the signs. Do you know any secrets, except those disclosed in Bernard and Allyn?

Witness. I consider them to be merely personal matters, by which one Mason knows another. They serve to distinguish us from other folks. I never thought of it before, but such is my impression.

Mr. Hallett. Do they not enable Masons to co-operate secretly, and combine against all other men? and may they not be used to the injury of other men?

Witness. I say as a Mason and an old man, that the secrets of Masonry as imparted to me, have tended to make me a better man, and more charitable to all men, and particularly to Masons. *We never gave the secrets under the Inquisition, and we never shall give them.* I shall not say whether those pointed out in the books are the secrets or not. *Let those who think they have got them try, and they will find their mistake.*

Mr. Haile. Are not these secrets such as cannot affect any but Masons?

Witness. There is nothing in the secrets of Masonry which can affect any person, but Masons.

The following question was here proposed by **W. Sprague Jr.**—When you enter or leave a Lodge or Chapter, do you make any sign or motion. If so, to what does it allude. Is it intended to impress upon the mind, the penalty of that degree?

Mr. Hazard. This relates to one of the secrets of Masonry.

Mr. Sprague said that was the reason he wanted the question put. It would explain the penalty. **Mr. Hazard** read the question aloud, as if to see what it was, and not as putting it to the witness.

Witness. I should not like to answer that question. It relates to the parts of our ceremonies which your honor has said you would not question us about! You must be sensible that it is one of those questions you agreed not to ask us about! It has no bearing on the subject and is merely an entering wedge to draw some admissions and contradictions out of us. Therefore I should decline answering it. I consider it merely a piece of idle curiosity to gain advantage. That you may state.

[This was the first intimation given of an understanding between **Mr. Hazard** and the Masons, as to the nature of the questions he should ask them. **Mr. Hazard** did not deny the bargain, which was thus unexpectedly disclosed, though he evinced much chagrin and vexation at the imprudent disclosure made by the witness, and he afterwards said to two individuals, that he was an old fool for doing so, or words to that effect.]

Mr. Paine Jr. informed **Mr. Hazard** there were several other questions we should want to ask, such as an explanation of the burning bush, and the 5th Libation. Recovering in part from his confusion at the unexpected disclosure made by the witness]

Mr. Hazard said, I have expressed my opinion that it is improper to call upon Masons to disclose their secrets. It is improper to make them forfeit their honor by disclosing the secrets they have sworn not to betray. [Murder and treason excepted, in-

cludes all other crimes, says **Mr. Hazard**, and yet Masons are to be protected from disclosing what they have sworn not to betray!] We have examined **Mr. Wilkinson** to our satisfaction, and we have no curiosity on this point. Masons consider themselves bound in honor not to divulge the secrets, ceremonies and signs, and I can't consider that any such question can be put with any good object.

Witness. I do not intend to answer nor deny any thing in reference to the secrets and ceremonies of Masonry. I do not mean to say whether any such sign is made or is not made.

[**Q**—This respectable witness was under a civil oath to tell "the truth the whole truth, and nothing but the truth." He was under a Masonic oath, not to tell the truth, in reply to this question. Which oath did he consider superior? And yet he testified a few pages back, that he never considered his Masonic oath could come in conflict with his civil duties, and, if it did, he should give the latter the preference.]

Is not the Masonic practice of this witness more conclusive of the binding nature of Masonic oaths, than of the force of civil obligations upon the subjects of Masonry?]

Mr. Paine Jr. requested **Mr. Hazard** to put the following question, which, after some delay, and an evident reluctance, was read to the witness as follows:

Are the ceremonies of initiation in the Knight Templar's degree in Allyn's Ritual, page 250, drinking from the skull, &c., and the representation or plate, called the 5th libation, are they correct? The book was here handed to the witness, who declined taking it.

Witness. I never saw this book, I never read it, and I never shall; nor shall I answer whether they are correct or not.

Mr. Hazard. To put an end to this kind of questioning, I will ask, Have you made up your mind that you will not answer any question relating to the form of initiation, ceremonies and secrets of Masonry?

Witness. I have made up my mind not to answer. I considered that to be agreed upon by the Committee. [**Q**—Civil oath, I swear to tell the truth, the whole truth.]

Mr. Sprague (of the Committee) here made some suggestions, dissenting from any such agreement on his part, and insisting on the question being put.

Mr. Hazard. Are you willing to answer any questions relating to the forms of initiation and secrets of Masonry?

Witness. I am not. I consider them merely personal. If we are guilty of crimes hang us, but if we are not, I do not consider the question proper to be answered. [**Q**—A Masonic oath can never interfere with a civil oath.]

Question from **Mr. Paine.**—Do you know any thing about a cheek degree or pass word, given to yourself or any Mason, since the disclosures made by William Morgan?

Witness. There was no new agree. There might have been something to prevent those *Judas*, who had been among us, from getting there again. It was never called a degree. It was to keep out those traitors as we called them, the seceders and intruders or spies; people that we don't want should come there.

[Some conversation not heard passed between **Mr. Sprague** and **Mr. Hazard**. The latter seemed uneasy. **Mr. Sprague** turned to the 5th libation in Allyn, and insisted on having the obligation as there given read to the witness who had refused to look at it in the book. **Mr. Hazard** was thus placed in an uncomfortable position, between his bargain with the witness and other Masons not to ask these questions, and the right claimed by **Mr. Sprague**, one of the Committee, who objected to the bargain and insisted upon having the question put. A sud-

den thought appeared to seize Mr. Hazard, which presented a mode to extricate himself, and also to punish the witness for disclosing the bargain that had exposed the partial operations of the majority of the Committee.]

Mr. Hazard—(holding Allyn in his hand.) **Mr. Wilkinson**, it is suggested that this part of the ceremony, at this page of Allyn's book, is a part of the Knight Templar's obligation which he swears to. If it is so you ought to state it. It comes under your obligations.

Witness. We have given you all the obligations we were required to.

Mr. Hazard—(a little touched.) But come to think of it, this is an obligation. It is given in the form of an oath. I will read it to you from Allyn, page 250.

"This pure wine I take from this cup, in testimony of my belief of the mortality of the body, and the immortality of the soul, and as the sins of the whole world were laid upon the head of our Savior, so may the sins of the person whose skull this once was, be heaped upon my head in addition to my own; and may they appear in judgment against me, both here and hereafter, should I violate or transgress any obligation in Masonry or the orders of Knighthood, which I have heretofore taken, take at this time or may hereafter be instructed in. So help me God. [Drinks the wine.]

Mr. Hazard. That appears to be an oath. Is that correct? Were these words a part of the obligation?

Witness. They do not belong to the obligation. We have given you the obligation entire, as we take it. *We gave them as you asked.* THAT IS CONTRARY TO WHAT HAS BEEN USUALLY CONSIDERED OUR DUTY; but the ceremonies we consider as personal, belonging to us, and shall neither affirm nor deny. I shall not for one.

[This answer was made, while Mr Haile was writing down the question. After he had written it out, he read the form of the fifth libation as above, and asked] was this administered to you, or did you ever see it?

Witness. I say that is our particular secrets and ceremonies, which I SHALL NOT FEEL MYSELF BOUND, UNDER ANY SITUATION TO DISCLOSE.

[☐] There is no Masonic obligation incompatible with any civil obligation.]

Mr. Hazard. But I consider this a part of the obligation of the Knight Templar, if these words are true.

Witness. I had no such obligation administered to me.

A question was here handed to Mr Hazard, which he readily put. Do you know any thing about these words?

Witness. I know about a great many things in Masonry, which I shall not tell you or any other man. Whether it did or did not make a part of the ceremonies, I neither affirm or deny.

Mr. Hazard. As the answer now is, it may lead to a wrong conclusion that it is so. I think you might be a Mason answer in the negative, if it is not true?

Witness. I think that would be an unfair question. You have said it might be answered as a mason. It is what as a mason I will never submit to. [The witness here lifted up both arms.]

Mr. Hazard. That is right, Mr Wilkinson.—There is nothing improper in your secrets, that is proved. All societies have their secrets. But can't you answer if these words were or were not used in the ceremony or initiation of a Knight Templar?

Witness. As to the secret ceremonies of that or any other degree, I will neither affirm or deny.

Mr. Hazard. Wont that leave an impression rather that it is in the ceremonies?

Witness. That would be an unnecessary question.

Mr. Haile, then put it to witness in this form.—Were these words used in any part of the ceremony or initiation in the degree of Knight Templar?

Witness. In regard to the ceremonies in this

or any other degree of Masonry, I neither affirm nor deny.

Mr. Hazard. Mr Wilkinson, that looks very much as if it was so!

Witness. (Rather out of patience) I can't help how it looks!

Question from B. F. Hallett. Is there any thing in the Royal Arch Oath, which refers to keeping the secrets of a brother companion?

Witness. I do not now recollect of any other than the penalty of our former obligation, in the Master's oath, to keep each other's secrets. Whether that is again expressed in the Royal Arch oath, I do not know. It strikes me not, he being considered already bound by reference to his former obligation as a Master Mason. It may be incorporated again by some.

Question from the same. But how is a Royal Arch Mason bound by his oath to keep the secrets of a brother companion?

Witness. There is that which obligates him in addition to his former obligation to keep the Master Mason's oath.

Mr. Haile. That don't meet the question. He then read the written Royal Arch oath, as handed in, which had no reference to keeping secrets, or to the Master's oath.

Witness. There is nothing different in the oath as I received it or heard it. The Master's oath.

Mr. Haile. The Master's oath has nothing to do with it. You do not understand it. It is no answer at all. The question is whether you are bound in any way, to keep the secrets of a Royal Arch Mason?

Witness. No further than the other clause in the Master's degree. That we should not reveal the secrets of a Royal Arch Mason, we are bound in the same way; but nothing in addition. [☐] That is murder and treason excepted.]

Mr. Hazard. Does that comprehend the whole oath? [pointing to the written oath.]

Witness. It does. You see we bind ourselves not to give the degree except to one who is a Master Mason.

Mr. Haile. From whence are dispensations obtained for Grand Lodges, Grand Chapters and Grand Encampments.

Witness. While we were under the British government, we had a Deputy Grand Lodge derived from their Grand Lodge. The higher orders were not introduced then, and a Convention was called, and the General Grand Chapter formed. The General Grand Encampment was formed in the same manner.

The Grand Lodges in the States were formed by the subordinate Lodges in each State, without any foreign dispensation.

How were the Chapters formed?

I have told in this State. In other States I do not know.

After the General Grand Chapter was formed, that constitution provided that there should be Grand Chapters in each State, represented at that time.

Question by request. Have you ever known a Mason to give the secrets to one who was not a Mason, or to one of an inferior degree?

Witness. I never have known it.

Have you as a Mason ever been told any thing respecting Morgan, or his difficulties.

Witness. I never have.

Did you ever know Lewis C. Brown of Cumberland, having been tried in the Grand Lodge for an offence against Masonry.

Witness. I have some faint recollection of such a trial. I remember there was a difficulty. I cannot state respecting it. There was a difficulty between him and his Lodge, and an appeal to the Grand Lodge. I cannot recollect the proceedings. In reply to Mr Hazard, says he presumes the records will show. I do not remember how long ago

it was, whether ten or twenty years. I had no concern with it. It was after I was active in the Lodge. He was not tried in the Grand Lodge. If I recollect right a Committee was appointed.

[The testimony of Wm. Wilkinson here closed, and the Committee adjourned till Wednesday morning. We again invite a careful examination of this testimony. Mr Wilkinson has evidently given his testimony with a high degree of conscientiousness. He appears deeply sensible of the importance of a civil oath, and yet Masonic obligations were stronger upon the mind of even such a man, than civil or conscientious obligations.]

Wednesday Morning, December 14. The Committee met at 9 o'clock. Present Messrs. Hazard Sprague and Haile. Barzillai Cranston, Esq. was called by Mr. Hazard. Mr. Cranston is HIGH PRIEST of the Providence Royal Arch Chapter, and at the same time Secretary of Mount Vernon Lodge; a practical illustration of the intimate connection between Chapters and Lodges; for whatever the President of the Chapter should desire to have done in the Lodge, respecting its funds, &c. the Secretary of the Lodge could carry into effect, and vice versa. Mr Cranston is a printer, and recently attempted to get up a Masonic paper, which he issued proposals to publish, but without success. He is a very respectable and unimpeachable citizen—a man of prudence and circumspection, and conscientious in his dealings, but very ardently attached to Masonry, in which he has attained more distinction than under any other circumstance.

The embarrassments under which Mr. Wilkinson labored in giving his testimony, *viva voce*, seemed to have suggested to Mr. Hazard and the Masonic witnesses, the necessity of obviating the like exposure, by coming prepared with a written statement, the result of careful examination and "caution," by a comparison of its different parts so as to avoid contradiction. Thus, to the surprise of all not in the secret, Mr. Cranston appeared with a written reply to certain interrogatories with which Mr. Hazard had privately furnished him the day before, as the only interrogatories the Committee would put to him, thus giving him ample time to answer them *circumspectly* in writing. [A similar indulgence, it is believed, was never before granted to a witness.]

12th Witness. BARZILLAI CRANSTON, HIGH PRIEST. Mr. Cranston was called by Mr. Hazard, and instead of being sworn to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, as had been done with all the preceding witnesses, he was *affirm'd* "to make true answers to such questions as may be asked." Under this oath, he handed in his written statement, drawn up by himself, in answer to the interrogatories privately furnished him.

These facts Mr. Haile suppresses in his minutes.] WRITTEN STATEMENT DRAWN UP BY BARZILLAI CRANSTON, WHEN NOT UNDER OATH.

Barzillai Cranston, in answer to questions, says he is a Printer in Providence, is a Mason, a member and Secretary of Providence Mount Vernon Lodge in Providence, Providence Royal Arch Chapter, Member of Council of Royal and Select Masters in Providence and member of the Grand Lodge. Took the three first degrees, in 1814, in St. John's Lodge, and others, including Royal Arch, in 1817, and the Select Master, in 1826. Is at present High Priest in the Chapter. Oaths were administered in each degree, and were received in good faith by him, which oaths deponent says have been written out in full, and laid before the Honorable Committee. A good deal of pains have been taken to give the precise words of the obligations as they have been given most, in the different bodies, by consultation among the present and past officers. That form which the most of the officers had used, was agreed upon as the most proper form. Witness is certain that these obligations are correct, that is, as he learnt them; and he did learn them of the officers who administered them to him.

His view of the obligations is that they are an ancient forms and solemn asseverations; that they have been kept in use as much for their antiquity as for any other reason except the want of confidence in the members to frame better ones, as the Charter of this State has been clung to. The declaration that the obligation is not intended to interfere with the candidates religious or political duties, as well as the Charges delivered or read from the Monitor, to every candidate, I consider proper qualifications of the obligations. I have known the affirmation to be given to candidates, and should always have considered it my duty, while presiding, to administer it on being requested to. I know of nothing in Masonry against giving or taking the affirmation. My construction of the point in the Master's obligation which says 'I will keep a brother's secrets, &c.' is, that the word *worthy ought to be understood*, as it is expressed in a preceding point, AND THAT THEY ARE BINDING ON ME SO FAR THAT I WOULD SUFFER THE PENALTIES RATHER THAN REVEAL WHAT I HAVE THEREIN PROMISED TO CONCEAL, AND NO FURTHER. So I HAVE INSTRUCTED OTHERS. Had the obligations been framed to suit modern times, the explanation and qualifications, which *our improved moral sense* has given them, would be unnecessary. As a consequence of the Masonic compact, I can state that money has been appropriated by the Lodge I belong to for charitable purposes in every year since it was chartered by the State. I never visited a Lodge or other Masonic body out of this State but once, and that was in Seekonk, Mass. for the purpose of giving them information respecting conferring the degrees and the lectures.

I have never heard a Mason justify the murder or killing of Morgan, and never heard one speak lightly of that transaction *since it has been believed at all to be true*. Before it was thought to be true, I heard Masons and others speak lightly of it, as a story got up for some other purpose—that of making sale for his book, &c.—rather than because it was true.

I consider the Masonic Institution a charitable one, not merely a mutual insurance company, because a member or his distressed family may draw out more than he ever paid in. If a Mason is in distress his claim for relief is good. (See by law and abstract of charities.)

The by laws (of Mount Vernon Lodge) provide for the expulsion of a member for disclosing 'any of the transactions of the Lodge to the disadvantage of the Craft, or any individual brother,' or if he conduct himself disorderly or by viciousness and immorality of conduct act unworthy the character of a Mason. I know of no other punishment than expulsion.

The by laws are generally written and kept in a book subject to the inspection of any member. The constitution and by laws of the Grand Lodge are printed, and lay on the table. I have printed by laws for a Lodge. I know of no secret by laws.

Amount of money paid for charitable purposes from 1799 to 1830.

1799.	\$18	1815.	45
1800.	10 67	1816.	57
1801.	18	1817.	106 69
1802.	30 50	1818.	46 18
1803.	13 25	1819.	48 50
1804.	13	1820.	63
1805.	15 75	1821.	85
1806.	28 36	1822.	56 75
1807.	38 62	1823.	107 25
1808.	15 12	1824.	107 75
1809.	15	1825.	97 04
1810.	28 50	1826.	182 50
1811.	48 06	1827.	100 98
1812.	34 25	1828.	97
1813.	29	1829.	71
1814.	68	1830.	74 50

\$1,705 13

Exclusive of money raised by subscription which probably amounted to several hundred dollars.

(Signed,) JASON WILLIAMS, Com
Providence, May 1830.

A true copy from the records of Mount Vernon Lodge.
B. CRANSTON, Secretary.

Providence, June 8, 1831.

After Mr. Cranston had handed in his written statement, Mr. Haile, by request of Antimasons, read the variations in the oaths from Allyn's Ritual, omitted in the written oaths handed in by the Masons.

1st. As to the Grand Hailing Sign, witness was asked if he ever heard it in the oath.

Witness. I am confident I never did.

2d. "I will not speak ill of a brother mason, neither behind his back or before his face, but will apprise him of all approaching danger." Did you ever hear that?

Witness. I never did! [After a pause, witness added] There is a point in the obligation similar to that, *"that I will not wrong a brother, or deprive him of his good name."*

[Note. Mark the prevarication. The witness endeavors to carry an impression that there is a material difference in the 2d point between the Rhode Island oath and Allyn's, and he so answers as to make it appear that the most objectionable clause, "will apprise him of all approaching danger," is not in the Rhode Island oath! To show how nigh the wind Masons can swear, touching their oaths, who are conscientious men in all other respects, reference is here made to the terms of this point as given in Allyn's oath, and in the Rhode Island oath, which this witness had just previously sworn was literally correct, but which he almost denies, when it is put to him as a variation in Allyn's form.

From the Master's Oath in Allyn's Ritual.

"That I will not speak evil of a brother Master Mason, neither behind his back nor before his face, but will apprise him of all approaching danger."

From the same oath written out by the Grand Lodge.

"That I will not wrong a brother, or deprive him of his good name, or suffer it to be done by others, if in my power to prevent it, but will apprise him of all approaching danger, so far as it shall come to my knowledge."

The latter is in reality stronger than the first, and yet the witness worded his answer so as to convey an impression that the obnoxious clause was not in the Rhode Island oath. Other witnesses it will be found went farther, and flatly denied that the clause, "apprize him of all approaching danger," was in the Rhode Island oath at all.]

3d. Keeping a brother's secrets, murder, and treason excepted, and they left to my election. Did you ever hear it so administered?

Witness. No Sir. The form is, I will keep the secrets of a brother Master Mason, murder and treason excepted.

4th. Relative to going on a Master Mason's errand?

Witness. I never heard that administered.

5th. If any part is omitted, &c.

Witness. I never heard that.

Variations in the Royal Arch oath.

6th. The Grand Omnific word?

Witness. I never heard it in that form.

[Mr. Hazard did not ask in what form he had heard it.]

7th. Will apprise of approaching danger?

Witness. I never heard that!

8th. I will assist a companion Royal Arch Mason, when I see him engaged in any difficulty—and will espouse his cause so far as to extricate him from the same, whether he be right or wrong—Did you ever hear that?

Witness. Not the latter part of it. There is a clause in the Royal Arch oath, embracing the first part of it. I never heard "espouse his cause so far as to extricate him from the same, whether he

be right or wrong." This obligation confines the assistance to a worthy brother.

[Note. The High Priest here admits that there is a clause in the Royal Arch oath embracing this point viz:—"I will assist a companion Royal Arch Mason, when I see him engaged in any difficulty." In this he accords precisely with the testimony of Mr. Thacher, and establishes the substance of the allegation that Royal Arch Masons are bound to assist each other in any difficulty, under all circumstances, and of course whether right or wrong. And yet it is a remarkable fact, that the written Royal Arch oath handed in by the Rhode Island Masons, does not contain a word about assisting a Royal Arch Companion, when engaged in any difficulty. But the High Priest admits that there is such an obligation in the oath, though he says it is confined to a worthy brother. What a worthy brother is, Past High Priest Wilkinson has informed us. Mr. Haile, in his minutes, omits a part of the witness' answer to the above question, but retains the substance of the admission that there is such an obligation, viz: to assist a worthy brother companion, when engaged in any difficulty.]

9th. 'I will keep all the secrets of a Companion Royal Arch Mason, when communicated to me as such, without exception, or murder and treason not excepted.' Did you ever hear that clause?

Witness. Not the latter part of it. I never heard the expressions in the latter part of this extract administered.

[Note. A very pregnant answer, and for once Mr Haile has taken down here the very words of the witness. 'I never heard the expression in the latter part,' that is without exception, or murder and treason excepted. The inference is plain, I have heard the first part, viz. 'I will keep all the secrets of a Companion Royal Arch Mason when communicated to me as such.' All means all; precisely as Mr Thacher stated the obligation he took in the Royal Arch degree, viz. 'to keep all the secrets of a Companion committed to me as such.' Mr Cranston thus fully sustains the testimony of Mr Thacher, and yet it is another remarkable instance of Masonic prevarication somewhere, that the written R. Island oath, in the Royal Arch degree, as handed to the Committee, contains not a word about keeping the secrets of a companion, of any description or under any circumstances! Had the oath always been administered without any reference to keeping secrets, would not the answer of the High Priest have been, 'I never heard that clause, or any part of it;' instead of 'I never heard the expressions in the latter part?']

[The following question in Mr Hallett's hand writing, Mr Haile was here requested to put. Mr Hazard had stepped out at this moment, and Mr Haile read the question. It was afterwards incorporated among the variations marked E.]

10th. In the obligation of the Royal Arch degree, as read to you from paper marked B, is this sentence. 7th. 'That I will not give the grand Royal Arch word in any manner except that in which I may receive it.' Is the manner there referred to the same described in this obligation as given in Allyn's Ritual, viz. 'in the presence of three Companion Royal Arch Masons, myself making one of the number, and then by three times three under a living arch, and at low breath?'

Witness. The obligation is, that I will not give the word, except in the manner I have received it.

Mr Hallett. To show that the oaths are alike, we want to know if the 'manner' is the same as is described in the Royal Arch oath given in Allyn's Ritual.

Witness. I think I have answered that question.

Mr. Hallett. Where is it answered?

Mr. Haile. The question is whether the manner alluded to in the written oath is the same as is described in the printed oath.

Witness. After a pause. Well, sir, I should answer that the first part is correct, and decline answering the rest.

[*Q*] *Note.* This witness had taken a civil oath to make true answers to such questions as should be put to him, under the peril of the penalty of perjury! and yet he refused to answer a question put to him by Mr Haile, one of the Committee, because he had sworn as a Mason to conceal and never reveal. Which oath did he regard most binding in this case; his civil or his Masonic oath!]

Witness was asked by request, if the penalty in the Past Master's degree was ever given, to have my tongue split from tip to root?

Witness. I never so heard it.

Mr Hallett here observed that in the written statement handed in by Mr Cranston, he had given an account of the charities of the Lodge for several years. In order to judge of those charities it was necessary to ascertain for what purpose the money was applied, and also the relative proportion of those charities to the receipts and to other expenditures of the Lodge. He wished this question to be particularly asked, viz.

What was the amount of the receipts of your Lodge arising from fees, quarterly dues and all other sources, during the years in which you state certain sums were paid out as charities, and what were the expenditures, during that period for all other purposes?

Mr John Miller, and Mr Peter Grinnell, high Masons, who were sitting at the table, both objected to this as a very improper question. One of them remarked aloud, if the Lodge had done so much, why not give them the credit of it. It was sufficient to state what they had done. We had no more right to inquire into their private expenses, than we had into the expenses of an individual.

Witness. I am unable to state. The records will show.

Mr Hallett. Then the records ought to be produced, and the statement shown. These Lodges are chartered as charitable societies, and we cannot judge whether they have wasted their funds or not, unless we can see how much money they have had to expend, and what proportion has gone for charities and for other purposes. Mr Cranston has taken pains to collect all the charities, as he calls them, and we ask to see the receipts and expenditures.

[Mr. Hazard, who had been absent a short time, as above stated, came in and took his seat, about this time, which put an end to all further attempts to get at the facts of the case. The following question was put by request.] Can you state any instance in which a brother or his family has received more in charity than he paid in fees, quarterly dues, &c. if so state the instance?

Witness. I think I could with the assistance of the records, and the orders drawn by the charitable committees on the Treasury, as audited and recorded at the end of the year. I know nothing of quarterly dues being paid.

[After this occurrence in the examination, a written request was sent to the Committee, that they would require Mr Cranston to produce a statement of the receipts and expenditures of the Lodge for each year, to accompany the statement made in his deposition of the sums paid out in those years, for charities, and also for what charities they were paid. It was also suggested that the sums set down for charities in 1826 and 1827, ought to be explained. It is remarkable that the charities of those two years, the period of Morgan's abduction and the trial of the western sufferers, amount to \$233 42, a much larger sum than in any other two years in the estimate.]

[The Committee took no notice of this request, (calling for an exhibit of the receipts and expenditures) but permitted Mr Cranston's statement to go on, without calling upon him to show the receipts

and other expenditures. And not only in this thing did they evince their determination to evade fair investigation, but they afterwards allowed this same Mr Cranston, to append to his deposition, *not under oath*, a note in which he gives at *second hand*, from Jason Williams, a pretended statement of charities to individuals, from the Lodge; and this hearsay account, not sworn to by any one or even certified, is appended to this deposition of Mr Cranston, and appears in the published report of the Committee as a part of the testimony! And yet this candid Committee could not get from the Secretary of Mount Vernon Lodge a statement of the receipts and expenditures of that Lodge! That the Committee might have no excuse for evading their inquiry into the receipts and expenditures of the Lodge, a call was made upon them in the Providence Daily Advertiser, of December 15, 1831, the day after they had refused to comply with a written request to procure that evidence. The call in the Advertiser was as follows:

"I beg leave to make one suggestion either to the Committee on Masonry, or to the public, I don't much care which, if it is understood. It is this. In the testimony of the Secretary of Mount Vernon Lodge, there is a statement carefully drawn up of what is called the *charities*, for thirty one years, amounting to \$1700, or about \$58 per year. A call was made [by Antimasons] for the account of receipts of the Lodge during that time, together with its amount of funds and the sums expended for all other purposes except charity, but has not yet been complied with. Now I agree this is the best exhibit of *masonic charity*, ever made by a Lodge, *if it be all real charity*; but at the same time we ought to see the other items of the account to understand it. If this statement is to be appended to the Secretary's deposition, an exhibit of receipts and expenditures ought to go with it, or it is not *FAIR PLAY*."

A newspaper containing the above paragraph, was laid on the table of the Committee, Friday morning, Dec. 16. They still persisted in their determination not to permit the statements called for to be given to the public, and they afterwards put into their published report a hearsay story from this same witness about charities, without requiring him to make the exhibit that had been so repeatedly and so publicly called for! This is one specimen of their fairness, and of their boasted *indulgence*, to Antimasons, in putting all question they were desired to!

Another fact should be mentioned in this connection, that will show the determination of the Masons, in which they were upheld by the Committee,

TO KEEP THEIR RECORDS SECRET.

One or two large Ledgers, purporting to be the records of the Lodge, were observed on the table, but no one had examined them. The day after the Committee had refused to make any inquiry into the funds and expenditure of Lodges, &c. Mr Hallett took up one of these books of records, with a view to examine the accounts of receipts and expenditures. He had just begun to make a note with a pencil from a part of the records when Moses Richardson, (Treasurer of the Grand Encampment) came up and seized the book with some violence, saying, "that book is in my custody, we don't allow the Records of St. John's Lodge to be seen by you or any other Antimason." The records were not afterwards seen, and as the Committee would not look at them, and others could not, they were as effectually sealed as if they had been buried under the Altar with the Master's lost word! Immediately after Mr Richardson had seized the records, a note was written signed by William Sprague, Abraham Wilkinson, William Harris, Walter Paine, Jr. and B. F. Hallett, stating that all access was denied to the records of the Lodge, which we presumed had been brought there for inspection, and desiring

to know if the Committee sanctioned this proceeding? The note was placed before Mr Haile, but no notice whatever was taken of the statement it contained, by the majority of the Committee.

After this transaction, it was found utterly impossible to get, through this committee, any inquiry into the wasteful and useless expenditures of Lodges, or the amount of their funds, and the Committee were left to pursue their own partial course.—Had the Committee been disposed to act fairly, it is believed that some other charities might have been proved, where at least a thousand dollars had been expended in the mummeries of a Masonic funeral, and the widow of the deceased Mason left destitute; with but trifling if any assistance from Masonic bodies.]

The following question was put by request. You state that the forms of oaths presented here, were agreed to by most of those who consulted about forming them. Who were the persons who consulted together and agreed to these forms, and directed them to be exhibited as your obligations?

Witness. Joseph S. Cooke [Grand Master], Peter Grinnell [General Grand Treasurer], Wm. C. Barker [Grand Commander], James Salisbury [Master of the Veils, we believe], Christian M. Nestell [Grand Recorder], Cyrus Fisher, John Andrews [former officers in the Chapter], Moses Richardson [Treasurer of the Grand Encampment], Samuel Jackson, 2d. [Past High Priest], and Bazillai Cranston [High Priest]. [The witness did not state their Masonic titles. They are given here to show the source from whence the written oaths came, and the Masonic power and influence which those who framed them could exert to induce all other Masons to believe they comprised the exact forms as administered to them. A few omissions, under such circumstances, would not be called in question. That there were omissions in the Royal Arch oath, is plainly shown by the statements of Messrs. Wilkinson and Cranston, relative to obligations of that oath requiring them to assist a brother in any difficulty, and to keep his secrets.]

Witness.—after giving the above names. I don't know that I can name any others at present. It was the intention to give them as they have been administered in St. John's Lodge, Chapter and Council, and Mount Vernon Lodge, for a number of years. There were no objections to reporting them as the form of oaths. I found I had used the word *unless*, where others had *except*, and there were some such other immaterial variations.

[Mr John Andrews, one of the above number, stated to John Hall and B. F. Hallett, after the investigation, that there were objections in this council or committee against giving the oaths at all. That one of them said he would sooner have his arm cut off than do it, and that a great many Masons still considered the oaths as much the secrets of Masonry, as any other part of the institution.]

Mr. Hazard. Have, to your knowledge, any of the funds of these two Lodges been misapplied, and directed to other than the legitimate objects of the Lodge?

Witness. I believe they have not. Not to my knowledge. Not one individual out of ten husbands his funds better than these Lodges do.

Question from John Miller, (Mason). Have not sums been voluntarily paid by members of the Lodges, in charities, exclusive of the funds?

Witness. Formerly, when the funds were small, and the members few, this was the case. The Lodges appointed a committee to solicit contributions, to be applied for the relief of distressed members and their families. I have been under the impression that the papers were returned to the Lodge, but they cannot be found.

[As the subject of the funds and charities had been brought up here by masons, it was thought best to propose some questions on the other side, to

draw out facts, if possible, on a subject which the Committee seemed resolved to keep in the dark.—The following question was handed by W. Paine, Jr. What are the legitimate objects of expenditure to which the funds of a Lodge are applied? Mr Hazard hesitated, and put the question very reluctantly. He said he considered it already answered under the question as to the general objects of Masonry. Mr Sprague wished it put, and it was read to witness.

Witness. The legitimate objects I understand to be, that they are to be applied to charities, and other purposes. [Mr Haile has put this down *charitable purposes*, which was not the language of witness.]

Mr Hazard. Do you mean to say that they are applied to charity, and the ordinary necessary expenses of the Lodge?

Witness. I do.

It was here remarked aside, by Antimasons, that this explained nothing, unless you could get at the receipts, and all the expenditures of the Lodge?

Mr Hazard overheard the remark, and said—It seems that is not satisfactory.

Mr Hallett. No Sir. You may put this question if you please.

What do you understand by the ordinary and necessary expenses of a Lodge or Chapter?

Witness. It would take sometime to answer that question in full. I should consider if they wanted fuel, oil, printing, and such like, they would be bound to pay for them. Also repairs of building, tools, trowels—and a good many things I could think of if I had time. [Mr Haile omits all these particulars in his minutes.]

Mr. Hazard. By necessary and ordinary expenses do you include any other than those you have enumerated and things of that character?

Witness. I have never known any entertainments that had been paid for out of the funds;—not in the Lodges in this town.

Question by request. What do you mean by saying, in the Lodges?

Witness. I think there have been instances in the Chapter. I have never known it in the Lodges, I am pretty sure: I have heard the members of the Chapter say that it was sometimes necessary to have some refreshments in a long sitting—crackers and cheese. The sittings of the Chapters were longer than the Lodges. There was a supper paid for by the Chapter recently, on the occasion of an election. It was an unpleasant evening, few persons were present, and we voted to pay the person who provided the supper out of the funds.

W. Paine, Jr. offered a question, whether contributions were paid to the Grand Lodge from subordinate Lodges, and from Chapters to the Grand Chapter. Mr Hazard said it was unnecessary, and would be embraced in some other question. He would now propose the general interrogatories. Mr Haile, read Mr. Wilkinson's deposition! It was accordingly read to witness.

Witness. In reference to the cable tow, the definition I have given and heard others, is that we were at liberty to bring it within the line of our duty. The declaration that the obligations were not to interfere with my duty to God or my country, has always been impressed on my mind as a duty. The declaration coming from the same source that the obligations did, I considered them as explaining each other. I did not consider I gave a right to take life, or bound myself to take that of others. I believe the address was always given before the oaths in the degrees above master. I think it was. It was considered proper that it should be given.

I can say for myself I always had an aversion to oaths, but for form's sake I have submitted to them. I do not consider the Masonic oaths as incompatible with my religious or civil duties.

I have proposed questions respecting the nature

and extent of Masonic penalties, and heard the same arguments used by Masons, which I have before stated. Have heard them explained in the manner as I have before stated.

Mr. Sprague asked if he had ever done this in open Lodge?

Witness. I don't remember that I ever did. in open Lodge, but either before or after the opening and closing of the Lodge. I think I have in open Lodge.

Mr. Sprague. When was this, and on what occasion?

Witness. If my recollection serves me, I have done it occasionally ever since I was a Mason, to the leading members.

Mr. Sprague. What was the construction put upon the penalties?

Witness. I have heard the arguments used as I have before stated.

Mr. Hazard. Was the construction you have put upon the penalties, the same put upon them by the members?

Witness. I might say, without vanity, that the younger members looked up to me for correct Masonic information generally. [Mr. Haile added something here the witness did not say.]

Question by request. Was there ever any distinct proposition to revise or alter these obligations?

Witness. I do not remember ever hearing any made to Masonic bodies, while in session.

Question from B. F. Hallett. You say the younger members looked up to you for Masonic instruction. Did you ever instruct a younger member, that if he were to reveal his masonic secrets, he would not be liable to the penalties of his obligations?

Witness. (In some embarrassment.) I don't remember as I ever did. I don't remember ever giving a Mason such instruction. The bylaws of the Lodges in this town recognize no other punishment than expulsion. I have generally referred to the bylaws for instruction. I never remember to have heard any such question proposed.

[*Query.* Is it not plain from this declaration, that before the murder of Morgan, Masons were left with the impression that their penalties would be inflicted if they revealed the secrets, and that no intimation was given by the leading Masons, that the penalties did not mean just as they read—death?]

Question by request. If you had a vote to give, or favor to grant, were you bound to prefer a Mason to one who was not, in similar circumstances? [This question witness was not required to answer.]

Question by request. Do you know when Royal Arch Masonry originated? [This question witness did not answer.]

In answer to 27th interrogatory, relative to communicating expulsions to Lodges in other States, witness says,

I believe the custom is, for the Lodges in this state to give notice to the Grand Lodge, and they to communicate it to all other Grand Lodges.

Mr. Hazard. What order is taken on the expulsion of a member, being communicated from one Lodge to another?

Witness. I am not able to state.

Mr. Hazard. But if it is communicated from a Lodge in another state?

Witness. When a member is expelled, his name is reported to the Grand body to which he is subordinate, and they communicate it to similar Masonic bodies in other states.

Mr. Hazard. What course is then taken?

Witness. I believe the Grand Lodge here has made a practice of putting down the names of persons expelled from Lodges in other states, and communicating the names printed with their annual proceedings, and distributing them to their subordinate Lodges. Of late this has not been done. I

can't recollect of having seen or heard of a list of expulsion for a year or two.

Mr. Hazard. Has any Masonic body in this State, to your knowledge, received any communication relative to the abduction or murder of Morgan?

Witness. I should answer that question the same as Mrs. Wilkinson has.

Question. Is not a Mason, so long as he belongs to a Lodge, entitled to be received in all Lodges, as a visiting brother, and if a conspicuous Mason in another State, were found to be guilty of a crime, would he afterwards be admitted to a Lodge in this State?

Witness. Mr. Wilkinson's answer is not precisely such as I should give. I think that a visitor would not be admitted unless he was supposed to be a worthy brother.

Mr. Hazard. The object of this question is to ascertain whether all Masons are not received in Lodges, who have an appearance of respectability, and if that is the case, whether when it is got to be notorious that any Mason has committed a high crime, it is not customary to take some order in the Lodges, that if he presents himself for admission he may be known? For instance, suppose De Witt Clinton had been proved to have been concerned in the abduction of Morgan, was convicted and the trial published. In such a case would not the Lodges here feel it their duty to take some order about it, to prevent his admission?

[*Mr. Hazard* here put the question fairly.—Mark the answer, which we give in the precise words of the High Priest.]

Witness. I SHOULD THINK THEY WOULD SAY NOTHING ABOUT IT UNLESS HE HAD BEEN EXPELLED WHERE HE BELONGED. THEY WOULD TAKE NO NOTICE OF IT!

Mr. Hazard. But if he was convicted of a crime?

Witness. I should say he would not be admitted, unless he was supposed to be a worthy brother.

Mr. Hazard. Has any Masonic body in this State disapproved of the conduct of those masons, engaged in the abduction and murder of Morgan?

Witness. I should think the Grand Lodge had expressed their disapprobation of the killing of Morgan.

Mr. Hallett. Where?

Witness. In their Address to the people of the State, (June, 1831.)

Mr. Hallett. What part of the Address? Witness did not answer. The question was handed to committee in writing. Please inquire in what part of that Address? Mr Hazard refused to put the question.

Mr. Hazard. Are the funds of any Lodges or Chapters, or any of them diverted to the use of Grand Lodges, Grand Chapters, or Grand Encampments?

Witness. They are not.

Mr. Hazard. I thought so. Here is a charge in this Memorial (referring to the Antimasonic Memorial,) about diverting the funds.

Mr. Hallett suggested that if the object was to disprove the assertion in the Memorial, the word funds, would not cover it. It should be fees or receipts.

Mr. Hazard. It is all the same thing.

Mr. Hallett. The witness don't think so. Ask him if the subordinate Lodges and Chapters don't pay fees, in the form of tribute to the Grand Lodge and Chapter. Mr Hazard did so, using the terms funds, fees, or receipts?

Witness. Two dollars for every initiation in a subordinate Lodge is paid to the Grand Lodge.

Mr. Hazard. That is a part of the fee which the individual pays to the Grand Lodge.

Mr. Hallett observed that it was not so. The Lodge paid it to the Grand Lodge, in the form of a tax or tribute.

Mr. Hazard. I don't understand it so. The

subordinate Lodge takes the fee, and hands over two dollars of it, which belongs to the Grand Lodge.

Mr. Hallett. It is not so. Ask the witness. The Lodge is taxed by the Grand Lodge two dollars for the right to initiate each member, and the Lodge pays two dollars a head to the Grand Lodge, whether it receives a cent itself or not.

Mr. Hazard. Well, how is that? What does the Lodge receive for making Masons, and what part is paid to the Grand Lodge?

Mr. Hallett insisted that it was not a part of what was received, but a distinct tax upon the subordinate Lodge. A seceding Mason, who was by, remarked that he had known notes given for initiatory fees, which were never paid, but the Lodge had to pay two dollars for the candidate.

Mr. Hazard. How is it, Mr Cranston?

Witness. The candidate pays twenty four dollars for initiation in the 3 degrees to the subordinate Lodge, and that Lodge pays two dollars to the Grand Lodge, for every initiation; that is for every candidate initiated. I am not acquainted with the regulations of the Chapter. Do not know what the Chapters pay to the Grand Chapter.

[And yet the witness is High Priest of a Chapter, and superintended all its concerns!]

The 11th Interrogatory passed over by Mr Hazard, he was requested to put.

Mr. Hazard. What do you consider the secrets of Masonry to be? What do you consider to be the nature and extent of the secrets of Masonry?—We do not wish you to explain them, but to say whether they have any bearing upon the rest of the community.

Witness. I have always considered the main object charitable. The secrets are such as will secure the benefits and objects of the institution to those to whom they belong, its members.

Mr. Hazard. Can these secrets affect the rights or interests of any person, who is not a member of that Association?

Witness. I should think not.

Mr. Hazard was here requested to present to witness Cross's Masonic Chart approved by Masons, page 33, an emblem of the ceremony in the Royal Arch degree representing God appearing to Moses in the burning bush.

Mr. Hazard. I consider that trenching on those parts of their secrets they ought not to disclose.

Mr. Hallett. We think the truth ought to be disclosed. This is a representation of one of their exhibitions, which is considered highly blasphemous, and which, if performed publicly, would subject any person guilty of taking a part in it, to indictment for blasphemy.

Witness. I don't know any thing about it. I never saw such a picture.

This seemed to relieve Mr Hazard, and he put the question. Is this picture in Cross's Chart, a representation of one of the secret ceremonies you do not feel at liberty to disclose?

Witness. I don't know whether it is meant to represent any thing in Masonry or not!

W. Paine, Jr. here unrolled before witness the Symbolical Chart and Masonic Mirror, by Companion S. Converse, representing the same picture of the burning bush.

Witness. I do not know what this picture represents. I never saw any such representation in Masonry!

[*P. Note.* This answer is remarkable. The symbol which this High Priest of a Chapter says he knows nothing about, is contained in Cross's Chart, which is certified to be correct Masonry, by twenty of the highest Masonic officers in the U. S. and by the General Grand Chapter, who say that it is "a valuable assistant in elucidating the various masonic emblems." The Chapter of Connecticut also say of this book that it contains "an elegant and comprehensive view of all the symbols used in lectur-

ing upon the several degrees." One of these emblems and symbols, used in lecturing, is the burning bush. "Every character, figure and emblem in a Lodge, (says Webb, p. 40) has a moral tendency." And yet High Priest Cranston does not know what a picture in Cross's Chart, of God appearing to Moses in the burning bush, represents!]

In reply to a question from the Committee, for witness to confirm the statement made by Mr Wilkinson in his examination, witness says—

I have heard the deposition of William Wilkinson read over deliberately, and the statements and facts therein contained are correct, so far as they relate to the degrees I have taken, and so far as my knowledge extends, where they are not varied by explanations I have given.

A pamphlet printed in Cypher, supposed to be a book containing Masonic Lectures and oaths in the three first degrees, was presented to witness, by request and he was asked if he knew any thing about it.

Witness. I do not. I have heard something about there being such a book. I never looked at it, and do not know what it contains. It was never consulted by Masons, or used in any Lodge to my knowledge. I saw such a book once, eight or ten years ago, I believe, in possession of John Holroyd, a Mason, who had then recently returned from the West. I do not know what it contained. The testimony of Mr Cranston here closed. No addition was made to his statements, at any subsequent time, under oath.

Wednesday afternoon, December, 14th, 1831. Mr Hazard absent.

PHILIP ALLEN, Esq. 13th witness, was sworn. He had not been in a Lodge for 20 years. Had been a Royal Arch Mason. Never knew Masonry used for political purposes, not being much engaged in politics himself, and of course did not know much about it, one way or the other. He presumed, at the time, it was meant for a charitable institution. So far as his recollection serves he did not consider there was any thing in the secrets that affected the rights of others.

Mr. Haile. When you took the oaths did you consider that they interfered with your civil, religious or social duties? *Answer.* I have no recollection what the oaths were. I did not consider they made me any better or worse. I considered after I became a member, I had a right to act in the same way as before I was a member.

[SAMUEL GREENE, 14th witness.]

Adhering Mason. Sworn to answer all such questions as may be asked.

Mr Haile read to him the part of the deposition of Abraham Wilkinson, in which it is stated that he had heard Mr Greene say that if Morgan had been killed for disclosing the secrets of Masonry, he did not see why any body need complain, for he had suffered no more than his just deserts, or what he had agreed to. The same remark is sworn to by William Harris, who heard Mr Greene make it.—Mr Haile inquired of witness if he ever said this?

Mr. Greene. I will state to the honorable committee that in general terms, I have never been an advocate of murder. I have always been a peaceable citizen, and I refer to those who have known me for forty years, for my character. I have resolved never to converse with A. Wilkinson or W. Harris. I said something like this to another person; that Morgan was a good for nothing fellow, and according to his own showing if he had been killed he deserved it, and if the Masons only killed one another, the Antimasons had no right to complain! I am in the habit of talking with warmth, but as to justifying murder I never have. I appeal to my life for 40 years in Pawtucket, and defy any one to say if I have not been a good citizen and obedient to the laws. I am a Mason and have taken several degrees in Masonry, including the degrees of Knighthood. I can't tell how many.

[*Note.* The witness expressed himself with great warmth and feeling. The fact that his character as a citizen stood so high, (he being one of the most intelligent Manufacturers in the state of R. Island, and until the distresses of 1828, one of the most extensively engaged employers in that business) rendered his justification of the killing of Morgan still more convincing as a proof of the real meaning of Masonic penalties. No circumstances could have irritated Mr Greene into a justification of a cruel murder upon any person not a seceding Mason, and yet he admits that he fully justified the killing of William Morgan, at the same time assuming the right of Masonry to execute her own criminals, without regard to the civil laws. We repeat, that this witness is a very respectable man, and we should do him injustice to believe that any thing but the pernicious influence of his Masonic oaths, made him so forget all moral principle as to justify a cruel and unprovoked murder of the father of a family, who had committed no offence against the laws or the morals of society.]

Mr. Haile, of the Committee, put this question to witness: Did you say these words, 'If Morgan had been killed he had no reason to complain, for he had suffered no more than his just deserts'?

Answer. No sir. I never said these words.

Mr. Haile. At no time?

Answer. Only in explaining to him what he had represented I did say.

Mr. Haile. Did you ever use expressions like these?

Answer. There was some conversation about Morgan, and a good deal of warmth between myself and the other persons. The expression I made use of, as near as I can recollect, was that Morgan was a great scoundrel according to his own showing, and perhaps got no more than justice, and I further said too, I thought the Antimasons ought not to complain as long as the Masons only killed Masons, and perhaps that would be the better way to get rid of such scamps as we Masons were. That was the substance of what I said as rightly as I can recollect. I have no recollection that Mr. Harris was ever present.

Mr. Haile. Was that your deliberate opinion, or uttered in a state of irritation?

[*Note.* What a question! If a man was so unprincipled as to justify murder, would he be so weak as to confess it before an Investigating Committee? The answer of the witness was, however, an evasion, thus.]

Answer. I generally when I talk on this subject become irritated. I think I was so then. It was never my intention to advocate murder anywhere, or to approbate the killing of Morgan: I detested it as much as any man. I am pretty confident that I never said the above to Mr. Wilkinson except in endeavoring to explain after I had heard it reported that I (witness) had justified the murder of Morgan. I then had a conversation with Mr. Wilkinson in the Pacific Bank. He (Wilkinson) had called Masonry an abominable, blood stained, stinking Order. It would do no harm where I and A. Wilkinson are known. He charged me with having said these things, and I told him it was a misrepresentation, and endeavored to explain how I said it.

I rather think the person I had the talk with, was a chap of the name of Claffin, who had been in the employment of Mr. Wilkinson. He would tell what I said to Wilkinson, and what W. said to me, and I was fool enough to talk to him. I have no knowledge of ever making use of any of these expressions to William Harris or in his presence. I have told William Harris uniformly that I was under no obligation that would influence me to do any thing improper as a good citizen or neighbor, and that I considered myself bound by my Masonic obligations to support the laws of the government under which I lived, and to be a good, quiet and peaceable citizen. He replied at the time that was prob-

ably the case with me; that he did not doubt it was the case with me, but believed it was different with some other Masons. That he said he would take my word in anything till it came to Masonry, and then he would not believe me, because he considered I was sworn to lie.

In answer to a question, by request, witness says: I have no recollection of having made expressions justifying the murder of Morgan to any one but Claffin.

[Mr. Hazard came in and took his seat a short time before this.]

Witness was asked, by request, how many degrees he had taken?

Ans. I don't know as I can tell.

The Committee were asked three several times, to read the Royal Arch oath to witness from Allyn, and ask him to point out what part of it he had never taken.

Mr. Hazard refused to put the oath from Allyn, until he had first read to witness the oath written out for the Committee, which he (Hazard) insisted was the Rhode Island oath.

Mr. Hallett said he had supposed that was a question to be settled by evidence, not to be taken for granted beforehand. If the oath was correct, the witness could tell it without having it read to him, as if to prevent his making a mistake. The oaths from Allyn had been read to Messrs. Thacher and Chase, without giving them the benefit of the written oaths, and he did not see what the objection could be to trying the witness first on the printed oaths.

Mr. Hazard made some insulting and sneering remark relative to Messrs. Thacher and Chase. He insisted that the oaths were precisely as they were written out by the Grand Lodge. It was an insult to doubt that the oaths were correctly written out.

Mr. Hallett. Very well. We only wished to see if the Committee were disposed to treat all witnesses alike. If it is thought best to tell them what to swear to, we have no objection.

Mr. Hazard became uneasy. The feeling of the spectators was evidently against his partial and unfair proceeding. To obviate it, he took up Allyn and read the Royal Arch oath to witness, at the end of every sentence saying, 'that is in the R. Island oath,' 'that is not in the R. Island oath,' as the case happened to be. Thus instructed, the witness generally confirmed the written oath, and did not recollect any portions of Allyn's oath which Mr. Hazard informed him were not in the R. Island oath.

Witness. That which was first read, sounds most to me like the oath I took. The variations read from Allyn I do not remember to have heard.

Question from B. F. Hallett. Is there any thing in the Royal Arch oath, which bound you to keep the secrets of a companion Royal Arch Mason?

Answer. I could not say whether there was or was not. I have not been in the habit of visiting the Chapters for several years, except occasionally.

In answer to question by request—

The Thrice Illustrious Knights of the Cross I have not taken. [The Committee took no pains to ascertain how far the witness had gone or what the oaths were above the Royal Arch. Mr. Hazard discouraged all questions of that kind.]

Question from W. Paine, Jr. Were you in the Lodge in Pawtucket in 1826 or 1827, when what is called a test oath or new pass word or check was given? and if so, what was its object?

Answer. I was present at a Lodge in Pawtucket. It was considered an addition, something instituted to prevent imposition. I cannot recollect what year.

Mr. Hazard. You are not bound to tell what it was!

Witness. I so understand it!

Question by request. Why was it introduced?

Answer. I understood it was given to prevent impositions. Thinks he has heard it called a check.

Question by request. Was it not a new thing, and what reason was given for introducing it into the Lodge? What authority did it come from?

Answer. It was necessary to prevent imposition. It was given by some one from this State. I consider that a fair answer, and submit it to the Committee. [Mr Hazard, the Committee, was satisfied of course, but one more effort was made to get an answer. The following question was proposed through Mr Sprague.]

Question. Was the check introduced in consequence of the disclosures made by Morgan?

Witness asked to be excused from answering that question.

Mr Hazard said I HAVE NO DOUBT THAT ALLYN IS CORRECT; but as the Masons have pledged themselves to one another not to reveal their secrets, I think they ought to keep them.

The witness was excused. Mr Hazard here inquired if any one wished to ask further questions. The reply was, it was no use to ask questions under such circumstances. The witness then withdrew.

TESTIMONY OF WM. RUSSELL.—[13th witness]
William Russell of Providence, merchant, sworn to answer questions. Is a Royal Arch Mason. Was initiated in 1809, in Providence, Mount Vernon Lodge. Is still a Mason.

Question by request, from Walter Paine, Jr.—Were you ever captured, and if so, please state minutely the circumstances relative to an occurrence that happened to you in the late war, when at sea?

Ans. I never was captured. I was in the ship *Mary Ann*, as Commander, in 1810 or 11, during the Berlin and Milan decrees, from Va. for Cowes and a market, not a soul on board that knew where I was bound but myself. My papers were fictitious. If they had known where I was bound I should have been a prize. By my papers I was bound for Tonningen. If my genuine papers had been known I should have been a prize to a French man-of-war. I was ordered on board a French privateer, got my boat out, and went on board. As soon as I got on board, I was taken into the cabin. They examined all of the boats crew apart, to find where we were bound. There were 20 in the cabin. I handed my papers and letters for Tonningen. Every thing was perfect. I was detained there and the boat sent back to my vessel, and directly there was a cry of good prize! I was then informed that my boat was stove, which was the only one I had. The Captain said he would put me on board. When I got on board I found they had stripped my baggage, &c. I told the officer that the Captain said he would take nothing from me; he said it was the people. Before I left the privateer, and after the examination, we drank a glass of wine together, and he knew me to be a Freemason, and I knew him to be one. This was before they robbed me of my clothes, and valuable articles. He promised to take nothing from me, but upon going on board I found I was robbed. I did not apply to him to get the articles back. It was no time for him to show me a favor, if he had been so disposed. After the boat got on board, the Captain advised me to make sail. It was very pleasant to find a man at sea I felt acquainted with, but I received no favor from him in consequence of his being a mason.

Question by request. Have you ever alluded to this circumstance as a proof that Masonry is a good institution?

Ans. I dont know that I have to that circumstance in particular. I have said I thought it a good institution because I could meet with friends abroad. I have been in Masonic Lodges in the four quarters of the globe, and have found it so. I have found, in consequence of it, friends in different parts of the world. I have frequented Lodges in different parts of the world, and in this country. I have not visited Lodges much for the last ten years, since I discon-

tinued going to sea. I have been in some Lodges where I could not understand a word that was said, being ignorant of the language spoken. I was never a bright Mason. *My object was to be able to visit Lodges abroad.* I have been in Lodges in Europe, Asia, Africa, and America. The Lodge in Africa was in the Isle of Franco.

Question by request. Please state whether the Masonic ceremonies, signs, &c. and obligations, and mode of working, are the same in all the Lodges you have ever visited?

Ans. They are all similar, as it respects the signs, ceremonies and mode of working. I was never at the initiation of a candidate in a foreign Lodge.

Mr. Hazard. Have you ever considered your Masonic obligations incompatible with your moral, civil and religious duties?

Ans. Never.

[*Note.*—This was a favorite question with Mr. Hazard. Its import, and the answer, go about as far to acquit Masonry as the question put to a criminal arraigned on his trial—Are you guilty, or not guilty? The answer, even if he be guilty, is expected to be—not guilty. So if a Mason had believed his oaths to be incompatible with his civil duty, and had so used them, he could not be expected to confess it. It is against all rules of evidence to compel a witness to criminate himself. This question, therefore, was clearly improper. The design of it was to impose upon the public the opinions of individual Masons, for facts, which Mr. Hazard intended to use in the report, to exonerate the Masonic Fraternity, as a body. The position Mr. Hazard took was, in effect, this—You must either prove every Mason to be a rogue, by his own confession, or the Committee will decide that Masonry is a good institution!]

In answer to interrogatory, witness never considered that he gave or received jurisdiction over life, according to the penalties. He considered them merely designed to make the obligations binding! He never heard any Mason construe them as giving a right to take life.

Question. Did you ever promise to keep the secrets of a companion, without exception, or murder and treason not excepted?

Ans. I never did.

Mr. Hazard was then asked to put to the witness the list of variations found in Allyn.

Witness said he had never read the oath of any degree in a book, or in print. Dont think he ever read one. He had avoided reading anything about the controversy.

Mr. Haile here began to read the list of variations. Mr. Hazard stopped him, and directed him first to read the Rhode Island oaths to the witness.

Witness said if he heard the oaths read with his eyes shut, he could recollect if anything read was different from what he had received.

The written oaths were then read. Witness said they were correct.

Mr. Hazard. In this book Allyn has these additions, and you can judge if they were in the oaths you took.

Mr. Haile then read the variations in the Master Mason's oath, to each of which witness answered in the negative.

Mr. Haile. Do you recollect in the Master's oath the words, "will upprize him of all approaching danger?"

Ans. I HAVE NO RECOLLECTION OF THAT.

[**SPECIAL NOTE.** This answer is remarkable. The witness was caught in the contradiction contrived purposely by putting into the variations a part of the Master's oath, as written out by the Grand Lodge, with a slight variation in phraseology. The object was to show that Masonic witnesses would swear to the written oaths when to they were the R. Island oaths, and yet would deny

parts of those very oaths, if presented as *variations* found in Allyn's book? Such is the force of prejudice. Thus this respectable witness swore that the Master Mason's oath as written, was correct. One clause of that oath is, "That I will not wrong a brother, or deprive him of his good name; nor suffer it to be done by others, if in my power to prevent it; but will *apprize him of all approaching danger, so far as it shall come to my knowledge.*" The witness swore this was correct. The variation put to him from Allyn is, "That I will not speak evil of a brother Master Mason, neither behind his back, nor before his face, *but will apprise him of all approaching danger.*" This the witness denies wholly. Mr. Halle put these last words "apprize of approaching danger," directly to the witness, and he swears, "I have no recollection of that!" Even Mr. Halle's accommodating report of the testimony has pinned the witness to this contradiction. See page 121 of that Report. He there makes the witness say, "as to Nos. 2, 3, 4 and 5, on paper marked E witness says, I do not recollect these expressions." No. 2 is this very expression, *apprize of all approaching danger.* Several other Masonic witnesses were caught in the same contradiction.]

[It is necessary here to state the fact, that a short time previous to this, Wm. Sprague Jr. one of the Committee, has left his seat at the table with the Committee, and gone out, it being the hour for supper. He did not take his seat at the table during the subsequent examination of this witness, at the close of which the Committee adjourned.]

The variations in the Royal Arch Oath were then read to the witness, to all of which he answered that he had no recollection of them.

After much urging and hesitation, Mr. Hazard permitted the 11th variation to be put, viz: In the written oath, you swear not to give the Grand Royal Arch word, in any other manner, than as you received it. Is the manner there referred to the same as is described in the Royal Arch Oath, given in Allyn, viz: in the presence of three companions, and then by three times three, under a living arch, and at low breath?

Ans. I have no recollection of that being in the obligation.

Question from B. F. Hallett. Is the manner there referred to, the same as that described in Allyn's obligation?

Ans. I should not be willing to answer that.

Mr. Hazard said the question ought not to be answered.

Mr. Hallett remarked that the object of putting this question, was to identify the two oaths, by showing that the Rhode Island Oath, in this particular, meant precisely the same thing described in Allyn's version of the oath.

Mr. Hazard. [excited] If there are any witnesses who choose to come here and *disgrace themselves by betraying their honor, let them come, and we will swear them!* I consider a man has a right to be protected in refusing to tell what he has pledged his honor to keep secret.

Mr. Hazard was then asked if he chose to put the following question:—Is there any thing in the obligation you took as a Royal Arch Mason, relating to keeping the secrets of a Companion Royal Arch Mason? It was put to the witness.

Ans. I do not recollect if there was.

Mr. Hazard insisted that the Royal Arch oath was proved, as it was written out by the masons. He should take no other. He would ask the witness one question, which would set this matter right. Is there any thing in the secrets of Masonry which interferes with the rights of others not Masons?

Ans. There is nothing which I so consider.

Mr. Hazard. That is sufficient. The Committee feel no interest in ascertaining what Masonic secrets are.

Mr. J. S. Harris. We supposed that was the very thing the Committee was appointed to do. The public are much interested in knowing what these secrets are, that they may judge of them for themselves.

Mr. Hazard, very much excited.) The Committee have so idle curiosity to pry into the secrets of these gentlemen. They have sworn that their secrets relate to themselves, and do not interfere with the rights of others, and we ought to be satisfied. The object seems to be to *make them contradict themselves, and draw out something that they consider they are bound in honor, on oath, not to disclose, and if that is the case, I consider it A NASTY CURIOSITY, to inquire into their secrets.*

Mr. Hallett. That remark will doubtless have a tendency to promote the object for which this Committee was appointed—to *allay the excitement.* To avoid farther insult from Mr. Hazard, Mr. Hallett then rose, and left his seat at the table.

Mr. Hazard. If it had been alleged that there was any thing criminal in these secrets, there might be a pretence for prying into them. But this is not pretended.

Mr. Hallett, who was standing near the table, said this was the very question. The secrets were the medium through which the oaths were carried into effect, and we consider them of a highly dangerous tendency.

Mr. Hazard. The Committee have resolved from the beginning, that if the masons gave in their oaths, they should not be questioned as to their secrets. We have indulged the other side in putting questions on that point, too far already.

Mr. Hallett. Were the Committee unanimous in that decision?

Mr. Hazard. Yes.

Some one among the spectators said, I doubt that.

Mr. Hazard. The Committee so understood it. Mr. Cornell was not present when the Committee agreed to it, and Mr. Sprague made some objections.

Mr. Harris said the Masons had shown that they considered their Masonic oath superior to their civil oath, by refusing to answer. It agreed with the trial in Newport (in the case of a Masonic juror) where Masonic witnesses refused to answer questions under civil oath, which the Court decided they were bound to answer.

Mr. Hazard said he was glad that case had been alluded to. He was engaged in that trial and knew all about it. Mr. Cranston [a Masonic witness who volunteered to disprove the oaths in Bernard,] was examined by him, and answered all his questions.—Mr. Pearce (the opposite counsel) wanted him to read and explain the oaths from Bernard, which he declined doing, but he answered every question which the Court said it was proper for him to answer. Mr. Boss; (another Masonic witness, Master of the Lodge) when he came on the stand and was sworn, refused to answer at all!

Mr. Harris. That is just what I said.

[The Committee were standing, and considerable feeling was manifested.]

Mr. Halle, of the Committee, said he agreed with Mr. Hazard. He saw no propriety in asking Masons to disclose their secrets. They had stated, their secrets related entirely to themselves, and did not affect others, and were harmless! Some of the spectators replied, so they would say to their oaths.

Mr. Moses Richardson, a high Mason, said he wished to be heard one word. He was glad to see the Committee do their duty. He wished to inform the Committee that Walter Paine, Jr. told him that when he got up before the Committee he would screw it out of us!

The Committee here broke up in so much confusion and disorder, that the form of adjournment was forgotten by the Chairman.

It was past 9 o'clock in the evening, when the Committee retired.

It is proper here to state that Mr. Sprague of the Committee, who was not present during the scene, expressly denied, (as he had previously done while Mr. Wilkinson was under examination,) having assented to any agreement to screen the Masons from answering questions relating to their secrets. In his report to the General Assembly, Mr. Sprague says, page 8: 'I never entered into any understanding that Masonic witnesses were to be protected from answering any questions, touching their secrets or institution, which might be put to them.—The Chairman has so stated the fact in presence of Mr. Cornell.'

This Mr. Cornell subsequently confirmed, in a note which has been published. Immediately on Mr. Sprague's learning that Mr. Hazard had declared the Committee were unanimous in agreeing to screen Masonic witnesses, he (Mr. S.) called upon him to make the correction.—Mr. Hazard wrote a correction to give to Mr. Sprague, which was seen by Mr. Sprague and Mr. Cornell. After promising it to Mr. Sprague, and retaining it to make some alteration: he altered his mind and withheld it, and then attempted, by the assistance of Messrs. Simmons and Haile, to convict Mr. Sprague of falsehood. This attempt was completely frustrated, and recoiled upon the heads of its authors and abettors. Mr. Hazard and his associates have been repeatedly challenged by Mr. Sprague to deny a single assertion made in his minority report, but they have shrunk from this test, and resorted to personal abuse. The Rhode Island public understand this, and are fully satisfied that the assertions made in Mr. S's report, are strictly true. It has had as decided an effect upon the majority of the Investigating Committee, in exposing their partial and indecent proceedings, as the minority report on the U. S. Bank investigation, by Mr. Adams, has had upon the majority of that Committee.

Thursday Dec. 15.—[In consequence of the abusive treatment of witnesses by Mr. Hazard, and his refusal to put questions fairly, Mr. Sprague, one of the Committee, who had remonstrated in vain against this course, declined taking his seat with the Committee, though he was present in the room. Mr. Hazard was absent, nearly all the afternoon.—Upon his assurance that the proceedings should be conducted in a different manner from what they had been, Mr. Sprague finally resumed his seat. It should here be remarked, that all the Masonic witnesses, with the exception of William Wilkinson, and two others were sworn only to answer such questions as should be put to them. All other witnesses were sworn to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. This distinction may form an important precedent hereafter, for Courts of law!]

This morning Mr. Hazard announced that no question would be received, unless signed by the person who wished it to be put, a provision which he supposed would restrict the investigation.]

JOHN GARDNER—15th Witness.

John Gardner, of North Providence, Manufacturer, sworn in full.

Was asked, by request, if he had ever heard any Mason justify the murder of Morgan?

Ans. I can't say I have other than this: About four years ago, I obtained Morgan's book and some other disclosures of Masonry, and about that time had a conversation with Samuel Greene, [Grand Marshal of the Grand Lodge,] then of N. Providence, now residing in Smithfield. I asked him respecting the truth of the disclosures by Morgan and others, and he gave me rather an evasive answer, and very soon began in this way. 'He said any person that would take them oaths, and then disclose them, *ought to suffer death.*' The conversation there stopped. I said no more to him nor he to me on the subject. This conversation took place in the store of Mr. Greene; his father,

he, and myself were then in business together.

Mr. Haile. Did his feelings appear to be excited?

Ans. No sir. He said it deliberately. He went out of the store, and a few days after met me in the same store, and he then asked me if I had reported that he had said it was good enough for Morgan if he was murdered? I told him I never had. I then asked him if there was such a report in circulation. He said there was. I told him then that he need not lay it to me, for I never had said anything about the conversation that took place a few days before to any person. He then went out of the store, and said no more about it.

Mr. Haile. Do you belong to that political party called political Antimasons?

Ans. Yes sir. There is no mistake about that.

Question by request. Were you a political Antimason at the time of this conversation?

Ans. I was not. I had rather a favorable opinion of Masonry at that time, and had had for a number of years. Since that time I have examined the subject, and read both sides, which made me an Antimason. I have never been a Mason.

Asked by request of Masons, if he ever heard A. Wilkinson or any other person say anything about a murder said to have been committed by Masons in R. Island?

Ans. Has never heard Mr. Wilkinson say any thing about it, and has only heard some rumors; nothing particular about it, but I have heard the subject conversed of frequently. I read the accounts in the papers.

JOHN A. KENT, 16th Witness.

John A. Kent, of Pawtucket, sworn in full; was asked, Have you ever heard a Mason of respectable standing as a man, justify or palliate the murder of William Morgan?

Answer. Sometime last summer, in the Machine shop in Pawtucket, Mr. Henry Lord stated to me, that "if Morgan had revealed the secrets and obligations, *he had just what he agreed to have done.* If any man would take such obligations as he had, and reveal them, *he ought to suffer death.*" Mr. Lord told me he was a Mason, and said he had taken twenty degrees, and if he had money he would go clear up. He is a mechanic and painter. This conversation was in presence of three others, William Bagley, Mr. Child, and Jonathan West. Mr. West did not stay to hear the whole conversation. I began to talk with Mr. Lord about Masonry. Was speaking of the murder of Morgan. I asked him if it was so good a society, how it came to take the life of Morgan?

Grand Master Cook suggested the following question, which Mr. Hazard immediately put: How long have you been attending here, during the sitting of the Committee?

Ans. I have been here, and about the room, more or less every day, since the Committee have been sitting.

Mr. Hazard, as if to apologize for this question said, it is the duty of the Committee to understand all the circumstances under which this sort of testimony is given.

Mr. Hazard. Were you instigated to come here by any one?

Ans. No one asked me to come. I come and go of my own accord.

Mr. Hazard. Yes; you have been here a fortnight of your own accord, to impeach a man. This is poor business, impeaching a person, to implicate him in justifying murder.

In answer to a question from Mr. Hazard, witness says he has been engaged in Manufacturing. Was in the employment of David Wilkinson, until he failed.

Mr. Hazard. Well—I suppose 'tis no reason why a man should not tell the truth, because he has been in the employ of Abraham Wilkinson.

Mr. Abraham Wilkinson. I thank your honor,

he never was in my employ; and as he never was in yours, I find no difficulty in believing him.

It was here explained, that the witness had said he had been in the employ of David Wilkinson, a Mason.

JOHN HALL, 17th Witness.

Resides in North-Kingstown, R. I. Is an Attorney and Counsellor at law.

Question by request. Have you ever heard any Mason, of respectable standing as an individual, justify or palliate the murder of William Morgan.

Ans. Some time in the summer of 1827, I think, in a conversation with the Rev. Lémuel Burge, of North Kingston, R. I. (whom I understand to be a R. A. Mason,) respecting the death of William Morgan, I told him I believed that Morgan was dead, and that I had no doubt but that he was murdered by Masons, for betraying the secrets of Masonry, or words to that import. He asked me if I believed Morgan's book to be true? I replied that I did, and that I had not the least doubt of it. He then said that if Morgan had taken the oaths he there acknowledged he did, (in the book he had written,) *he had forfeited his life, according to the letter of the oaths he had taken,* and that according to his own confessions, he had become a traitor and violated his obligations as a Mason. In another conversation with Capt. Joseph Northop, of Newport, at Wickford, respecting Masonry, I told him that I was opposed to the institution, I believed it to be wicked and corrupt. He said he knew it to be a good institution for he had received benefit from it. He said at this conversation that he was a Mason. He told me that when he was at sea, one time, he was taken and carried off on board an armed vessel, I do not recollect what vessel. He made himself known as a Mason to the captain, and that consequently, the captain took him into the cabin, and treated him with a great deal of care, and did not take from him any of his property. I do not recollect any other conversation of this kind.

[A question was here asked through a Mason, whether witness had not said that he joined the Antimasonic party in order to get into office, to which he answered in the negative.]

[The Rev. Mr. Burge referred to in the foregoing deposition, is a respectable clergyman of the Episcopal Church. Immediately after the examination of Mr. Hall, an express was sent to Mr. Burge, (either by Masons, or as is believed, through the Committee,) who resided about twenty miles from Providence, Mr. B. did not come before the Committee at Providence, nor subsequently when the Committee met at Newport, which is within an hour sail of Mr. B's residence. It was known, however, that Mr. B. had sent to Mr. Hazard a deposition taken privately, which deposition Mr. Hazard said in conversation, made the matter worse. This affidavit, taken in this private manner, before a Justice of peace, when the party might so readily have been summoned to attend on the Committee in person, is not entitled to be considered a part of the examination. It nevertheless appears in Mr. Haile's minutes. The only part of the private affidavit of Mr. Burge, that bears upon the statement made by Mr. Hall, is this:

"On one occasion, happening to meet John Hall, Esq., and hearing the said Hall make sundry declarations concerning Morgan's book and death, I said to him, Do you really believe that Morgan is dead? His answer was, I have no doubt of it. Do you believe that the book said to be written by him, is a correct representation of Freemasonry? I do, was his reply. You believe, then, that he was murdered, and that by Masons, for having violated the obligations he there says he had voluntarily taken? He replied, to be sure I do. I then asked him (*solely for the purpose of seeing what answer would be given!*) [indeed!] whether, *as a mason,* he was not guilty, and if guilty, whether he had not met with the fate he justly merited? I waited for an answer, but there was no answer given!

I further depose and say, that this is the ground I have uniformly taken, in order to avoid a declaration, or any thing that might lead to a declaration of my opinion respecting the supposed death of William Morgan, or his illustrations."

[NOTE. This confession from a christian minister, is sufficiently remarkable. He admits that he put the case to Mr. Hall, in such a manner as to leave him to infer, that he, Mr. Burge, did consider that if a Mason were guilty of revealing Masonry, he justly merited death. And this he did, *solely for the purpose of seeing what answer would be given!* He explains nothing, but leaves his hearer to infer that he, a minister of the gospel, justifies murder, and this he does, *solely to see what answer would be given!* No answer was given. This fact demonstrates that Mr. Burge did not put the case in the form of a question, but as his own opinion. Had he put it in the form of a question, would Mr. Hall, an Antimason, have been so puzzled as not to be able to answer it? The fact that he did not answer it, proves that it was not a question.

Another admission by this clergyman, is even more appalling. He says he took this ground, (*viz:* putting a case which was designed to compel his hearer to admit that Morgan was justly murdered,) *in order to avoid a declaration of his opinion respecting a cruel murder!* Is this possible? A minister of the gospel resorts to subterfuges to avoid giving his opinion of an outrageous murder, and to evade telling the truth! When Masonry leads such men to such shifts, what will it not do with men of loose or bad principles!]

JOHN PRENTICE, 18th Witness.

[Mr. Hazard was absent. Mr. Haile conducted the examination.]

John Prentice affirmed to tell the whole truth.—Resides in Providence, is a Merchant Taylor. Has been a Freemason, and taken three degrees in St. John's Lodge, No. 1, Providence, about eighteen years ago.

Question by Mr. Haile. Are you a Mason now?

Ans. I understood unofficially that I was expelled from the Lodge, but for what I was never informed. I had no notice of the proceedings.

Mr. Haile. Are you now an adhering Mason?

Ans. I consider myself altogether opposed to Masonry.

Mr. Haile. Are you a political Antimason?

Ans. I have never voted, not having been admitted a voter by the laws of this State, though a freeholder. If being opposed to Masonry, constitutes an Antimason, I am one.

Question proposed by Masons. At what time did you become opposed to it.

Ans. After I had satisfied my mind, by investigation, that the whole fabric was based upon falsehood and deception. My mind was also deeply impressed with the influence of the Masonic principles, as they were legitimately carried out in the forcible abduction and murder of William Morgan, and also in the obstructions, that were thrown in the way, by Masons, in obedience to their Masonic principles, of the conviction of those who were engaged in that wicked transaction. During the winter of 1829, I became first interested to inquire into the truth or falsehood of Masonry.

Mr. Haile inquired if witness should be examined respecting the oaths?

Grand Commander Barker said it would be as well, and handed Allyn to Mr. Haile.

Mr. Haile asked if an oath was administered in each degree?

Ans. It was. I recollect distinctly that when I took the first degree, the preliminary remarks were made to me that the oath was not to interfere with my religion or politics. In reference to the other two degrees, I cannot say whether they were or not. I think it probable they were.

Mr. Haile. Can you repeat the obligations?

Ans. I do not think I could without omitting some parts.

Mr. Haile read to witness the written Rhode Island oaths, declining to state that they were the oaths furnished by the Rhode Island Masons, as had been done to all adhering Masons. Entered Apprentice's oath was read.

Witness. I never heard the word *affirm* used.—The phrase *that buried* alluding to the penalty that the tongue is to be buried, was given to me 'my body buried,' &c.

Fellow Craft's oath read.

Witness has no recollection of within the angle or square of my work. It may however be an improvement.

Master's Oath read, and witness asked, do you recollect any variations?

Answer. I recollect there is one important omission in that oath, which I will name. The oaths read to me are substantially the same as I received, with such variations as I have pointed out, above, and will point out. They are these. The word *affirm* was not used in either of them.

In the Master's Oath as read to me, in the penalty, there is an important omission, as I received it, viz. "that there might not be the least track, trace or remembrance, of so vile and perjured a wretch as I should be, were I wilfully to violate these my solemn obligations."

Mr Haile then read the variations, as had been done to other witnesses.

1st. Relating to Grand Hailing sign of distress.

Witness. That I took.

2d. But will apprise him of all approaching danger.

Witness. That I recollect, also to keep the secrets of a brother, murder and treason excepted.

3d. "And they left to my election," was not administered to me.

4th. To go on a brother's errand.

Witness. I have no recollection of that.

Question by Grand Commander Barker. How many points are there in the Master's oath?

Ans. I do not recollect. I never heard that question asked by one Mason of another.

Mr Hazard here came in and commenced the Committee's interrogatories. The first charge from Webb's Monitor was read. Witness believes that charge was read to him at his initiation in the first degree. The other two charges of initiation of the other degrees, were read to witness, and he presumes they were read to him.

Witness. The moral principles inculcated in those charges I considered were binding on me before, as a moral man. I consider them as the advice and instruction of the Master of the Lodge.

6th Interrogatory. Witness had no means of ascertaining what he was to swear to, before he took the obligations. He had no means of ascertaining whether he had an oath to take, before he went to the Lodge, and had no idea of an oath being required until after he was brought into the Hall with a rope round his neck, blind folded, and placed at the Master's desk. It was not then until I was told I had an oath to take.

Mr Hazard. It is unnecessary to state the situation you were in! Did you strictly attend to the oaths when taking them?

Ans. The situation in which I was placed, and the manner in which the oaths were communicated, were such as to render it impossible for me to understand them. I made no inquiry respecting the oaths, at the time I took them.

The first degree was taken by itself, the other two in the same evening. I expressed no scruples to the Lodge at the time of taking the oaths, and I had none at that time.

10th. Relating to jurisdiction over life?

Ans. I don't know that I ever came to any definite conclusion relative to these points. I never believed that if I broke the oaths, the Lodge to

which I belonged would themselves inflict the penalties. I considered that, as a moral being, I had no right to take the life of any individual.

In answer to the 11th Interrogatory.

I don't know of any other secrets in Masonry than those contained in Bernard and Allyn. I have always considered that the oaths were as much the secrets of Masonry, as the signs, initiation and manner of working. The form of the different Lodges, their arrangement when at work, &c. are also a part of the secrets.

Question. Did you at the time you took the oaths consider them incompatible with your duties as a citizen?

Ans. No individual could form his judgment of the oaths, until after he had taken them. I did not consider them incompatible with my religious and civil duties, until I had an opportunity to investigate them. My mind was under a suspicion in reference to them, as I presume has been the case with many who still adhere, to the institution. When they were placed before me in print, as I had taken them, I had an opportunity to consider them deliberately.

Question by Grand Commander Barker. When did you first see them placed before you in print?

Ans. I think I saw them soon after my initiation, in Jachin and Boaz, which some Masons used to have in the Lodge. It was considered rather un-masonic to study Jachin and Boaz in the Lodge.—In that book the oaths were printed. But I did not study the oaths for the purpose of forming any opinion on them, but rather to refresh my memory. In the winter of 1829, I formed an opinion upon the character of Masonic oaths. In answer to a question from Mr Barker, witness says, for the first two or three years after I joined the Lodge, I heard these frequently administered, but I did not understand them.

Question. What do you consider the objects of Masonry to be?

Ans. What the objects of Masons now are, in upholding the Institution, it would puzzle any body to tell. I believe the original object of Masons to have been to meet together to have a high frolic, and look after each other's interests, to the exclusion of all others of the community. To protect each other at all points. Such I believe to have been its original object. I should be sorry to attribute such motive to the Masons in this town. I also believe one of the original objects was to bring the religion of the New Testament into contempt. I do not believe that those who now uphold it are fully aware that this is the legitimate design and tendency of Masonic principles and ceremonies.

[This statement produced much sensation, among the Masons. The Grand Commander proposed this question:]

Where do you find your proofs of this, and on what do you found your opinion?

Ans. In all the prayers used in the Lodge, the name of Jesus Christ is most studiously left out. There is no reference made to him in any of the ceremonies of the seven first degrees.

Mr. Haile. To whom are the prayers addressed?

Ans. To God.

Question from a Mason. In what other respects does Masonry conflict with the religion of the New Testament?

Ans. The one I believe to be a system of truth, the other to be a system of falsehood.

Mr. Hallett here presented, in writing, two questions, relative to the disavowal of revealed religion, in Masonic charges, and the erasure of the name of Christ from the passages of scripture used in the Royal Arch degree. No notice was taken of it.—Grand Master Cooke, referred to the questions asked Mr. Chase, a former witness, touching his belief in the relative existence of the personages in the Trinity, and insisted on having them put. Mr. Hallett requested that his questions might be put. Mr.

Haile, who held the latter questions before him, paused for some moments, and seemed undecided what course, to adopt. Mr. Haile, Mr. Sprague and Mr. Cornell were the only members of the Committee present, Messrs. Hazard and Simmons being absent. The curiosity of the spectators, was strongly excited, to discover what the difficulty was.—After evincing considerable uneasiness, Mr. Haile put the question, with evident reluctance. Up to this time the impression of some of the Committee and the spectators, seemed to be that the witness had made a charge against the Institution, of its irreligious tendency, which it was impossible for him to prove. Even the Masons who knew better, were confident the witness would be put down in making this charge.

The questions and answer, however, produced an entire revulsion in the opinion of all candid persons present, and fully sustained the witness. Mr. Haile put this question first:—

Do you know of a quotation or passages from the New Testament in a Masonic book, from which the name of the Saviour is excluded, although it appears in the original as printed in the New Testament?

Ans. In one of Paul's Epistles, which is used in the ceremonies as a lesson, the name of *'our Lord Jesus Christ,'* which occurs in the original text is left out. The second question was then put:

Did you ever read, or hear read to you, the Charge to Masons in the first part of the Records of St. John's Lodge, in which the following instruction is given to the candidate? 'Religious disputes are never to be introduced into a Lodge. For as Masons we only pursue the UNIVERSAL RELIGION or THE RELIGION OF NATURE!'—[Extract from a short charge to be given to the Candidate on his initiation, as found in the Records of St. John's Lodge, Providence, and also published in Books of Masonic Constitutions.]

Witness does not remember it was read to him.

[Mr. Hallett here called for the Book of Records of St. John's Lodge, which was produced after some hesitation, and referred to the passage as above quoted, which he read, aloud, and handed to Mr. Haile. Mr. Haile has entirely omitted this fact in his Minutes.

NOTE.

[To illustrate this important point, that Masonry, in the seven original degrees, as they are called, carefully excludes revealed religion, and the name of Jesus Christ, in order to accommodate itself to Turks, Jews and Pagans the following, facts are subjoined. In one of the principal Masonic charges, is found this passage, above referred to.]

"As Masons, we only pursue the UNIVERSAL RELIGION, or THE RELIGION OF NATURE. This is a cement which unites men of the most different principles in one sacred bond, and brings together those who were the most distant from one another."

The same principle is fully avowed in the Declaration of the twelve hundred Masons of Massachusetts.

"[Masonry] simply requires of the candidate his assent to one great fundamental religious truth: the existence and Providence of God, and a practical acknowledgement of those infallible doctrines for the government of life, which are written by the finger of God on the heart of man."

So says orator Brainard. "The only religious test [in Masonry] is this, that men should have a sense of their immortal accountability, so that their obligation can be confided in."

A still stronger illustration of this Masonic principle, is found in the original charge at initiation into the first degree, p. 175 of the Massachusetts Book of Constitutions, compiled by the learned Dr. Harris, and approved by the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts.

"As a gentleman and a Mason you are to be a strict observer of the moral law, as contained in the

Holy writings." In a note by Dr. Harris, he thus gives the Masonic definition of *Holy Writings*, viz: "The Bible, and in countries where it is not known, ANY OTHER BOOK WHICH IS UNDERSTOOD TO CONTAIN THE WORD OF GOD."

Thus the Koran and the Shaster are accounted of equal and concurrent authority with the Bible, in the religion of Masonry! Hear also what brother James Hardie says in his Monitor, approved by all good Masons:

"Masonry excludes all distinctions of rank, as well as of religion. The Roman Catholic, the Episcopalian, the Presbyterian, the Methodists, the Baptists, the Unitarian, the HEBREW, the GENTOO, the INDIAN, &c. may here sit together in harmony and peace."

In Webb's Monitor, page 140, at the opening of the Royal Arch Chapter, passages of scripture are set apart to be read, 2d Thessalonians 3d chapter, from the 6th to the 17th verses. The 6th verse reads in the New Testament thus: "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother who walketh disorderly."

In Webb's version, it reads thus: "Now we command you, brethren, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother," &c.

12th verse. In the original: "Now them that are such we command and exhort, by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work and eat their own bread."

Same verse as altered in Webb: "Now them that are such we command and exhort, that with quietness they work," &c.

The 18th verse in the original is wholly omitted, viz: "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all." Here, in one chapter, the name of Jesus Christ, which occurs three times, is expunged by Masonry, in order to accommodate itself to the Jew, the Turk and the Hindoo.

Again in Webb, p. 154, a part of the 9th chapter of Hebrews is read during the ceremony of lowering the candidate through a trapdoor, in the wicked farce of representing 'the tabernacle called the Host of all the manna, Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant.' In the original the name and office of Christ occurs seven times, but no allusion is made to him in Webb's version. One of the verses omitted is remarkable. "11. But Christ being come a high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect Tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building."

Grand Master Cooke now called for his question, which Mr. Haile put as follows:

Mr. Haile. I have no right to ask you any questions relating to your religious views, but in order to explain how you consider the Masonic Institution as excluding the religion of Jesus Christ, I will ask you what you understand by the word God?

Ans. Perhaps the best answer I can give, is, that being who created and upholds the universe.

Mr. Haile. What do you understand is meant by the words Jesus Christ?

Ans. Do you wish to divide them or take them together? Jesus Christ was the son of God.

Mr. Haile. No, take them together.

Mr. Haile. What do you understand by the expression, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost?

[Mr. Harris here referred to the bill of rights of Rhode Island, which expressly says that no man shall be called in question, touching his religious belief.]

Mr. Haile. I have no right to question you on your religious belief, but it is necessary to understand how you comprehend the word God.

Ans. If the object is to involve me in a metaphysical inquiry, for the purpose of misrepresenting my views of religion, I shall claim my rights as a

citizen. As a believer in the religion of Christ, I can approach God in no other way, than in the name of Jesus Christ.

Mr. Haile. That is not an answer to the question. If you decline answering it, I shall so state it.

Witness. You will then not state it correctly. I have not refused to answer.

Mr. Haile. The witness has charged a large and respectable body of men with infidelity.

Mr. Hallett. The witness has made no such charge against individuals. He has stated the principles laid down in Masonic charges and constitutions.

Mr. Haile. I cannot understand any distinction between charging an Institution with: inculcating deism, or charging the men who belong to it.

Mr. Hallett. That is your own inference. The witness has only stated the facts.

Mr. Haile, addressing the witness. Is it understood, by any portion of the religious community, that the word God includes Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?

Ans. I do not understand the drift of the question, or the reason for asking it. I decline answering the question, if it is intended, as I presume it is, to involve an inquiry into my religious opinions. I do not think that this is a proper place to explain them.

[Mr. Haile here remarked with some severity, upon the circumstance of Mr. Harris having handed to witness the R. I. bill of rights, relating to religious freedom.]

Mr. Haile. Then you decline answering?

Witness. I beg leave to remark, that if that question has the remotest connexion with the matter now under legal investigation, I am willing to answer it. I feel myself bound to answer every thing that comes under my civil obligation to tell the whole truth; not to tell a *part of the truth*, as other witnesses have done, and excuse myself by saying that the Committee agreed to ask me only such and such questions.

Mr. Haile. For my own part, I consider it has a bearing.

Witness. I believe there is no sect of Christians who do not consider Christ the only medium of intercession between God and man.

Mr. Haile. That is not an answer.

Witness. I think it important. In Masonic prayers the Savior is excluded, which is evidently not accidentally but purposely, in conformity to the principles of the Institution, which exclude the religion of Jesus Christ, and adopt only natural religion.

Mr. Haile. That is not the question.

Grand Commander Barker handed the following question, which Mr. Haile put.

In whose name are witnesses sworn in a Court of law?

Witness. What has that to do with this investigation?

Mr. Haile. You are not to judge.

[*Notes.* The Masonic witnesses, however, by a special contract with Mr. Hazard, were allowed to judge, and to withhold answers to all questions which they judged to be improper.]

Mr. Haile. Do you decline answering?

Witness. I have no objection to answer the question, but I have an objection to being trifled with. If the Committee will so far relieve my mind as to point out any relation it has to my duty here as a witness, I should be greatly obliged to them.

Mr. Haile. I cannot consider the question important other than to ascertain whether you are acquainted with the manner in which oaths are administered in Courts of law. All kinds of questions have been put.

Witness. If the design was apparent in the question itself, I should have no objection to an-

swer, though the fact is known to every school boy, but the object is to draw an inference, to be used to my injury elsewhere.

Mr. Haile. Do you decline answering, then?

Witness. I do.

Mr. Haile wrote this down.

Mr. Hallett said, that if Mr. Haile put down the refusal of the witness to answer, he ought also to state the reason given by him, for the refusal.

[*Note.* The above examination took place in the absence of Mr. Hazard and Mr. Simmons. The impropriety and unfairness of the proceeding, are sufficiently apparent, especially to any one acquainted with the laws of Rhode Island, which expressly declare that no witness shall be called in question, touching his religious belief. Even this violation of law, by Mr. Haile, is, however, less improper in a person acting as a magistrate, than his refusal to put down any thing in his minutes, but the simple question, and the refusal of the witness to answer, though he was specially requested to give the whole of the witness' answer. It would seem hardly credible that Mr. Haile should have condensed the whole of this inquiry touching the religious views of the witness, into the following questions and answers, and yet it is every word of it that is given in his printed report of the testimony. See page 62 of the Committee's published report of the testimony.]

"*Question by Committee.* What do you understand is meant by the word God?"

Ans. I understand it to mean that being who created and upholds the Universe.

Question by request. In whose name is a witness sworn in a court of law?

Ans. I decline answering this question."

[Mr. Hazard resumed his seat at the table.]

In answer to a question by request, witness stated he had a conversation a year ago, with a Mason, Benajah Warren, of this town, on the subject of keeping secret a crime, if communicated to him Masonically. He asked me why I had renounced Masonry. I told him, one reason why I had renounced it was, that I considered the principles of Masonry were inconsistent with the duties of a man as a citizen. He asked me to show him in what respect. I stated to him a case, by way of illustration, referring him to that part of the obligation which requires him to keep the secrets of a brother Master Mason, in every respect save murder and treason.

If a brother Mason should be guilty of burning his neighbor's house, and should communicate to him the fact, and require him to keep secret, as a Mason, the transaction, how he could, consistently with his obligation as a citizen, keep his Masonic obligation? I asked him what he would do in such a case. He replied, *he would not tell of it, let people find it out as they could, he would never tell of it.*

Mr. Haile inquired if there was any reference to a trial in a Court of Justice.

Ans. There was none.

In answer to 18th interrogatory, witness says—

I have no recollection of ever hearing politics discussed in a Lodge, nor knew a Lodge to combine to elect a candidate to office.

21st Interrogatory.—

I have considered my moral duties paramount to all others, and have never favored a Mason to the injury of one who was not, in consequence of my Masonic obligations.

Question by request. Have you known any instance, where the influence of Masonry has been used to the injury of those who were not Masons? If so state it.

Ans. Sometime in the summer of 1830, I was called upon by a young man of the name of William Hall, then a resident of this town, now in Connecticut, to become his bail, he having been sued by Griffin Child, of this town. Not being sufficient

bail myself, (two being required by law,) I called on Mr. Lowell Adams, to be bail with me. He did so. A few days after we had become bail, said Adams remarked to me, that he was apprehensive we had got ourselves into difficulty, for that this Hall was a great villain. I asked him how he knew that fact. He replied, he was told it by a brother Mason, as a Mason. I asked him who the man was. He refused telling his name, saying it was communicated to him as a Mason, or upon the principles of Masonry. I ascertained afterwards that it was the very man who had caused the writ to be served on said Hall. This man was Griffin Child. The suit that was brought was for slander. After the suit was withdrawn, Mr. Adams told me he got the information from Mr. Child.

[Note. The bearing of this will be seen, by observing that it was the interest of Child to injure the character of Hall, and induce his bail to surrender him, which would have placed him at the mercy of Child. He therefore Masonically communicated suspicions to the mind of Adams, who did not know that Child had caused the writ to be issued.]

Mr. Hazard, about this time, was extremely civil to witness, and made this remark, "I presume that nobody who hears your testimony, will doubt it. It is given very fairly."

Witness. Never knew the Grand Hailing Sign of Distress to be made in a Court, or a Judge to practice upon that construction.

Question by request. Was the duty of obeying the Grand Hailing Sign of distress inculcated in the Lectures?

Ans. I recollect at the close of receiving the Master's degree, the Master of the Lodge, in explaining the Grand Hailing Sign, told me that whenever I saw that sign, or heard the words accompanying it, I was to fly to the relief of the person making it, if there was a greater probability of saving his life than losing my own. The sign is made by raising both hands above the head. The words are, My Lord, three times repeated.

[The witness here represented the motion, at which the Masons present exhibited indications of distress as though they had witnessed some awful sacrilege.]

Witness. It is the custom for Masons to be received as visiting brethren into all Lodges of their degree.

Question by request. What is understood by a worthy brother?

Ans. I presume it is to be understood that every Mason is to be considered a worthy brother until he is declared to be otherwise by the Lodge to which he belongs.

Answer to 33d Interrogatory. I have had repeated conversations with different Masons, at different times, upon the subject of the Morgan outrage.—The impression that several of them left on my mind was that they justified the abduction and murder of Morgan, on Masonic principles. My recollection is so indefinite that I should not name any individual. These conversations were within two years past, in this town. I do not recollect any particular place, nor do I recollect any particular expressions that led me to these impressions.

Mr. Hazard seemed very desirous, just at this time, to do away the unfavorable impression left upon the public, by pressing the witness as to his religious opinions. He evidently did not like to have any one abuse the witnesses but himself. He said, very politely, that he hoped the witness would not consider that the Committee were disposed to press him. He thought the public ought to be possessed of all the information in reference to such a subject, as the justification of murder. This was all he desired. Mr. Hazard here asked if a single question had been refused, if it had it should be put now.]

Question by the Grand Master. In what form were you notified previous to your expulsion?

Ans. I was not notified at all, and knew not why I was expelled.

Question from W. Paine, Jr. Had you made known previous to your expulsion, the Masonic oaths, and did you suppose you were expelled for declaring the truth of the revelations of Masonry, before the public?

Ans. I had, and I presume that was the reason why I was expelled.

Question from the same. Have you ever been told in a friendly or threatening manner by Masons that your speaking against Masonry would injure you in your business?

Ans. I have, but whether in a friendly or threatening manner I cannot tell.

Question by request. Was it explained to you, as you advanced in the degrees, that the reason of the cable tow being increased in each degree, in the number of times it was wound round you, was to impress upon you the additional binding force of your obligations?

Ans. It was so explained.

The testimony here closed, and it being 9 o'clock in the evening, the Committee adjourned.

Friday morning Dec. 16.—Present all the committee, except Mr. Potter. Rev. Mr. Greene, a Baptist Clergyman and adhering Mason, was called again, having been previously examined and excused.

TESTIMONY OF REV. DANIEL GREENE.

The general interrogatories being put, witness answered in the form adopted by most of the Masonic witnesses, who had the benefit of each others testimony.

Question by request. Did you ever hear of the murder or intended murder of Morgan, in the Lodge, or did you ever hear a Mason justify or palliate the murder?

Ans. I do not know any thing about it, except what I read in the papers and publications.

Question by request. What are the signs made on entering and leaving a lodge, and what reference have they to the penalty?

Ans. There are signs and ceremonies on leaving a Lodge; I never inquired whether they had reference to the penalty or not. I presume the lectures will tell all about it.

[Witness, however, declined stating what the signs were; or what explanation was given of them in the Lectures.]

Question by request. Were you taught in the Lectures, to obey the grand hailing sign of distress?

Ans. I presume they are taught to obey the signs, in the Lectures, &c.

Question by request. To whom did you consider you bound yourself, in the penalty of your Entered Apprentice's oath, to have your throat cut, &c. if you revealed the secrets? to yourself, or to the Lodge?

Ans. I do not consider I gave power to any one to inflict the penalty upon me.

By request. Have you ever had any evidence to satisfy you that Speculative Masonry existed previous to 1717, and have you ever held out the opinion to others, or believed it yourself, that the Institution was 5831 years old?

Ans. I have always held it to be an ancient Institution. I have no particular evidence other than the Masonic Monitor. I do not remember to have stated exactly how old it was.

By request. Do you consider yourself, as a Royal Arch Mason, under stronger obligations as respects charity to a brother Royal Arch than to an Entered Apprentice? What is the object of having so many degrees, in which Masons are bound to keep secrets, not only from the world, but from each other.

Ans. I do not know.

Question. How do you answer the first part of the question?

Ans. I do not know that I do.

Question by request. If you have taken the degree of Knight Templar, as you say, do you remem-

ber the following obligation administered to you, while going through the ceremonies? "This pure wine," &c. [Ante p.49.]

Ans. I cannot recollect any thing about what is read to me from that book.

Question by request. Can you recollect ever drinking wine, or its representative, out of a HUMAN SKULL, in the ceremonies of being made a Knight Templar?

Ans. I do not know that it can effect the interests of any one, WHETHER I DRANK WINE OUT OF A SKULL; A TIN CUP, OR A BASIN!

[*Q*] Truly a worthy answer for a reverend clergyman, under a solemn civil oath, to answer all such questions as should be put to him! How strangely Masonic principles pervert the understandings and consciences of pious men, and even ministers of the gospel of TRUTH! A list of questions had been made out for this witness, but they had been torn up by Mr. Hazard, and it was deemed useless to press them, where the witness was protected by the committee from telling the truth, and where it was apparent he would not answer any question, under civil oath; which his Masonic oath required him to conceal. One of these questions, if put, must have involved the witness in direct contradiction. He had testified, that the object of the check degree was to keep people out of the Lodge, who might get in by studying the books of impostors, &c. The question was, whether a man who told the truth could be an impostor, and how it was necessary to guard against the admission of impostors, if they had not got the real secrets of Masonry, from Morgan's disclosures?

[It has been alleged that among the charges brought against the Masons of Rhode Island, by Antimasons, was the murder of a man for having made a Mason illegally. Mr. Hazard, (though he carefully avoided inquiries into the actual charges made by Antimasons, and though he twice refused a written request to summon the Grand Master and Grand Commander of the year 1826, and question them as to their knowledge of the Morgan conspiracy, and the disposition of the extra appropriations made from their funds in that year), was nevertheless eager to represent the Antimasons as having charged the Rhode Island Masons, with the actual commission of murder. The fact was, this charge originated from Caleb Sayles, a high adhering mason, and but for him would never have been presented to the public at all. We deem it wholly foreign to the subject of inquiry before the Committee, but as Mr. Hazard was particularly zealous in his investigations into a matter which he knew the Antimasons did not rely upon at all, or expect to prove; it may be proper to give the testimony.

The witnesses on this point were got before the Committee, with great difficulty, and only upon an extra summons for them to appear. They were adhering Masons, and testified with great reluctance. Mr. Hazard throughout avoided proposing any questions that might draw out more than it would be prudent to have disclosed.

There is one fact, particularly deserving notice in the testimony of Lewis C. Brown. It will be seen that a Mason, who did not collect his debt in a distribution of the witnesses property, accused him to the Lodge, evidently for not complying with the spirit of his obligation to favor a brother Mason, to the exclusion of other creditors, and the Lodge condemned him for it. Could this subject be fully developed, many a creditor, not a Mason, would learn how it has happened that he has been overlooked in the distribution or attachment of his debtor's property, while others, less deserving, have been fully secured.

It will also be observed from this testimony, that the witness was rather suddenly restored to the Lodge, just after the Morgan outrage, when it became necessary for Masons to settle all their smaller difficulties.]

TESTIMONY OF LEWIS C. BROWN. [20th Witness.]

Lewis C. Brown, Smithfield, Valley Falls, millwright, sworn—I am a Mason, have taken the degree to the R. A. I am still an adhering mason.

Ques. Did you ever have any difficulty with the Lodge, if so what was it, and what were the proceedings?

Ans. I never had any difficulty with the Grand Lodge of this State. As to the Morning Star Lodge there was at one time some difficulty in 1814. It began by some of the members being at variance with me. That happened in consequence of a certain one, who I was owing a sum of money to, and I was gone to New York and some persons attached my property; amongst them some masons, and one in consequence of not getting his money, accused me of cheating him.

He made a complaint to the Lodge for defrauding him, and they took notice of it. They appointed a committee to investigate the subject. The committee on an investigation reported against me unambiguously. I appealed as I had a right to do, according to the by laws of the Lodge, to a second committee. The second committee investigated the affair and also reported against me. As I was a member of a Chapter in Providence at the same time, the same complaint was entered there. After the report of the second committee, the Chapter appointed a committee of three to report on the same. John Carlile, Peter Grinnell, and Mr. Jackson of this town, I think were the Committee. After hearing the parties they reported unanimously in my favor. Then I went back to the Morning Star Lodge, and insisted on being reinstated, which was refused. I then made complaint to the Grand Lodge. The Grand Lodge appointed a committee of three to investigate the affair and report. This committee cited the Morning Star Lodge to show cause why I should not be reinstated in said Lodge. The Lodge at Cumberland appointed a committee to appear before the committee of the Grand Lodge. They accordingly appeared with myself before said committee. There was a full investigation of the subject before the committee, and they reported, That the said Lewis C. Brown be reinstated into the Lodge and all the privileges of Masonry, and have a right to visit any Lodge under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge. This report was accepted. I then went back to the Morning Star Lodge, but they insisted on holding me as an expelled member, and contended that the Grand Lodge had no right to reinstate an expelled member of any subordinate Lodge. Their by laws required the unanimous vote of all the members present to reinstate an expelled member, and the reason why the Lodge did not comply with the requisitions of the Grand Lodge were these: the brother mason opposed to me always put in a negative vote, and I believe that some others voted always against me. After these repeated requests, in 1827! or 28! they finally restored me to all my former rights and privileges in said lodge by a vote, the person who made the complaint having moved away.

Ques. After this, or before, or at any other time, did you write any thing about or against the institution of Masonry, which got before persons who were Masons, or before the Lodge, and created the same or another difficulty?

Ans. It is true while the affair was pending in Morning Star Lodge, I kept a journal and made some comments on it, but I believe no difficulty was created by it. The comments were on points which I deemed illegal and unmasonic. At this time I wrote some letters to the Lodge on this subject, which the lodge did not approve. These proceedings are all on record.

Ques. Did the Lodge some two or three years ago, or any masons pay or offer to pay all the money back again which you had paid the Lodge upon certain conditions; if so, state the reason or conditions.

Ans. There was no such offer ever made. The person represented that I had written against Masonry, but the Committee of the Grand Lodge decided I had not written anything against Masonry; I never had written or said any thing against Masonry.

Ques. Have you ever known any person to obtain the secrets of Masonry illegally, or as they say clandestinely? Who was it, where did he live, what was his name, what became of him, when was he tried if tried at all?

Ans. I know of no such case that ever came under my knowledge.

Ques. Did you ever hear of such a case, or have evidence given you to convince you that such a case ever happened in this State.

Ans. There has been frequent reports, but nothing that ever satisfied my mind that such a case ever took place in this State. There was a report that a Mr. Joseph Follett, of Cumberland, now dead, did once obtain Masonry illegally. It is very difficult to tell whether people meant it for a fact, or only a rumor. This report I had from my father and others. My father was not a Mason. These circumstances happened about thirty two years ago, since which time there has been something said about it.

The report has been revived within about 5 years in a Vermont paper, but I have heard no new circumstance about it. Mr. Follett has been dead something like twenty years. He left two daughters. The youngest is married to my brother. She is about thirty years old, and resides in Cumberland. My father died in 1800. I was well acquainted with Mr. Follett. My brother's wife said that her mother told her that a stranger came to board with her, and soon after disappeared. No name was mentioned in the Vermont report, who made Follett a Mason. I don't know as I can tell. In conversation with my brother's wife, she stated her mother washed this man's clothes, who boarded there, the stranger, and his shirt was bloody. Her mother has been dead five or six years. Can't tell that her mother stated the time when this man boarded there. This man soon after disappeared. It was supposed by them that no other person knew the stranger but Mr. Follett. They were often in a room together alone.

Ques. What has been represented by Mr. Follett's family, as his feelings and views upon this subject, during his last sickness.

Ans. Never has been represented by him, any thing against Masonry. He was buried with Masonic honors! I don't recollect ever hearing his family say any thing about what his feelings were upon this subject. My brother's wife says that her mother told her they, the stranger and Mr. Follett, were intimate together, and often in the room together by themselves. I was well acquainted with Mr. F., but never heard Mr. F. say that any Mason or any body else suffered by Masons on his account. I was twenty or twenty five years old at the time Follett died.

Adjourned till afternoon.

Ques. Were you not restored to your Masonic privileges by the Grand Lodge, from fear you would publish your difficulties to the world?

Ans. It is very difficult for me to say what the cause was. It was sufficient for me to know that I was restored. I should rather think it was because justice required it to be done.

Ques. Did you threaten to publish the proceedings of the Lodge, and was it talked in the Grand Lodge that you would do so, if you were not restored.

Ans. Seems though there was something said by a Committee in the Morning Star Lodge, to a Committee in the G. Lodge. I do not know what effect that had. I should have published the proceedings, if they had not restored me.

Mr. Haile. Was there any thing improper in those proceedings?

Ans. Nothing more than to show a private difficulty, and the inconsistency of the proceedings of the Lodge. Nothing that would injure the principles of Masonry, I conclude, if these proceedings were made public. It would show their inconsistent conduct.

[This last was got down with difficulty, Mr. Haile asking if witness was satisfied.]

In answer to a question, witness has read some parts of Morgan's Illustrations; of Bernard's none. I think that Morgan wrote as well as he knew.

Ques. What do you mean by saying he wrote as well as he knew how?

Ans. My impression is he wrote to get money by it, and of course he would write as well as he knew. In that part I read I found some variation.

Mr. Haile. What is your meaning, well or correct?

Ans. I find some errors in it in my opinion.

Mr. Haile. Can you state the errors.

Ans. I can't do it without they are pointed out.

Mr. Paine wished the Committee to read the Royal Arch Oath from Allyn.

Mr. Hazard said the proper oath to read to the witness, who was a Rhode Island Mason, was the Rhode Island oath, as handed in to the committee.

Mr. Paine thought the witness ought not to be instructed in this way, as to what he was to swear to.

Mr. Hazard. It don't have a very good appearance to attempt to discard the oaths proved here, by R. I. Lodges and Chapters. It is not in my opinion fair treatment.

Mr. Paine. If it was fair treatment to make seceding Masons testify from the oaths given in the books, I don't see why it is not as fair to question adhering masons in the same way.

Mr. Hazard replied by biting his lips and shuffling his spectacles with great vehemence. The witness relieved him by saying,

I won't trouble you to read the oaths, they are nearly correct in Morgan. It is so long since I read the Royal Arch Oath, that I cannot undertake to point out any part. [The reading of the oath was waived.]

Ques. Have you ever taken the Check degree or pass word, since 1826; if so, when and from whom, and what did you understand was the occasion of it?

Ans. I received such a degree in Morning Star Lodge, Cumberland, sometime in 1828, from Rev. Mr. Cutler, an Universalist minister, Master of the Lodge. There was little said about it at the time. I suppose the real object was to keep out those who we did not know but might get information enough from Morgan's book and others to work into the Lodge.

Ques. Did you understand where it came from?

Ans. I understood it had been lately received, but from whence it was not told to me.

TESTIMONY OF JESSE BROWN—21st witness.

Friday morning, Dec. 15.—[Nearly every question put to this witness, was by request. Mr. Hazard appeared very reluctant to examine him closely.]

Jesse Brown, an adhering Mason, sworn in full. Resides in Cumberland, is a farmer. I call myself a Freemason. I have taken 3 degrees in St. John's Lodge, thirty five years or more ago.

Ques. Do you know of any person having been made a Mason clandestinely?

Ans. I do not of my own knowledge. I never saw one made. I have heard it reported. It was the common report in Cumberland that one Joseph Follett, who lived in my neighborhood, had been made a Mason clandestinely. Follett is now dead. If I can recollect the man's name who made Follett a Mason, it was Adams. I can't recollect his first

name; I will not be quite positive that his name was Adams.

Ques. What became of Mr. Adams?

Ans. The report was that Adams sometime afterwards took a vessel at Providence and went off—removed to the west with his family. Thinks this was within a few months after he had made Follett a Mason. He was a transient man. It was said that Follett was made a Mason clandestinely in Massachusetts. Adams represented himself as a Mason.

Ques. Did Follett get into the Lodge after Adams made him a Mason? Did he pay any fee for admission?

Ans. They received Follett in the Lodge. I do not know whether he paid his fee or not. He was not satisfied with the Masonry he got. He got sick of it himself, and came forward and was admitted to the Morning Star Lodge in Cumberland in the legal way. I have sat in the Lodge with him.

Ans. Where did you understand Adams went to.

Ques. It was some distance I heard Adams was to move? I won't be sure it was Ohio. I have never heard of him since. He was rather transient.

Ques. How did you know he had gone to Ohio?

Ans. I conversed with some of our Masonic brethren who told me that he had gone to the West, and they saw him go on board the vessel in Providence with his family! He had been with us in the Lodge, and was some acquainted, and of course it would lead us to speak about him, was the occasion of the brethren telling me where he had gone. Witness does not know Caleb Sayles.

Ques. Did you ever know or hear of Adams making any other Mason?

Ans. By report I heard that Adams made another Mason clandestinely besides Follett. I don't recollect who it was. It was not in my neighborhood. This circumstance was generally known in Cumberland, by Masons, and I guess other people too. It was not a very private thing.

Ques. Did you ever hear that Adams was called upon by any Lodge, for what he had done, or that Masons had any thing to do with his going away?

Ans. I never knew that the Lodge in Cumberland or any other Lodge called upon Adams about this. Some of the members did. I understood several Masons conversed with him.

Ques. What was the nature of the conversation?

Ans. Why, they asked him why he came to do so, I understood he plead poverty, and wanted to get funds to move. I never heard that the Lodge had any thing to do with his going away, or paid any thing for it. Said Adams did not visit the Lodge after these transactions. This was more than twenty years ago.

Ques. by J. S. Harris. Have you not frequently said or thought there was something wrong about this so far as Masonry is concerned?

Ans. No farther than I have heard it said, Adams did wrong, in getting said Follett's money.

Ques. Did you ever hear or know that Adams ever suffered in consequence of making Follett a Mason?

Ans. I know nothing further than that the brethren talked with him about it, and told him it was a breach of his trust. Adams gave Follett three degrees in one evening.

[Mr. Simmons here asked if there were any more questions. The Committee proposed none and evinced no wish to inquire into the subject.]

Ques. by W. Harris. Have you ever heard any thing respecting a stranger that boarded with Follett, and went away suddenly, and Mrs. Follett discovering blood on his clothing.

Ans. I never did. The witness was here dismissed.

TESTIMONY OF BENAJAH WARNER—22d Witness.

Benajah Warner—sworn in full. Resides in Providence, is a shipwright, and an adhering Mason. The deposition of John Prentice was read, relating a

conversation, in which Warner had said if a Mason communicated a crime to him, he should feel bound to keep it secret, and let others find it out.

Witness. I had no such conversation as that. We had a conversation about the obligation, but not in that way. He never put that question to me; and I never answered it in that way. I asked him why he had renounced Masonry. He was a young fellow that I felt an interest in. I had always heard him well spoken of, and I thought it would be an injury to him to renounce Masonry. I asked him why he fell back. He said that the obligations were dangerous, especially the higher ones. He said that there was such a thing as that Masons would uphold one another in the higher degrees. I told him I believed no such thing; and asked him if he found any thing ungentlemanly, or unchristian in the obligations he had taken? It appeared that he signified I was right in the lower degrees, but in the higher degrees which we had not taken, one Mason was bound to uphold another, let him do what he would. I told him I did not believe it. It did not look consistent with the other degrees. He said he had a book that would convince me. I told him I did not believe the book. It was not consistent. I talked with him out of friendship. He was a young man, and had no one to help him. I told him I thought his seceding from Masonry would injure him. I thought he had taken a snuff, and that instead of injuring others he would injure himself. I had always heard a good name of him, before, from a child. He was much liked.

Ques. by W. Paine, Jr. How did you consider it would injure him to secede from Masonry, especially as you say you had always heard a good name of him before?

Ans. I considered that he would say things that he ought not to, and would lose the confidence of Masons—not only of them, but all judicious men.

Question by W. Paine Jr. What character did Mr. Prentice bear among Masons, after he seceded? [The witness did not answer this question.]

Question by the same. Did you swear in your Master Mason's oath, to keep the secrets of a Master Mason, when committed to you, murder and treason excepted?

Witness hesitated. Mr. Hazard read that part of the R. Island oath to him. Witness admitted he had sworn viz: "to keep a brother's secrets as my own when committed to me, as such, murder and treason not accepted."

Question from the same. Well, then, does not the expression, "murder and treason excepted" show that no other secret, but murder and treason, is allowed to be disclosed, when communicated by one Mason to another, as such? By murder and treason being only excepted, are not all other crimes included? Please explain how you reconcile this with keeping your Masonic oath, and being a good citizen.

[The witness did not appear prepared with any explanation. There was a short pause, whereupon Mr. Hazard said it was the hour appointed for the funeral of some person, and the Committee would adjourn till 3 o'clock.]

Friday Afternoon. The committee met, and called Benajah Warner again, who appeared to have been provided with an answer to the interrogation.

Ans. I do not consider this part of the obligation binding me to keep secret any crime, committed by a brother Mason, as a crime.

Question by the same. If a Mason should commit a secret to you on the five points of fellowship, which was a crime against the laws of the State, should you reveal that secret before you had made it known to the Lodge?

Ans. I should not.

[This, witness afterwards altered, by saying, I would not receive any such a secret, as a secret, and would communicate it if made to me. W. give his precise words.]

Question by the same. What, then, is meant by keeping a brother's secrets?

Ans. Why, *what he promises to keep.* If a brother communicates a secret to another brother, if he is a man of honor he will keep it; but he is not bound to receive such a secret. His Masonic obligation does not bind him to receive any secret that is unlawful. I conceive for myself, that it does not. I don't know how it is considered.

[*Q.*] This is a valuable distinction. He is not obliged by his oath to receive a secret, revealing a crime, but if he does receive it, he must then keep it.]

CHARLES SEARLE, 23d Witness. (Introduced by the Treasurer of the Encampment, Moses Richardson.)

Question proposed by him. Did you ever hear Abraham Wilkinson say, that there had been 500, more or less, murders committed in Providence Masonic Hall, or Pawtucket?

Ans. Last summer, S. S. Southworth and A. Wilkinson, were talking by the Market House. A large collection was present in the street. They were conversing on Masonry. Mr. Southworth pointed to St. John's Lodge, and asked Mr. Wilkinson how many murders he supposed had been committed in that Lodge. His answer was, shaking his finger, more than five hundred, you puppy. He said it in an ironical way, and raised a considerable laugh. They both appeared to be excited.

Ques. by Mr. Wilkinson. Do you know that Mr. Wilkinson saw him point to the Hall?

Ans. I cannot say that he did. They were both facing each other.

Ques. Did not my answer apply to the Institution?

Ans. I do not know how others understood it. I understood it as applying to Masons.

24th Witness.

BURRINGTON ANTHONY, introduced by Moses Richardson, for the same purpose. To the same question answers—

I was coming out of Mr. Searle's office, some-time ago. I am ashamed to be called to tell the story now, and should not if I had not supposed. I was compelled to come upon the summons of the Committee. I heard loud talk in the street, and went to the market window. Mr. Wilkinson and Mr. Southworth were conversing with warmth upon the subject of Masonry. The only words I recollect were, Southworth said how many do you think have been murdered in this Hall?

Mr. W. replied to it very quick, and rather in a passion, five hundred, you puppy. I did not understand that he intended to convey the idea that he believed five hundred persons had been murdered there.

[It was here suggested, that as this expression of Mr. Wilkinson, was introduced as an offset to the justification of the murder of Morgan by Masons, it might be that Mr. Wilkinson referred to the candidates who had represented Hiram, Jubela, Jubelo and Jubelum and been murdered in the ceremonies in that Hall.]

In answer to a question from Mr. Wilkinson, witness says, I never heard him apply his opinions of the institution to its members individually.

[Mr. W. Paine Jr. here stated to the Committee, in answer to some inquiry, that Mr. Moses Richardson had in his possession certain doings of the Grand Chapter and Encampment in New York, in 1826, which were printed.]

25th Witness.

SAMUEL YOUNG was called by the Masons and sworn in full. Is a Mason. Questioned by Mr. Hazard if he had ever heard any reports about a Mason being murdered?

Ans. Yes. Two years ago there was a report prevalent in this town, that there was a man murdered in St. John's Hall, of the name of Smith,

Thomas or Thomas H. Some one was relating this story to Anson Potter, and considered there was no doubt of it. I have understood it to be the same man Thatcher alluded to, as having been murdered in St. John's Lodge.

[*Note.* This is entirely a mistake. Mr. Young in his zeal to clear Masonry, had brought up a new and suspicious case, of which Antimasons had never heard before.]

Witness. It was six or seven years ago he went off. Mr. Truesdell said he was in debt and run off. Judge Tourtellot (a mason) said he saw him in Cincinnati. I was acquainted with the wife of Smith, and I never heard her say or intimate that her husband was murdered. She said he had gone off and absconded. I never talked much with her about it, because I considered it a delicate subject.

In answer to Question by request. Has no reason for saying this was the man alluded to by Mr. Thatcher and others as having been murdered in St. John's Hall. He supposes it must be, [as it is the only man he ever heard it talked about as having been murdered there. I never heard it intimated that any other person was murdered in St. John's Hall, and I drew the inference from that, that Smith was the man alluded to by Mr. Thatcher and others. Said Smith resided in Gloucester in this State. I never heard Smith's wife say that her husband had been summoned before the Lodge.]

Mr. Moses Richardson was here called upon to be sworn. He declined; said he had an objection to be examined, to be wire-drawn by people on the other side of the table, (meaning Antimasons.) He would not submit to it. The Committee waived his examination, and said they should take hold of the Masons tomorrow.—Adjourned.

Saturday, December 17.

THOMAS TRUESDELL, of Providence, affirmed.

[*26th Witness.*]

Is not a mason. Has heard mention made that it was supposed Thomas Smith was made way with, in St. John's Hall. He heard such a report last winter—about a year ago. Knew Thomas Smith well. In 1821, in February, he started to come to Providence, from Gloucester; and the report came in town that he was robbed and made way with by robbers. There was a considerable inquiry made for him, and it was reported his horse and wagon were found in Cranston or Johnston. The supposition, after this, was that he had gone to Ohio. He was owing my firm about \$500. We sent our accounts out to a Mr. Drown, in Louisville. I never heard from Smith, till Mr. Wilder, a partner of Judge Tourtellot, (a mason) returned from Ohio. He said he had seen Thomas Smith, in New-Orleans. He said he did not speak to him. Smith turned off when he approached him; but he was sure it was he. I heard nothing more of him till this fall, when I asked Judge Tourtellot if he had seen him, mentioning the excitement there was about Smith. He said he had not; but that Smith had been in the neighborhood of Cincinnati, about 30 miles from there, with an acquaintance of Tourtellot's, as said Tourtellot was informed by a friend. Said Tourtellot is a mason.

Ques. Did Smith owe other debts, to induce him to go off?

Ans. I believe not; ours was the main debt. I have heard it repeatedly reported that he was made way with.

In reply to a question, says—

I don't know whether this was the man Mr. Thatcher alluded to or not.

Ques. Did you ever hear from your correspondent or any other source, what became of Smith?

Ans. No. Mr. Wilder came the highest to him of any person I ever knew.

Witness has never heard any report of any other person having been murdered in St. John's Hall or any other Lodge in the State, but Smith.

RAY POTTER—sworn—called by the Committee.

[27th Witness.]

Resides in Pawtucket. Is a clergyman. Has taken one degree in masonry. Does not consider himself a mason now. Mr. Thacher called on witness some time ago, in September or October 1831. He shewed me a letter from a man in Maine or New Hampshire, relative to the account of the murder of a mason in the Lodge in Rhode-Island: I heard Mr. Thacher read the letter, and also saw it, except the name of the writer. The writer enjoined secrecy as to his name. The author of the letter stated that the name of the man who was made a mason, illegally, was Delton C. Smith, a brother-in-law of Caleb Sayles, who now resides in New-York, and has an elder brother residing in Gloucester, R. I. The writer of the letter said he had forgotten the name of the person who made Smith a mason, and wished to learn his name. The transaction was about thirty years ago. The writer of the letter lived in this State formerly. I presume Mr. Thacher did not intend that I should know the name of the writer. He had been requested not to give the name. The man had written him in consequence of the statement he had seen in a newspaper. He formerly resided in Rhode-Island, and he wrote as if the circumstances were once familiar to him. Mr. Thacher called on me, to preach for me. In the course of that call, I inquired of him relative to the statement he had made, and he shewed me the letter. The writer assigned as the reason for not having his name made public, that he did not wish to get into the excitement.

Ques. by Mr. Hazard. Did Mr. Thacher intimate to you any other facts and circumstances than those you have here stated, about the murder?

Ans. He stated the conversation between him and Mr. Sayles, the same as has been published in the papers. I have not heard that Mr. Thacher ever made this letter known.

Ques. by Mr. Simmons. From all you found in that letter, and all that Moses Thacher added to it, did you come to the conclusion and believe that any such murder as was by said Thacher, or the writer of the letter, hinted at or alluded to, had ever been committed?

Ans. I have not come here to insinuate that the Grand Lodge, or any other person, has committed murder. I have not come to such a conclusion.

Ques. Have you ever before spoken of the facts and circumstances here alluded to: have you done so frequently and publicly?

Ans. Yes: I have a number of times today, and before.

Ques. When you have related these circumstances have you expressed an opinion decidedly?

Ans. I have never expressed an opinion decidedly; but I have had some suspicions and some fears that a murder was committed, and I will give my reasons.

Ques. Will you tell the Committee what those fears and suspicions were?

Ans. My reasons and suspicions were—in the first place, I knew the penalty of the masonic obligation to be death, in case of revealing the secrets; and if masons thought it right to annex such a penalty, they would of course think it right to inflict the penalty, as it evidently appeared to me they did, in the case of Morgan; and I think they are not consistent unless they do it. These are the reasons for my fears and suspicions.

By Mr. Simmons. Do you consider an anonymous letter ought to be received by any man as evidence in relation to so high a charge as murder; especially when the person who shews such a letter, is in some degree committed by making the charge, and is to be benefitted by the contents of such a letter, or the impression it may make?

Ans. I should think not. I have referred to the letter as proof of the name of the person made a mason, but never as proof of murder.

The last part of his answer Mr. Haile has en-

tirely suppressed in his report, with unpardonable unfairness.]

By Mr. Simmons. Was it not Mr. Thacher's intention to corroborate or substantiate the charges he had made, and which have been referred to by you, by shewing you this letter?

Ans. I can't say what his intention was: I asked him about his statement, and he afterwards shewed me this letter. In consequence of that inquiry, Mr. Thacher produced it, in the course of the conversation.

By Mr. Hazard. Did you and Mr. Thacher have any conversation about the murder itself, and about the circumstances attending it; and who probably committed the murder?

Ans. I don't recollect that we did—the conversation soon ended—we were soon called to tea.

Ques. Did you suppose Mr. Thacher put his thumb on the name in the letter, for the purpose of concealing it?

Ans. I did: I have no doubt of that.

Ques. Did you, notwithstanding it was concealed, endeavor to see the name: what part of it did you see; and was you desirous of seeing the name?

Ans. I looked at it despondingly, because I was desirous of seeing the name, and saw the christian name, but can't recollect it: it was not an ordinary name—it began with O, something like Orin.

By the Committee. Did you make any enquiry about this transaction after this time?

Ans. I did not; because I did not know where to go. I knew if I went to the murderers they would not tell me.

Witness took one degree in masonry in Pawtucket, in this State; and renounced it four or five years ago, soon after the abduction of Morgan.

Witness continued a mason about five years. During that time, he considered that the penalty of violating his masonic obligation was death; but did not reflect seriously upon it. When he did, he renounced. He never entered a Lodge after the first time.

[Mr. Hazard treated this respectable witness with great harshness and gross insult. He took the paper from Mr. Haile, and wrote down the questions and answers to suit himself, continually muttering that the witness had come there to charge respectable witnesses with murder, and he would see that they were protected.]

Mr. Potter replied with perfect propriety and calmness, that he did not come there to accuse any person or persons of murder. That Mr. Hazard himself had called him, and put questions to him, which he had answered, under his oath, to the best of his knowledge and belief. That he was not responsible to Mr. Hazard or any other man for his opinions, the grounds of which he had frankly stated, and that he considered himself, entitled as a witness, before a committee of the Honorable Legislature of Rhode Island to decent treatment.]

Mr. Hazard—in great anger. There is your deposition, Sir; it will speak for itself.

Mr. Potter. If it is correctly stated, it is all I wish to speak for me.

Mr. Hazard. Very well, Sir; we shall see.

The Committee here adjourned until Saturday morning, in a state of very considerable excitement, and unusual spirit on the part of the Chairman.

TESTIMONY OF CALEB SAYLES—28th Witness.

Saturday Dec. 17.—[Mr. Sayles either presented himself voluntarily or had been sent for by the Masons, by express, and made his appearance evidently for the purpose of contradicting Mr. Thacher.]

Caleb Sayles, of North Wrentham, Mass. a Mason sworn to answer questions.

By the Committee. Have you seen a statement in the newspapers, published by Rev. Moses Thacher, which relates a conversation said to have taken place between yourself and him on the alleged murder of a man in St. John's Hall, and if so, is that statement correct or accurate?

Ans. I have seen the account. It is not correct.

He has added to it. I have published a reply to said Thacher's statement in the *Masonic Mirror*, Boston, which is correct. I never heard the name of the person supposed to have been put out of the way by the Lodge. I am a Freemason. Have taken something like 25 or 26 degrees. I took the three first in Watertown, New York, I took all the other degrees in Rhode Island, except some ineffable degrees. The statement read to me is the one published in the *Mirror*, and is substantially true in every respect. I have made inquiries but have never been able to find out the name of the person said to have been murdered. I heard during this examination that his name was Smith. My brother in law Delwin Smith, told me the circumstances about the murder, some dozen years since. He then lived in Watertown, New York. I do not know whether he is now living or not. Have not heard from him since.

By Mr. Hazard. At the time of your conversation with Mr. Thacher, what reply did he make. Did he express any opinion favorable or unfavorable to Masonry, or any belief in the story. Did he signify any intention of leaving the Fraternity?

Ans. I don't recollect whether Mr. Thacher made any reply or not, when I made the communication to him, or whether he expressed any opinion favorable or unfavorable to Masonry, or intimated any intention to leave the fraternity. I think he did not, for if he had I think I should remember it. I have had no conversation with him on this subject, since that time. I do not recollect what reply he made if any.

By W. Paine, Jr. What led to this conversation, and under what circumstances was it introduced?

Ans. I do not recollect what led to this conversation. I and Mr. Thacher were in a chaise together at the time.

By the same. Did you know that Mr. Thacher was a Mason, at the time you made this communication to him?

Ans. Yes, sir.

By the same. What was your motive in making this communication?

Ans. After a pause—Why to give him information of that circumstance, connected with the *Morgan affair*! That was my only motive!

Ques. Have you ever assigned any other reason?

Ans. I have not as I recollect, other than as stated in my publication.

J. S. Harris proposed a request in writing, that the questions put by Mr. Thacher to Mr. Sayles, in his communication, might be put to the witness.—The communication of Mr. T. from the Boston Telegraph, was then read, containing these queries.—The *Masonic Mirror* was also handed in, and Mr. Sayles referred to his reply to these queries.

Mr. Haile said the reply was a long one. Does it answer these interrogatories?

Witness said it did. It took them into view.

Mr. Haile asked if that was satisfactory.

Mr. Harris said he should like to have the questions put and answered.

Mr. Hazard complained about giving the Committee trouble.

Mr. Sayles said perhaps they had better read his reply.

Mr. Haile assented and commenced reading, when Mr. Sayles said that was not the communication.

Mr. Hazard became quite angry. He said they would put questions that come from the four quarters of the globe.

Mr. Harris observed that the questions were before him in print.

Mr. Hazard. What sort of a question is that? Write it down, Mr. Haile, and annex the newspaper.

The following interrogatories were then put to

witness, from the *Boston Free Press* of October 12, 1831, referring to the story Mr. Sayles told to Mr. Thacher, respecting the murder of a mason in R. Island:

1. Did you relate the same story to other masons, besides members of St. Alban's Lodge?

Answer. I did relate the same story to other members of St. Alban's Lodge.

2. Did you, or did you not, as late as the Spring of 1829, relate the same story to a mason who was not a member of St. Alban's Lodge?

Ans. In 1828 I did relate the same to a mason not a member of St. Alban's Lodge.

To each of the following interrogatories witness replied, "I shall answer that in the negative," viz:

3. Did a freemason, who was a Knight Templar in 1829, ask you in substance if it was intended that masonic penalties should be executed, in case the oath of secrecy were violated? and,

4. Did you give your opinion in the affirmative?

5. Did you give this as a reason, "that masonic law was older than civil law?"

6. Did you give this mason to understand, that you would be willing to assist in executing the masonic penalty upon a violator of his oath of secrecy?

7. Did you bring the Grand Lodge of R. Island as authority, by relating substantially the same story, with which you say, in 1828, you "had precipitately alarmed your brethren?"

By the Committee. Did you answer the communication of Mr. Thacher, containing these interrogatories?

Ans. I did in the *Masonic Mirror* of Oct. 12.

Mr. Hallett here reminded the Committee that this witness stated he had taken 26 degrees, and an opportunity offered of ascertaining the oaths of the higher degrees, if the Committee wished to develop the truth. The Committee evinced no disposition to make the inquiry. The following question was handed to them and put:

Have you ever taken the degree of Illustrious Knight of the Cross?

Witness wished to have the book to look at.—

Bernard's Light was handed him, and after reading the oath attentively and a considerable pause, he laid it down, saying in an under tone, he did not know as he had. The Committee let it pass. The oath of this degree contains the obligation to derange the business of a seceding mason, and hold him up as a vagabond wherever he may go. Mr. Sayles had apparently practiced so thoroughly on this principle, in his treatment of Mr. Thacher, that considerable anxiety was felt to ascertain if he had ever taken this oath. The Committee, however, discontinued the inquiry.

Mr. Hallett said,—he had supposed that if any Mason were sworn here, who had gone higher than the Knight Templar's degree, the committee would of course endeavor to ascertain the oaths of those higher degrees.

The Committee did not regard the suggestion, and the witness was dismissed.

TESTIMONY OF BARNEY MERRY. Past GRAND MASTER.—[29th Witness.]

[Mr. Merry was Grand Master of Rhode Island from 1828 to 1831, and was regarded as among the most intelligent and influential masons of the State. He may therefore fairly be supposed to be as capable of explaining masonic oaths and principles, as any adhering mason can be. We invite particular attention to his testimony.]

Mr. Merry was called by Masons for the purpose of contradicting the deposition of William Harris, viz: that he, Harris, heard Merry say, "that if Morgan had revealed the secrets of masonry, he deserved his fate." [See ante page 83.]

[Mr. Hazard was absent, Mr. Simmons presided.]

Barney Merry, of North Providence, Manufacturer, sworn to answer all such questions as may be put to him.

By Mr. Haile. Do you recollect the conversation imputed to you by William Harris?

Ans. I do not. I have tried, but cannot bring any such conversation to my mind. I never have deliberately justified the murder of Morgan, at any time to my recollection, or the conduct of those masons who were concerned in that transaction.

By Walter Payne Jr. Did you not take in the Knight Templar's degree an obligation called the *fifth libation*? If so, is it not considered, and so explained by Masons of that degree, to be the seal of all your former obligations, administered in the institution?

The witness did not answer. The sealed obligation was read to him as follows:

"This pure wine I take from this cup, in testimony of my belief of the mortality of the body, and the immortality of the soul, and as the sins of the whole world were laid upon the head of our Saviour, so may the sins of the person whose skull this once was, be heaped upon my head in addition to my own, and may they appear in judgment against me, both here and hereafter, should I violate or transgress any obligation in Masonry which I have heretofore taken, take at this time, or may hereafter be instructed in, so help me God—Drink the wine." [See ante page 49.]

The question as proposed by Mr. Payne, was again put to witness, who continued to hesitate.

Ans. I SHALL DECLINE ANSWERING IT!

[COMMENT.] This Past Grand Master had just taken the following civil oath: "I swear to make true answer to all such questions as may be asked me, touching the matter now under investigation, so help me God!"

By Mr. Haile. Did you take the obligation I have read to you?

Ans. I did not take that obligation.

[NOTE the quibble! Witness first declined to answer at all. He then denies that he took the obligation, because he and other masons do not consider the fifth libation as a masonic obligation. The truth of these words is admitted by two preceding witnesses [see ante pages 49, 65.]

By Joseph S. Cooke, present Grand Master and successor to the witness. Did you ever take any obligation which you thought would conflict with your moral or social duties?

Ans. I did not.

By Wm. Harris. Did you not, in this Court House, say to me, after I had given my evidence, that if you did make such a declaration, it must have been in reference to the oaths in Masonry?

Ans. I had some conversation about your evidence, and told you I could not recollect any such declaration; that if I ever made it, it must have been under an excitement, produced by some unreasonable charge against Masons.

By the same. Have you at any time visited the Lodges as Grand Master, to explain the oaths or obligations, and induce them not to give up their charters? Please explain the object of such visits?

Ans. I never have visited the lodges for that purpose, except at the elections.

[The words in italics Mr. Haile has suppressed.

By the same. Have you ever as Grand Master received any Masonic communication from the Grand Lodges in other States, or their officers, and if so, what was their import?

Ans. I never have as an individual. The Grand Lodge has never, while I was Grand Master, received any communication, except on the election of officers and masonic matters. The communications are on file and may be seen by the Committee. Some of them are very long.

[Mr. Haile has misrepresented this answer. The Committee never took any measures to get at these very long communications. A question was here presented in writing, how long the witness had been Grand Master. The Committee took no notice of it, leaving it to be inferred that Mr. Merry

was Grand Master during the Morgan outrage.—This was not so. He was not Grand Master till 1828. Richard Anthony was Grand Master in 1826, 27, and it is worthy remark, that though he lived within four miles, the Committee refused two special requests in writing to summon him and examine him touching his knowledge of the Morgan murder, derived from masonic bodies in New York!

B. F. Hallett here handed a question in writing to Mr. Haile. Mr. Haile hesitated. Mr. Simmons was then sitting at the stove, at a distance from the table. Moses Richardson (Treasurer of the Grand Encampment) observed the question, and went and spoke to Mr. Simmons, who rose and resumed his seat at the table, and looked at the question. Messrs. Simmons, Haile and Sprague were the only members of the Committee present. Mr. Sprague thought the question ought to be put. Mr. Simmons objected to the first part of it, which was in these words: "A charge from Webb's Monitor has repeatedly been read to seceding Masons, in the course of this investigation, by the Committee, at the request of Masons."

Mr. Simmons refused to put the question, if it stated that this charge had been read to seceders, at the request of Masons. He said he had read these charges himself in the Monitor long ago.

B. F. Hallett. That part is not material; but it is a fact that this charge was shown to you by Moses Richardson, a mason, and read to seceders, by his suggestion, in order to show the excellent principles taught by masonry; and it has been used for that purpose. We think, therefore, as it is introduced to justify masonry, it ought to be explained, if it has any hidden meaning.

W. Payne, Jr. and A. Wilkinson said they had witnessed the fact stated by Mr. Hallett.

Mr. Simmons appeared at a loss how to proceed. He finally said he had no idea of putting a question that implied a censure of the Committee.

Mr. Hallett said the truth ought to be no censure; but rather than lose the question, he could strike out that part of it; which he did; and Mr. Simmons passed the question to Mr. Haile.

Mr. Haile—addressing the witness. It is requested that I read to you from the charge to the master, in Webb's Monitor.

Mr. Hallett. I have made no such request. I wish the questions put, as they are stated in writing.

Thereupon Mr. Haile finally read these formidable questions, which had been subjected to so many objections. The questions were intended to be put in succession, the second after the first was answered; but Mr. Haile read them both at once, as if to give the witness the benefit of seeing the whole ground, and that he might avoid a committal.

1. *Ques.* A charge from Webb's Monitor, page 72, has repeatedly been read, in the course of this investigation, by the Committee. In that charge, this sentence occurs:—"Be true and faithful and imitate the example of that celebrated Artist whom you this evening represent." Please explain the allusion and meaning of this part of said charge, and the nature and object of the representation there alluded to, with its reference to masonic penalties?

2. *Ques.* Please state whether the following instruction, or the like, occurs in one of the Lectures of the master mason's degree referring to the same representation alluded to in the above charge, addressed to the candidate, viz:—

"Brother A. before we can proceed any further with you in this solemn ceremony, it will be necessary for you to travel, in order to convince the brethren of your fidelity and fortitude. In the course of your travels you may meet with ruffians who will endeavor to extort from you the secrets of a Master Mason. Some will go so far Br. A. as even to threaten to take your life, but you must be prepared even to lay down your life, rather than to reveal any of the secrets of Freemasonry that have been communica-

fed to you; therefore on your firm fidelity and for titade rest our further favors."

Ans. I SHALL DECLINE ANSWERING THAT QUESTION!

Mr. Sprague, (of the Committee.) Do you decline answering the whole, or which part of the questions?

Ans. I decline answering the whole of it.

[*Mr. Haile* objected to writing down these questions and answers. He complained that he had been put to a great deal of trouble. *Mr. Hallett* told him he would save him the trouble by writing them himself, rather than they should not go in the deposition. *Mr. Haile* finally assented, and *Mr. Hallett* wrote them on *Mr. Haile's* minutes.]

Present *Grand Master Cooke*, proposed the following question, which *Mr. Simmons* put at once, without showing it to any one but *Mr. Haile*.

Do you consider the question as alluding to that part of the ceremonies which you do not consider material to the public, as a reason why you decline answering it?

Ans. I do.

Mr. Simmons. You say then that the only reason why you decline answering this question, is, that the public have no interest in it?

Ans. I do.

Mr. Haile. Can the masonic signs, ceremonies and secrets, in any way, directly or indirectly, affect the rights or interest of any person, not a Mason?

Ans. They cannot, to his injury, so far as I am acquainted, never having had a case of the kind ever come to my knowledge.

By B. F. Hallett. If a Mason is required to suffer his life to be taken rather than have the secrets of Masonry extorted from him, ought he not as a Mason to suffer imprisonment and death, sooner than disclose these secrets, if called upon in a Court of Law, and compelled to disclose them under his civil oath?

Ans. After a pause—That is supposing an extreme case. I don't know as I can say what a Mason ought to do in such a case.

[*Comment.* Here is an illustration of the obedience to the civil Magistrate taught by Masonry. A Grand Master is doubtful whether a Mason ought not to suffer imprisonment and fine, as Bruce and Whitney and others did, sooner than testify to the truth, under a civil oath, when required to do so by the civil magistrate, provided that civil oath enjoins upon him the disclosure of any secrets of Masons, or of Masonry, which he has sworn ever to conceal and never reveal! The principle goes the whole length of making Masonic law superior to civil law. *Mr. Haile* saw this dilemma of the Grand Master, and came to his aid with the following leading question.]

Mr. Haile. Can you conceive of any possible case in which it would be the duty of a Court to require a Mason to reveal his Masonic secrets or in which a refusal to make such disclosure could affect the rights or interests of any person, not a Mason?

To these words thus put into the mouth of the witness would be of course answered No.

[Here we again have the assumption that a Masonic witness, and not a Court of law, is to be the Judge of what questions it is proper for him to answer as a Mason, in such Court.]

B. F. Hallett. But suppose a juror should be objected to in a trial, on a charge that Masonic signs had passed between him and the party, or that he could not stand impartial with his masonic oath, might it not be necessary to call upon Masonic witnesses to testify what these signs and oaths were, in order to prove that they had been used in this case, or would bias the juror? Under such circumstances would a Mason be justified in withholding this important evidence from the Court?

Ans. That is an extreme case. I know nothing about what a person might do. It would be left to the individual to decide. I cannot tell what a person might do in such a case.

B. F. Hallett. What would you do?

Witness—rather angrily. *If the gentleman wishes to draw any thing out of me, derogatory to the principles of masonry, he will find himself mistaken!*

By Grand Chaplain Friesz. If satisfied that masonic secrets conflicted with the duties of a good citizen, would not your obligations and charges, as you understand them, require of you to give up those secrets in obedience to your civil oath?

Ans. They would.

[It was here suggested that this witness had before sworn that his masonic obligations never could conflict with his civil duties; and of course he never could be "satisfied," as a mason, that he ought to obey his civil oath, if it required him to disclose what he had masonically sworn not to reveal.]

By B. F. Hallett. You appear to be quite certain that masonic secrets cannot affect those who are not masons.

If a mason, in a trial, were to give the masonic sign of distress to a masonic juror, and that juror be induced thereby to favor him as a brother mason, in preference to the opposite party, not a mason, would not this secret of masonry, in such a case, affect the rights of those who are not masons?

Ans. That, Sir, is a curious kind of a question. No juror, who was an honest man, would receive such a sign.

Question by the same. But may not Masonic signs and secrets be used by bad men, as a medium of communication and concert, dangerous to the rights of those who are not Masons?

Ans. A bad man might do a great many things.

B. F. Hallett. Are not many masons bad men? That does not answer the question.

Witness. Well, Sir, I think not, if they acted on the principles of Masonry.

Mr. Haile. Have you ever known such a case?

Witness. My answer is, Sir, that so far as I am acquainted, they never have. I do not know what might be done by bad men.

Mr. Sprague, (of the Committee.) That is not an answer to the question. It is a very plain one.

Mr. Simmons. You said before, that they could not upon the principles of Masonry. Was not that your meaning?

Ans. Yes, that was my meaning.

Mr. Haile. Then you say you think that Masons could not use the secrets and signs in that way, and act upon the principles of Masonry. Is that your meaning?

Ans. It is.

Mr. Sprague. Is not this principle taught in Masonry, to suffer death rather than disclose the secrets?

Ans. It is not.

Mr. Sprague. You say so in the Grand Lodge Address.

Witness, after a pause. I should wish to amend that answer. "The words of the obligation make use of that, but as to the principles of Masonry inculcating such a thing, I do not so understand it."

Question from A. Wilkerson. Would not a mason, on trial, have secret means of communication with a masonic judge or juror, which one not a mason could not have?

Ans. I SHALL DECLINE ANSWERING THAT QUESTION!

[A mason here spoke to the witness in a low voice. Witness thereupon said, "I should prefer answering that question, I think." He then added, "I never knew any such case, it would not be likely to occur."]

[*Mr. Haile* has made this witness say, in answer to the question whether masonry teaches to suffer death rather than disclose its secrets, "such a prin-

siple is not at all taught in masonry." (See page 35, Hailes' minutes.) Mr. Merry has involved himself in a most extraordinary contradiction here. He swears that no such principle as this is inculcated by Masonry, to suffer death rather than disclose Masonic secrets. In June, 1831, the Grand Lodge of R. I. published an Address to the people, which is signed **BARNEY MERRY, Grand Master**. It is to be inferred, that Mr. Merry read this address, before signing it. It contains the following, page 5.

"No penalty recognized by a Mason, involves any other principle than that of self-devotion. The instance of John A. Custos may serve as a noble example. The cruel tortures of the Spanish Inquisition were insufficient to extort from him the secrets of Masonry. He would have suffered death as an honorable man, rather than violate his integrity. This every mason, and we add every man, is in honor bound to do. A mason, like a Christian, promises to be faithful unto death, but gives no right to take his life for infidelity."

To the same point is the charge from Webb's Monitor, page 72 which this same witness admitted to be correct, viz: "Be true and faithful, and imitate the example of that celebrated Artist whom you this evening represent." This Artist was Hiram Abiff, who suffered death, as Masonry teaches, rather than disclose the secrets of Masonry. Grand Master Merry had enacted this resurrection farce perhaps an hundred times, to teach a Master Mason that he should suffer death rather than disclose the secrets of Masonry; and yet on his civil oath he swears, that "such a principle is not at all taught in Masonry!"

In August, 1831, Barney Merry signed a second Address, of the R. I. Grand Lodge to the people. He there says, "the true form is, 'hinding myself to suffer thus and so, rather than I would violate, &c.'" "It is so understood in all our Lodges."

Again. "A mason is understood as pledging himself to be faithful to his trust, even to death."

And yet, swears this same Grand Master, whose signature is placed to the above declarations, "such a principle is not at all taught in masonry." Can there be presented a more palpable and direct contradiction? Such is the influence of the "principles taught in masonry" upon the minds of men who pass in society for upright, respectable and unimpeachable citizens!]

TESTIMONY OF HENRY LORD.—29th Witness.

I have taken something like fifteen or sixteen degrees. The higher degrees I took in Norwich, Con. of J. L. Cross. I took the degrees in regular order to Royal Arch; I was then made a Select and Royal Master, Perfect Master, Roman Eagle, and Mediterranean Pass.

Question by the Committee. Do you recollect the conversation with Mr. J. A. Kent, relative to justifying the murder of Morgan?

Ans. He bore upon me one day quite hard, in relation to the subject, and I thought it deserved a reply, because I had found out that said Kent was an antimason. I told him he did not know that Morgan was dead; and if he had been murdered that it was done by low masons; but I never uttered the expressions attributed to me by Kent. I cannot remember the conversation alluded to, so as to state it.

By High Priest Cranston. Has not said Kent spent most of his time in abusing masons?

Ans. His whole theme was abuse.

In answer to a question from J. S. Harris,—

At the time I took the degree of Mediterranean Pass; I took it with the officers of Com. Decatur's ship. At that time we were at war with the Algerines, and this pass it was thought, would benefit those who might fall into their hands. I do not know how it would benefit them. It appeared to be the object of the degree to get released from prison, should I be so situated.

Grand Master Cooke here said, it would be ben-

eficial to soften the barbarous treatment towards prisoners.

The Committee made no inquiries, as to the higher degrees the witness had taken.

NOTE.

In a former part of this Report allusion has been made to the unwarrantable proceeding of the majority of the Committee, in permitting Masonic witnesses to take the interrogatories home with them, and write out at their leisure, such answers as they might think best calculated to evade a thorough examination. This proceeding is, the more excusable, from the partial relation in which these witnesses stood, they being, in fact, parties to the investigation, and their personal reputation, as well as the reputation of Masonry, depending upon their answers. Under such circumstances, it was not in human nature to avoid taking advantage of the peculiar privilege extended to them, of arranging their answers by consultations among themselves, and exerting all their ingenuity to evade making any disclosures that would implicate the Institution or themselves. The benefits of a cross examination and unpremeditated answers to questions, were thus entirely lost to the public. No such privilege was extended to the witnesses who testified against the Institution. They were required to answer all sorts of questions upon the spur of the moment, without deliberation or consultation.

Neither were the majority of the Committee satisfied with even this partiality to Masonic witnesses. In several instances they have admitted into their published minutes, letters, from Masons without any formality of oath attached to them. In others they have allowed a Mason to give his deposition, and to interlard it with affidavits, taken by his suggestion from other adhering Masons. Unattested, certificates of pretended charitable distributions have also been published, without any explanation or authentication, while, at the same time, the Committee resolutely refused to make any inquiry into the amount of funds, and the appropriation of those funds.

In one instance, the majority of the Committee have gone even further than this. Abraham Wilkinson and William Harris, two unimpeachable witnesses, testified to certain threats made by Samuel E. Gardner, Master of a Lodge, to deter Mr. Wilkinson from giving his countenance to the establishment of an Antimasonic Press. (Ante pp. 33, 34.) This Mr. Gardner was present at the time one or both of these witnesses gave their testimony, and on the last day of the examination, he was in the room where the investigation was going on, for several hours. Every member of the Committee knew him, and several, if not all of them, conversed with him. Yet no attempt was made to put him under oath, nor was he asked publicly for any explanation of the testimony against him.

The inference of course, was that he could neither deny or explain it. Nevertheless, we find in the published report of Mr. Hazard's investigation, p. 33, a formal letter from this same Samuel E. Gardner, without date, addressed "to the honorable

Committee, &c. for the purpose of investigating the charges against Freemasonry." The letter commences thus: "Gentlemen, I should not presume to trouble you, were it not for the fact, that my name has been made use of by Messrs. Wilkinson and Harris, in their examination before you, in Providence. That only must be my apology for trespassing on your time, by stating the conversation I had with them."

Now as the examination of Messrs. Wilkinson and Harris had not been published, it is evident that Mr. Gardner must either have heard it, or that it was handed to him by the Committee in order to get him to draw up some counter statement. He did not venture "to trouble the Committee" with a statement on oath, which he might have made with half the trouble he wrote this letter. Even this statement, prepared evidently so as to evade the responsibility of an oath, and at the same time enable the Committee to use it as contradictory testimony, does not deny, but confirms the threat. Mr. Gardner admits that when Mr. Wilkinson informed him he had subscribed to the stock of a free press, he, Gardner, told him "it was the worst business he ever undertook, and that he *could not discover the hand that might injure him*, or words to that import." Mr. Gardner adds: "Mr. Wilkinson said in reply, greatly agitated, My God! am I to have my throat cut, and I not know it?" This reply shows how Mr. Gardner's threat was understood, and how he meant it should be received, for he says in his letter, the conversation here ended.

Such are the subterfuges to which an honorable Committee of an honorable Legislature have resorted, to palliate and explain away the force of the testimony they were compelled to record against Masonry.

On the one hand, in favor of Masonry, we find them furnishing witnesses with interrogatories to answer in writing at their leisure, and publishing letters and explanations not under oath, as if they constituted a part of the testimony. On the other hand, we find them suppressing some of the most essential parts of the testimony of Masons and Anti-masons, against the Institution, misrepresenting their answers, and refusing to publish in their minutes the deposition of Jarvis F. Hanks, regularly sworn to before a magistrate, declaring that he was present at Jerusalem Chapter No. 8, New York, when it was voted to pay \$500 out of its funds, for the relief of the kidnappers of William Morgan! (Ante p. 26.) The committee also refused to publish the communication made to them by William Sprague, Esq. setting forth the allegations against Masonry, and the facts and evidence by which they could be sustained.

We take no pleasure in presenting this evidence, of the utter violation of every principle of fairness and impartiality, which governed the proceedings of this Committee, but it is due to the public that they should be made known. If the Committee, or either of them, will deny a single allegation made in this report, touching their course of pro-

ceedings, they shall be met, in any form in which the truth can be tested, and by individuals, in all respects as responsible, and as much entitled to credit as themselves.

We have now gone through with the testimony of every witness examined before the Committee in their investigation at Providence, from the 7th to the 17th of December. At the close of the examination, on Saturday evening, about 10 o'clock, Mr. Hazard made an attempt to exhibit a show of fairness, by stating that the Committee would meet again at Newport, and if any questions had been omitted, which were at all important, they should then be put. This, however, was impossible, as Mr. H. well knew, because the witnesses to whom he had refused to put questions, were residing 30 miles from Newport, and would not be present at the examination there; and further to prevent the possibility of any attempt to urge the rejected questions at Newport, Mr. Hazard, (without any consultation with Mr. Sprague, one of the Committee) caused a notice to be published in the newspapers of Monday, December 19th, signed by himself as Chairman of the Committee, in which he states that the Committee would meet at Newport on the 25th inst. when they would examine the witnesses summoned before them, on all matters, *except those relating to the forms, ceremonies, secrets and mysteries of FREEMASONRY!* In other words, he would examine the witnesses upon such matters as they chose! After this annunciation, no further attempt was made to get at the truth, beyond an attendance on the part of Mr. Turner at Newport, as some check upon the gross partiality openly exhibited by Mr. Hazard throughout the whole proceedings.

The investigation at Newport was held by Mr. Hazard alone, with the occasional presence of Mr. Cornell. Another *private* and *ex parte* examination was made by Mr. Haile, of masons in Warren, R. I. A third (notified in such a manner as to escape the observation of Mr. Sprague, one of the Committee) was held in Providence, by Mr. Simmons, alone. The object of most of these examinations was merely to receive written dissertations drawn up by masons, in favor of their institution, substituting their own opinions for facts. The only examination entitled to be considered regular, is that taken before the Committee at Providence, as above reported. The minority examinations were all informal, and not entitled to equal consideration. There are, however, several important points established and developed, in those examinations, a summary of which will be presented, as an appendix to this report.

APPENDIX.

EXAMINATION AT NEWPORT.

[Mr. Hazard, Chairman of the Committee, held an informal examination alone, at Newport, with the occasional attendance of Mr. Cornell, another of the Committee, which was continued from Dec. 31 to January 7th.] It chiefly consisted of written dissertations, furnished by Masons in answer to questions which Mr. Hazard permitted them to take privately, together with the examination of the Providence Masons, the answers to which were agreed upon in a regular Lodge meeting previous to their being handed in to the Committee! Such concerted and premeditated evidence, cannot be entitled to much credit, as a full development of facts. It consisted chiefly of a mere echo to the answers made by the Providence Masons, with some exceptions.

George Turner attended the investigation at Newport, and attempted to elicit the truth, but was met with the same obstacles and insult Mr. Hazard had dealt so largely in, at Providence. An abstract of the testimony is taken from notes by Mr. Turner.

Wednesday, December 21.

TESTIMONY OF NICHOLAS G. BOSS, ESQ.

Mr. Boss is a Counsellor at Law, and Past Master of a Lodge. Has gone as high as Royal Master. He testified as follows:

The written oaths, as read to him are correct, except as follows. In the Entered Apprentice's penalty, the words were added to the oath as taken by me, "ere I would divulge the secrets about to be committed to me," and the like words were in the other penalties, as I took them. Also, after injury to myself, "or those who have a prior claim to my benevolence." In the Master's obligation, these words were used, whenever I have heard it administered:

"I will keep the secrets of a Master Mason, when communicated to me, murder and treason excepted, and THAT TO BE LEFT TO MY OWN DISCRETION." "I will apprise of all approaching danger," was not in my Master's obligation.

The Past Master's obligation binds, "not to wrong the Lodge, over which I may be called to preside, nor see it wronged by others, if in my power to prevent it." In this obligation I was sworn to apprise the Lodge of all approaching danger.

I have heard the Master's oath administered, to hold myself amenable to any part of the obligation omitted, when informed of the same; but this was only when the Master did not feel confident that he could recollect the whole obligation.

When I was placed in a situation to receive the obligation, the person presiding said,

"You are now in a situation to receive the obligation of an entered apprentice, which all others have done, who have gone this way before you. It contains nothing contrary to religion, morality, or the laws of your country, but is founded on faith, hope and charity."

In the Royal Arch Oath, the words were used, "will not shed the blood of a R. A. Mason in anger," instead of "unlawfully," as given in the manuscript oath, by the Providence Masons.

I never heard the word "omnific" used. I promised to not repeat the R. A. word, except in the manner I received it. The manner was then explained to me, and I did not consider the explanation as part of the oath!

Question by Geo. Turner. Was the explanation given before the oath was completed, and if so how do you separate it from the oath?

Answer. The person presiding would state the manner, and the candidate did not repeat this explanation, but it was given after the words except as I shall receive it.

[NOTE. Neither does the candidate repeat the explanation as it is called, preceding the Entered

Apprentice's Oath. How convenient, masonic construction is! When a Mason is told that his oath is not to interfere with religion or politics, he assures us that explanation is a part of the oath, and equally binding; but the explanation of the manner of giving the R. A. word made in the midst of his oath, he swears is no part of that oath? In the first case, it helps to cover over the enormity of the oaths now they are revealed; therefore, it is to be construed as a part of the oath! In the latter case, if admitted to be a part of the oath, the witness would be required to disclose it, therefore he construes this explanation to be no part of his oath!]

"The words whether he be right or wrong, were not used in any Lodge or Chapter I have been in. I never have heard the words, "murder and treason not excepted," and I don't believe any other mason ever did. When I took the degree of Royal Arch Mason, I promised to keep the secrets of a R. A. Mason, knowing them to be such; but murder and treason were excepted, and they left to my own election. I have been present in Chapters in New York Philadelphia and this town, and never heard "murder and treason not excepted."

[The Providence Masons handed in the Royal Arch oath without a single word relating to keeping secrets, and swore it was all the oath though they admitted, on cross examination, that they were bound to keep a R. A. Mason's secrets. The Newport Masons swore that this obligation to keep all secrets of a Royal Arch, at their discretion, was always in the oath!]

"I could not repeat any single degree of knighthood."

Question as to the 5th libation, and drinking wine out of a skull?

Ans. None such was ever used to me, and I have never been in an Encampment since. I took that degree in presence of Rev. Mr. Mudge, and others. No such ceremony was used at the time, and no such words in any ceremony of initiation I ever took. In the Knight Templar's obligation, the words "without reservation, self evasion, mental reservation," &c. I think were used, and in several degrees of Knighthood, which, by the by, we never considered any part of Masonry. Refers to Webb, 208. I never heard such an expression, as when or until the last trump shall sound."

[The Providence Masons all swore to this expression in the Knight of the Red Cross.]

What do you consider the secrets of masonry?

Ans. I feel bound, as a good citizen and a good mason, to answer all questions. I consider the way in which masons know each other as the secret of masonry; but how they know I do not feel at liberty to tell.

Mr Hazard. If any person wishes to know how masons shake hands, they are not on this Committee.

Witness. There are certain ways in which one mason can know another—certain signs, tokens, words, &c.

Mr Hazard. I suspect it is not so now—you have been obliged to adopt a check word.

Witness. No Sir, we have not!

[This is in direct contradiction of the Providence masons.]

In answer to a question respecting superiority of civil or masonic obligation, witness says—I should have obeyed my civil and moral obligations, if they came in conflict; but I do not consider that my masonic obligations could ever come in conflict with my religious, moral, or civil ones, but always strengthen them.

[NOTE. This same Mr. Boss, as will be seen at the close of his testimony, had plumply refused one year before, to answer questions, when under

evil oath, as a witness, which interfered with his masonic oaths!]

Witness has visited three master mason's lodges in New York, and a chapter in New York, in 1822, Philadelphia in 1823, and some in Baltimore, and believes the ceremonies, practices, and obligations to be the SAME as those used in Newport! I consider masonry a charitable society, and designed to discuss the mutual concerns of freemasons.

In answer to question whether it is not the custom to receive into the lodges, as a visiting brother, all masons not expelled from their respective lodges, witness replies—Yes! Those whom we know to be unworthy, we reject.

Ques. by Mr Turner. If convicted of crime, would you reject them, though not expelled?

Ans. The Lodges where they belong will investigate the charges, and if found true will expel them! The lodges never pass votes of censure as a prohibition upon masons, until they are at first dealt with by their own Lodge!

Ques. Has your Lodge or Chapter ever passed any resolution disapproving of the murder of Morgan, by masons?

Ans. We have never taken any order about it. I NEVER BELIEVED THE MASONS HAD ANY THING TO DO WITH IT!

[**Truly an enlightened man!**]

Ques. Did you ever hear a mason justify the abduction or killing of Morgan!

Ans. I never heard any mason justify or palliate it, admitting it had been done by masons! If it had been done, no people would have been more willing to have ferreted it out than masons would. [**As for example, the witnesses who refused to justify, the Chapter that voted \$500 to the abductors, and the Grand Lodge, who appropriated \$1000, for the relief of the Western sufferers!!**]

Ques. Is there a chain of communication between the lodges in this State and the lodges of other States and between the order in this country and of other countries or any of them?

Ans. The Lodges communicate to the Grand Lodge of the state in which they are located, and each Grand Lodge communicates with the others. I know of no communication between them and foreign countries. There is a Gen. Chapter and a Gen. G. Encampment, but having no communication to my knowledge with foreign countries. I know of no connexion between the higher Masonic orders, (so called) and those in Europe or elsewhere. The Masonic fraternity in this country are not subject to one common head or power!

[Mr Wilkinson swore they were. See Ante page 47, and the Constitutions say the same.]

Question by G. Turner. Does not a mason make a sign on entering and leaving a lodge, indicating a part of the penalty of that particular degree?

Ans. They do not, only a mark of obeisance to the master.

Ques. If Freemasonry is only a charitable society, why have they so many degrees, and so much secrecy, not only from others but from themselves?

Ans. I do not know.

By G. Turner. Can you not, as a Mason, communicate with a judge, juror or officer in Court, who are Masons?

Ans. I can make myself known to a Mason, as being a Mason at any time.

Ques. Are you bound by oath, to support the Grand Lodge?

Ans. I am a member of the Grand Lodge, being a Past Master of St. John's Lodge No. 1, and am bound by no other oath, than that taken in my induction to the office of Master, which is similar to the Past Master.

By G. Turner. Is every Mason, in a Lodge, required to make the Masonic signs of each degree, before the Lodge is declared to be opened on that degree!

Witness refuses to answer this question! [but he considers his civil oaths superior to his Masonic oaths, so he says.]

By Mr Hazard. Were you a witness, in the case of Bateman Monroe, a juror, objected to on account of being a Mason, in November, 1830, and did you decline answering questions, and if so why?

Ans. I was called as a witness in that case, and entered the court room without knowing the question on trial. I was enquired of by B. Hazard, Esq. state the obligations, and declined doing it. Messrs. Pearce and Turner then required me to read the obligations as printed in Bernard's book, and state the difference if any. I did read it, and immediately refused, plumply to answer or explain the difference; because I considered the question as an impertinent and unauthorized one, not holding myself bound to answer individuals in such matters; but always to be subject to the constituted authorities!

By the same. Did the court require you to answer—did they find any fault with you for not answering?

Ans. I did not consider the court as requiring me to answer the questions, and no fault has been found in relation thereto. If I had committed a contempt of court, I should have been fined, imprisoned or reprimanded, which was not done.

NOTE.

[**To show how strangely this witness contradicts facts, and to prove the superior force of his masonic over his civil obligations, we subjoin a certified report of the case alluded to, which occurred at the November Term, 1830 of the Court of Common Pleas for Newport County, R. I. In the case of R. Shaw vs. John C. Borden, Messrs. George Turner and Dutee J. Pearce, counsel for Plff. objected to Bateman Munroe, one of the jury, on the ground that Munroe and Borden, being Freemasons, and Shaw not a Mason, the juror was under masonic oaths incompatible with his civil oath to decide impartially between the parties.—Mr. B. Hazard was counsel for Borden. The point was argued, and four of the five Judges decided that the juror was disqualified, and must come off. We now quote from the published report of that case.]**

"Nicholas G. Boss, a distinguished Mason, was next sworn. He was asked by Mr. Hazard if the oaths as stated in Bernard's Light on Masonry, were truly the obligations taken by Masons, in the three first degrees.

Ans. (after hearing them read,) No, they are not.

By the same. What part of them do you deny, or do you deny them wholly?

Ans. I deny them wholly!

Mr. Pearce. What particular part of these oaths do you deny to be correct?

Ans. The whole of them, except that some words in both are the same.

By the same. What words are they?

Ans. Why such words as "of," and "and" and "the."

By the same. Will you state in terms, the obligations of Masons as you have taken or know them?

Ans. I do not think I shall. I do not feel myself at liberty to do so. That is a masonic affair altogether!

By the same. If I read these obligations to you, sentence by sentence, will you show me in what respect they differ?

Ans. If you expect that of me, I consider myself being called here, as a witness, an insult, and might as well at once decline all further answer.

The Court said Mr. Pearce's question was a proper one."

[Here is a singular development of Masonic reality! Mr. Boss, as a witness in Court, in November, 1830, denied the whole of the oaths of the three first degrees in Bernard, except and and the, and or. In December, 1831, he swore that the oaths

written out by the Providence Masons (which are almost verbatim the same as the oaths of the three first degrees in Bernard,) were correct, except several additions which he made, conforming the oaths still more to Bernard's! He also refused in 1830 to obey his civil oath in preference to his Masonic oath, though the Court declared he was bound to answer the questions, and would have punished him for contempt, had Mr. Pearce (who was his brother in law,) insisted upon his answering. And yet, in 1831, the Masons of Providence declare that the oaths, which Mr. Boss so "plumply" refused to explain, were never considered a part of Masonic secrets!]

As a voucher of the correctness of the report above quoted, we cite the certificate of Joseph Childs, CHIEF JUSTICE of the Court before which the case was tried.

"The undersigned has read and carefully examined the report of the challenge of Bateman Munro, as a juror, published in the R. Island American of the 16th, and is persuaded, from his own recollections, that it presents a nearly correct outline of the case, and that no material fact or argument is omitted. The points made, are truly stated, and the substance of the argument, and the testimony of the witnesses, nearly word for word.

JOSEPH CHILDS.

Portsmouth, Nov. 19, 1830.

Nine persons, all adhering masons, were called, and several swore to the correctness, of the deposition made by Nicholas G. Boss, so far as their knowledge extended, said deposition having been examined by them, and the answers agreed upon, in a regular Lodge Meeting the night previous, by an arrangement with Mr. Hazard!—

STEPHEN A. ROBINSON Royal and Select Master. He does not recollect the Royal Arch obligation to keep a brother companion's secrets, precisely as Mr. Boss states it, but has heard it so given sometimes in our chapter. In other respects agrees to the deposition.

Peleg Clarke, of eight degrees, and Stephen Cahoon, of three degrees, assent to the deposition.

Mr. Cahoon at first denied several clauses which were in the Providence oaths, before he had heard them read, whereupon Mr. Hazard undertook to explain the difference between the oaths in Providence and Newport, apparently to apprise the witness (who had not been present at the Lodge meeting,) of what had been testified by the preceding witness.

Henry Hudson, Royal Arch Mason, had heard the oaths and Boss's deposition read last evening (at the Lodge meeting) and agrees to the truth of them substantially.

[While this witness was under examination, George Turner asked a question, relative to a proposed assault on the person of Dr. Case, a seceding mason. Mr. Hazard refused to put down the answer, in witness's words, substituting his own, which witness says is satisfactory. Mr. Turner here stopped asking questions, for what use could it be, if the answers were to be Mr. Hazard's and not the witness's.]

James R. Gardner and John Stanhope, Master Masons, swear to Boss's deposition.

Stephen T. Northam, a Master Mason, made in Carolina, 42 years ago, swears to the same, but has no recollection of phraseology.

By G. Turner, Do you swear that the substance of principles of the oaths, include penalties as all as promises?

Ans. I have no recollection of phraseology. I do not consider the penalty as any part of the obligation! I have no recollection of the penalties being there, and if I had, should not consider it any part of the obligation!

By the same. Did you not swear to submit to some penalty, as well as to perform your promises, at the time you took each of the oaths?

Ans. I have no recollection of the oaths at all!

[But yet he swore Mr. Boss gave them correctly!] I never submitted to any such penalty—I do not think I did—No I did not!

Jeremiah N. Potter, and John G. Whitehorse also assent to the deposition of Mr. Boss.

TESTIMONY OF BATEMAN MUNRO.

[This witness was the juror who was challenged, on account of his Masonic oaths, in the case of Shaw vs Berden, before the Court of Common Pleas in Newport. (See ante page 72.) The Court decided that a person who had taken the oaths there proved (which were the same in substance as proved in this investigation) could not stand impartial between a Mason, and one not a Mason, and must come off the jury. The correctness of this decision can not be doubted after examining the views which this man entertains of Masonic obligations. Munro is a respectable man, and really thought he was doing Masonry great service, by avowing the advantages that might be derived from it, in the manner he has described. He has so declared, after he had given the deposition.

Bateman Munro, of Portsmouth, in the County of Newport, being solemnly sworn, testifies as follows: I am a Mason of three degrees. Took the first in Charleston, S. Carolina, forty years ago, the others in St. Alban's Lodge, Bristol R. I.

By request of G. Turner. Have you ever said that Masonry has been of little use to you as a Farmer, but that while you went to sea and traded, you found it of great service? If so please explain in what manner.

Ans. Masonry has been of use to me in foreign countries, in Spain, in France, and in England.

From the same. In what manner did you find it serviceable?

Ans. I have entered ports, since I have been ship Master, and would show myself as a Mason, so as to get information what the markets were, what I could do, and what I could not, so as to make my owners a good voyage. I have been favored by Port Officers on account of my being a Mason, and have been aided and assisted in smuggling goods, by making myself known as a Mason, and have been introduced to the Bishop and Governor, in the Spanish dominions—but never in this country—The Custom House officers, and even the Governor himself, have been aiding me in so doing,* and the Bishop also. I have been for four years and upwards, sailing out of this State, with a memorandum from them (the Governor and Bishop) of contraband articles, to bring them, making three or four voyages a year, and never paid any duties on them! James D'Wolf and my other owners were benefitted by it. This was transacted in the port of Havana, in the island of Cuba.

I have, through Masonry, always derived great benefit to my owners and myself, in foreign countries, and have always turned my masonry to account—made use of my masonry for that purpose!

[NOTE. Let any honest man say, if such a man ought to decide a cause as a juror, between a mason and one not a mason? And yet the Court who decided that this man was disqualified as a juror (from the influence they inferred his masonic oaths might have upon him, as well as every other mason, and before they knew the use he admits he always made of his Masonry) were denounced in the bitterest terms & their names held up to scorn in large capitals, in masonic newspapers. The lawyers who sustained the motion were denounced as utterly abandoned, and the whole fabric of justice declared to be prostrated, and the Masons disfranchised, as citizens, by the unrighteous proscription of Antimasonry!

If this man, a respectable ship master, and of

[* "I furthermore promise and swear that I will be aiding and assisting, all worthy distressed Master Masons." &c. Master Mason's Oath.]

unimpeachable character aside from his Masonry, thus construed and acted upon his Masonic oaths, in strict conformity to their fair and literal import, and if Governors and Bishops, in other countries, concurred with him in this construction, where is the security which men not masons have in business, in Courts of law or elsewhere, so long as the secret means of Masonic co-operation and conspiracy exist?]

Secret concert between Mr. Hazard and the Newport Masons.

[It has been stated on a preceeding page that Mr. Hazard consulted the Masonic witnesses at Newport, in order to give them an opportunity to concert their answers to his interrogatories, which were handed to Mr. Boss, Past Master of the Lodge, for that purpose, and that a regular Lodge meeting was held to arrange the form in which the Masons should give their depositions to avoid contradiction. This fact was brought out, in the investigation, by cross questions from Mr. Turner, as will appear from the following answers of witnesses, on the first day of the examination at Newport.]

STEPHEN CAHOONE—Sworn.

Question by G. Turner. For what purpose did you meet with the Lodge last night?

Ans. I met for the purpose of hearing read the forms of oaths and other papers referred to in Mr. Boss's deposition.

Question by do. By whom were they read.

Ans. Mr. Boss read the interrogatories and oaths, and Mr. Robinson, (present Grand Master) read the answers and depositions.

Question by do. Can you repeat all or either of your Masonic oaths?

Ans. No, I cannot, AND IF I COULD I SHOULD NOT! FOR IF I COULD MY CONSCIENCE WOULD NOT LET ME.

[Here again we find the *Masonic conscience* not to tell, stronger than the civil oath to tell the whole truth!]

Question by do. If you cannot repeat your oaths, how can you undertake to swear that Mr. Boss has stated them correctly?

Mr. Hazard, (to witness) you perceive this is rather *screwing*. It is a Justice's way of doing business!

Witness. I should have answered as to what pertains to Masonry, according to my recollection, as Mr. Boss had done.

[On further inquiry it appeared in proof, that on the 27th of December, before the examination commenced, Mr. Hazard had sent in his form of oaths, variations, and interrogatories, which with Mr. Boss's deposition were all sent to St. John's Lodge for perusal and digestion.

Here Mr. Hazard asked Mr. Boss where the papers were, and he thereupon produced them from his pocket.]

JOHN R. STANHOPE—Sworn.

Question by G. Turner. When, where, and by whom, were the forms of oaths, interrogatories, &c. read in your presence and at whose request?

Ans. At the Lodge, last night, they were read by Mr. Boss and Mr. Robinson, and at the request of the Chairman of the Committee (Mr. Hazard) as I have heard him (Mr. Hazard) say!

Question by do. Was the Lodge regularly open, when the said papers were read, was there any discussion or conversation on the subject of said papers, if so state particularly what it was.

Ans. Whether the Lodge had been regularly opened or not, he cannot tell. He recollects hearing the Master declare the Lodge to be open, but cant remember the time. The business of reading, was done at the beginning. The members sat round and heard the papers read, the object of doing which being mentioned. There was no discussion about it; except that it was observed gen-

erally that Mr. Boss had answered the questions properly!

Question by the same. Was the Lodge duly tyled or not?

Witness evaded the question, by saying he did not see the Tyler.

Question by do. Is there or is there not always some ceremony observed on opening and closing of Lodge, and was it performed last night?

Ans. The first part I answer, yes, the last part I have said before I do not recollect!

NICHOLAS G. BOSS

Being called again, by Mr. Hazard, attempted to explain. He said he received the papers, (the interrogatories, cross questions, forms of oaths, &c.) together with his own deposition, from Mr. Hazard, on Tuesday morning, with a request to read the questions and answers &c. to the Masons who would be summoned as witnesses, in order to facilitate the examination. He at first proposed to have a meeting of the Masons at his house, but concluded to meet at the Lodge for the election of officers that evening. The Lodge was duly opened, and he then stated the business to the brethren who had been requested to attend as witnesses. The Tyler was directed to admit all Masons, and I read the questions, &c. and brother Robinson the answers. We then proceeded to the regular business of the Lodge.

[It would be difficult to imagine a greater outrage than this, upon a fair investigation, by a legislative, or any other tribunal. Here were all the witnesses met together, the form of examination put into their hands, and they tutored so that all might say yes or no to the same questions. What would have been said of the minority report of the Committee appointed by Congress to investigate the concerns of the United States Bank, if Mr. Adams had given a list of interrogatories privately to the President of the Bank, together with all the testimony against it, and desired him to hold a consultation with all the witnesses connected with the Bank, who were to be summoned, before the Committee, that they might have an opportunity to concert their answers, and all get their lessons alike, under pretence of "*facilitating the examination*!" Where would be the difference between such a proceeding and the conduct of Mr. Hazard with the Newport Masons?]

THE MOST SOVEREIGN GRAND CONSISTORY.

[The existence of a Consistory of Sovereign Princes of the Royal secret, derived from the most Sovereign Grand Consistory of the United States, and to them from the Imperial Consistory in France, was established, by the following testimony.]

TESTIMONY OF ISAAC STALL.

I do not know who introduced the higher degrees into this Country. I know who did into this Town. They were introduced into this town from New York. I assisted in the matter. The Chapter was introduced here, say twenty years ago, by James Perry, John A. Shaw and others. The first Encampment was established here by authority derived from New York, and pretty soon after that we established the Consistory, and after a while the Encampment was placed under the authority of Massachusetts and Rhode Island. The Consistory is the sum and summit of Masonry in this Country.

All subordinate Lodges pay a small fee to the Grand Lodge, for every candidate they receive. Certain fees are paid by the Lodge, Chapter, Encampment or Consistory, upon receiving their dispensation or charter, and the same rule governs the higher orders as is applicable to the lower orders.

I believe that the Grand Lodges correspond throughout the States. There is a General Grand Encampment in the United States. The Grand Encampment of each State is subordinate to the General Grand Encampment.

WILLIAM COGGESHALL—Sworn.

[A Sovereign Prince of the Royal Secret, and also a bar keeper in a respectable Hotel.] In answer to questions, reluctantly says, He is a member of the Consistory of Rhode Island. Cannot say where it originated. Expects they have regular meetings for choice of officers, but cannot say who they are. Thinks they kept records, but does not know who has them. Does not recollect what amount of fees the Rhode Island Masons paid to the Grand Consistory of the United States. Could not make any guess about it now. Never heard there was a Grand Consistory of the United States, or it had escaped his memory, it was so long ago. There is a Grand Consistory in New York, having jurisdiction over its subordinate Consistories. Does not know of any higher degree in this Country than Princes of the Royal Secret, and members of the Grand Consistory.

Stephen Deblois, John Brown, David M. Coggeshall, and Jeremiah Bliss, members of the Consistory, testified to the origin and existence of the Consistory, in Rhode Island. The latter was present four or five years ago, at the choice of officers. He surely considers the Consistory in existence, because they were in possession of the Charter, and had never surrendered it. Deblois was formerly Recorder, and kept the books. He paid \$150 toward fees, and for getting the Charter from N. York.

[Peleg Clark's diploma of the 28th degree, was presented, dated 7781, and 2312 years after the restoration.]

Alexander M. McGregor, testified that he had taken three degrees of Masonry in Scotland. The oaths he took there are substantially the same as he has heard administered in Lodges in Rhode Island.

George Howland, swore he had attended a Lodge in Curacao, and a French and American Lodge in Norfolk, Va. and in various other places in the Islands and in Europe. Their ceremonies and mode of working, with few variations, are the same as in Lodges here.

[Masons justifying the murder of Morgan.]

SAMUEL S. PECKHAM—Sworn.

Is not a Mason. Testifies that two months ago, in Capt. Vars store, in presence of Capt. W. and Capt. J. Vars, he heard James M. Tuell a Mason, say, "that if any man should do as Morgan had done, *he ought to have his throat cut*; and that if any man belonged to a religious society, and should come out and strive to tear it down he would deserve the same." Witness saw Mr. Tuell a few days after, and told him what he had said. He then said, if he had said that about a *church member*, he ought not to have done it, and was sorry for it—but he never denied what he had said about Morgan. That appeared to be his deliberate opinion, for I had spoken to him several times about it. I had heard he had said that there were three or four men in this town, he should like to have served as Morgan was.

JAMES M. TUELL—sworn, to tell the whole truth. Is a Mason of three degrees. As to the conversation referred to in Peckham's deposition, about Morgan, witness recollects being in Var's store, at the time Peckham was, "and to tell you the truth I cannot recollect what the conversation was, more than a child, for I was in a hurry and was not in the store more than three minutes." Has no recollection of saying there were three or four others he would like to have served as Morgan had been. Witness did not deny the remark respecting Morgan.

WILLIAM VARS—Sworn.

Is not a mason. Was present when Peckham and Tuell had the conversation. Mr. Tuell said he thought there were some in Newport who ought to be served in the same way, as Morgan.

George Bowen affirmed. What conversation I have had, was in a joking way. I think that once, in

his shop, I heard Mr. Tuell say that Morgan had been served right.

NICHOLS HASSARD (Sheriff of Newport County) Sworn. Is not a Mason. Pretty soon after the people here began to talk about it, I heard Mr. HENRY MOORE, a Mison, say, "he did not believe a word of the murder, and if it was so, it was no more than he (Morgan) deserved."

Question by Mr. B. Hazard. Did Mr. Moore say this as his sober, deliberate sentiment?

Ans. He said it apparently in earnest, and pretty warmly, and he said it more than once; and there had been no provocation given to him for saying so, to my knowledge. I have repeatedly asked Mr. Moore if he thought Morgan had been carried off by Masons, and he would always evade the question by saying, "it had never been proved."

Mr. B. Hazard here made some insulting remark to the witness, who claimed to be treated with the civility due to a witness, or he should leave the room.

Mr. B. Hazard retorted that this was a bad place for him to flinch. The witness replied that he would never find him flinching.

Mr. B. Hazard asked witness his opinion of Masonry, as connected with the murder of Morgan.

Witness. The Institution of Masonry, in my belief, has screened the perpetrators of that deed. I have said so, and I believe so now.

There was some further cross examination, which did not vary the testimony in the least.

THEOPHILUS TOPHAM, sworn,—says he is a Mason and has taken twelve degrees. Being asked if he could repeat the oaths accurately, says—"I could repeat them as high as the Royal Arch, inclusive, but I decline repeating them. I have always understood that I was bound not to repeat them."

[Mr. Hazard suffered this excuse to pass.]

SAMUEL S. PECKHAM states, that after his return to Newport, from the Antimasonic Convention held at Providence, Sept. 1831, he had a conversation with Capt. Benjamin Marshall, a Mason, of Newport. In the course of the conversation, Capt. Marshall said, that the Masons, "if they wanted power, could have as much as they pleased, and that the General Assembly dare not take up the Antimasonic Memorial, and try it; and that the Masons could command a majority, if they pleased, in every town in the State. I asked Capt. Marshall if I should remind him of these assertions a month hence, he would acknowledge having made them; and he replied, "I will not only do that, but I will repeat them," and he thereupon did repeat what he had said about the power of the Masonic body, and the fears of the General Assembly.

[There were several other witnesses examined at Newport, but their statements did not vary the evidence given in the above abstract of the testimony taken at that place. The Deposition of

Dr. BENJAMIN W. CASE, of Newport, a seceding Master of a Lodge, was very minute and accurate, detailing all the ceremonies and forms and oaths of the Lodge. It confirmed in every essential particular, the disclosures of Morgan, Bernard and Allyn. Dr. Case testified, that sometime in 1829, Capt. George Howland, a Royal Arch Mason, told him that he (Howland) was at sea at the time of Morgan's death. On his return he visited the Royal Arch Chapter in Providence, and inquired into the truth of the story. They told him it was true, and that Morgan had justly come to his death, and on that night the Chapter raised money to help the Western sufferers, then imprisoned on account of the Morgan business. The opinion was uniform among Masons, at first, that Morgan had been justly dealt by.

Capt. Howland, an adhering Mason, being called and put on oath, positively denied he had ever made such a statement.

Dr. Case further testified, that in the Master's oath are these words: "*I will give a brother Master Mason a preference in his trade or calling.*" This he well recollected, for he had repeated it at least sixty times. Having initiated over that number of Members, besides repeating all the three first oaths twice a year, as is required of the Master by the by-laws, who repeats them to the members, and they repeat after him.

The connecting link between the Lodge and the Chapter, is the Past Master's oath, not to sit in a Lodge of which the Master is not of that degree, and that he will support the Constitution of the Grand Royal Arch Chapter.]

PELEG ALMY—Sworn.

Is not a Mason.

Ques. Did you ever know any judge or juror, being a Mason, to give a preference to a Mason, in Court.

Ans. I did not know until lately who were Masons, or who were not, nor did I know any thing of the obligations Masons were under to each other.

Ques. Have you now any reason to believe such a preference has ever been given?

Ans. I have had cases in Court that went differently from what I and others expected. There was some mystery about it, but whether it was Masonry or not I cannot tell. One was a case against Ebenezer Davenport, who I have since learned was a Mason. There were several Masons on the jury. During the trial, I took notice that Davenport was often down in the store of J. B. Newton (a Mason) and I was in there after the trial, when Newton told me he was satisfied the witness lied against me, and that the jury decided against the evidence, but that they could not give it the other way, because it would prove forgery, on the part of Davenport.

TESTIMONY OF HENRY Y. CRANSTON.

[Mr. Cranston is an Attorney at Law, Clerk of the Court of Common Pleas, for Newport, and a Mason of twenty-three degrees. In the challenge of Bateman Munro (November 1830) as a Masonic juror, before mentioned, Mr. Cranston was Counsel for Borden, the Masonic party, and volunteered as a witness to prevent Munro being taken off the jury. In his examination he denied that he had ever taken the three first oaths given in Bernard "as such," refused to state what the oaths he had taken were, on the ground that he did not know as he was at liberty to do so, though required by the Court; declaring to the Court that he would subject himself to every kind of punishment, that he would perish utterly and forever rather than violate his Masonic obligations! Mr. Cranston was selected by the Grand Lodge of Rhode Island to deliver the Address on the last celebration of St. John's day, so called, by the Masons of Rhode Island.]

H. Y. Cranston, being called upon by Mr. Hazard, to take the civil oath, before the Committee, made a speech to the Committee *declining to submit to an examination.*

Mr. Hazard said, you can tell whether you are a Mason, or not, and proposed to put the oath to him. Mr. Cranston *refused to take the oath*, and he and Mr. Hazard conferred about it. Mr. Hazard then proposed to administer an oath to answer questions put to him about the Bateman Munro case, and witness consented to be sworn in that form. Mr. Hazard then put some irrelevant questions to him about his being a witness in that case, after which he asked Mr. Turner if he had any questions to ask the witness?

Mr. Turner, I have not, until the witness is sworn generally, and then I should like to ask him several questions.

[Mr. Hazard did not swear him any farther, and thus this witness, who declares that his civil duty is paramount to his Masonic duty, *doubted* in one case under civil oath, whether he was at liberty to tell the truth, where his Masonic oath enjoined secrecy,

and in another case, *refused to be sworn at all*, where his Masonic obligations were to be called in question, unless the oath could be narrowed down to suit his views as to the questions he choose to answer? What a scene would courts of law present, if members of all other societies, were to exercise the prerogative claimed by Masons, to make the supremacy of civil law, yield to Masonic law!]

SECOND EXAMINATION, AT PROVIDENCE.

Held by James F. Simmons, solus.

[On Friday evening, January 6th, the following notice appeared in the Providence Daily Advertiser and American.]

"The Committee appointed by the General Assembly to inquire into the charges against Freemasonry and Masons in this State, will attend at the State House in Providence, on SATURDAY, the 7th instant, at 10 o'clock, A. M. for the purpose of receiving the testimony of such witnesses as may there appear before them.

In behalf of the Committee:

JAMES F. SIMMONS."

[This notice was given only 24 hours before the examination. Mr. Sprague, one of the Committee, who resided but a few miles from Providence, was not personally notified, and knew nothing of the intention of Mr. Simmons to hold this additional examination, until it had passed by. The arrangement appears to have been made with a design of getting rid of Mr. Sprague's attendance. None of the Committee appeared on Saturday, except James F. Simmons.]

The object of this pretended meeting of the Committee was to carry into effect the pre-concerted plan between the Committee and the Masons, of giving the formal solemnity of sworn depositions to certain disquisitions and essays in favor of Freemasonry, which some of the principal Masons had prepared, by the consent of Messrs. Hazard and Simmons, to hand in on this occasion. Accordingly when Mr. Simmons called the first witness, *William C. Barker*, Grand Commander, and swore him to tell the truth, the *whole* truth and nothing but the truth, the witness said he had testimony *written* which he wished to offer, and handed a bundle of papers to Mr. Simmons. This testimony, in his case, as in that of the other witnesses, had been written out, compared and digested, doubtless in the Lodge, with all the benefit of the preceding examinations and questions furnished them by the Committee. In this light it is not *evidence* as to *facts*, but merely individual *opinions*. The witnesses might with equal propriety have handed in Webb's Monitor and Cross's Chart, and swore to them as their depositions. What transpired openly before the Committee, we shall record faithfully. The written essays are no evidence.]

WILLIAM C. BARKER,

Grand Commander, being sworn, was questioned. *Question by Walter Paine, jr.* Cannot a person be a member of a chapter, encampment and lodge at the same time?

Ans. He can.

Question by same. If Freemasonry is a charitable institution, why does it refuse to admit those as members who are most likely to need the assistance of their fellow men, such as are deformed or dismembered in body, and not of hale and entire limbs, as a man ought to be?

Ans. I have no answer to make to this question other than this, that Freemasons choose to make such rules and regulations as they please, of their own affairs.

Question by J. S. Harris. You say you have never received any information from Lodges or Masonic bodies, of Morgan's death. Have you ever heard Masons say or otherwise, that Morgan had

written, or was about writing a book disclosing Masonry, and that he had suffered either by confinement or otherwise in consequence?

Ans. If the word Masonically was stricken out, I might answer that question. I have heard such reports and seen them in the newspapers frequently.

Mr. Simmons said the question must be answered as it stood. Nothing could be stricken out. Witness made no farther answer.

Question by John S. Harris. Did you ever yourself as presiding officer of a Lodge, or know others in that capacity, to inform the candidate when initiated, what was the oath he was about to take, or the substance or nature of such oath, previous to taking it?

Ans. We inform them that they are to take an oath, and that it is not to interfere with their politics or religion. *The oath is not read nor repeated before initiation.*

Question by Walter Paine, jr. Did you in the Knight Templar's degree take an obligation called the "5th libation"? If so, is it not considered as a seal to all your former obligations, and the most binding oath administered by the Masonic Institution?

Ans. I have alluded to all the obligations that I have taken, and handed them to the Committee.

Question by Samson Almy. You say you never knew an upright adhering Mason, to consider his obligations as binding him to inflict any punishment except expulsion from the Lodge. Did you ever know any Mason to consider them in any other light?

Ans. I never did.

Question by Walter Paine, jr. Is there such an obligation administered in the Masonic Institution as the "5th libation"?

Ans. I have referred to all the obligations I know of in Masonry, and handed them to the Committee.

Question by Walter Paine, jr. Is there in the ceremonies of the Masonic Institution any oath, obligation or affirmation called the "5th libation"?

Ans. I have referred to all the obligations in Masonry that I know of, and handed them to the Committee—and as to the ceremonies of Freemasonry, I have nothing to say about them.

Question by Samson Almy. If a Masonic sign is given by one brother Mason to another, is he not bound to obey it?

Ans. That is a point that I am not at present decided on. I want time to consider of it. I should rather think not, but am not at present prepared to answer, had rather take time.

{Witness took the question for consideration, by consent of the Committee, but he never answered it.]

Question by George W. Jackson. Were not the oaths and obligations as administered in the Masonic Institution, considered as part of the Masonic secrets prior to 1826?

Ans. I cannot tell; they might have been by some.

Question by Walter Paine, jr. Did you, prior to 1826, feel yourself at liberty to repeat the oaths of Masonry to any but a Mason?

Ans. I never thought of the subject before that time. If the question had come under my consideration, I think I should have concluded they were not secrets, [here adding in a low tone, "if I was of the same opinion I am now."]

Question by George W. Jackson. Did you ever know prior to 1826, of an instance of a Mason repeating to any but Masons, the oaths and obligations as administered in the Institution?

Answer. I don't recollect of any such instance. If I had, I should have thought upon the subject.

Question by Walter Paine, jr. Do you know, how many masons have been initiated into the ma-

sonic bodies to which you refer in your deposition—and what is the charge for such degree? if so, please state the number and price?

Answer. In answer to this question, I should say generally, that I do not know. There are some other facts enquired of, that I do know. The price of initiation is 24 dollars for the three first degrees, and 30 dollars for the four succeeding degrees, and 30 for the three next, making ten degrees. The price I understand, varies in different places, and has varied in this town, not lately however, not since I have been a member.

Question by Walter Paine, jr. Has there been a new oath introduced into the Masonic Institution which is now used in conferring a check degree, or pass-word since the year 1826?

Answer. I have alluded to all the oaths in masonry that I know of, and they have been handed to the committee.

Question by Geo. W. Jackson. Do you consider yourself as bound by your masonic obligations, or did you ever know any mason that did consider himself as bound to render any pecuniary or other assistance to a mason giving the sign of distress, without inquiring how he came in such a situation?

Answer. I never did.

(This is the close of this deposition. Mr. Barker then said, "I give that deposition to you, Mr. Chairman, not to go out of your hands, at least not to go into the hands of any Antimason.")

Adjourned until 2 o'clock, P. M.

[After the committee had adjourned, Mr. Moses Richardson called Mr. Simmons aside and shew him a paper.

The paper read as follows: "I. M. Richardson of Providence, promise that I will answer all fair questions upon my honor, that may be put to me by the committee, but none that may be asked or proposed by B. F. Hallett, Walter Paine, jr. John Harris, — Almy, or — Jackson, &c." (All Antimasons.)]

AFTERNOON, Jan. 7. Present of the Committee, James F. Simmons.

JOSEPH S. COOKE, Grand Master, sworn to "tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth." Mr. Cooke handed a bundle of paper to the committee as his essay upon Freemasonry. Is a Royal and Select Master.

Question by John S. Harris. Was the words, "of your duty to your God and country," contained in the Master's assurance to you before your initiation, used? or only the words that the oath would "not interfere with your politics or religion?"

Answer. I do not recollect certainly.

Question by Walter Paine, jr. Do you understand that the penalties of Masonic oaths are in any way binding upon those who have taken them? if so, in what way?

Answer. I will refer you to Mr. Barker's deposition, and agree with him in what he has said upon the nature of the penalties and obligations, [viz. that they mean only expulsion, when they say nothing but death.]

Question by the Committee. Do you consider by the principles of the institution, that you are to consider the claims of indigent brethren or the families of such, when they are deceased, as having a claim on your individual charities, as well as the funds of the Lodge?

Answer. Not a special claim, but we should feel bound certainly in dispensing our charities to help a brother's widow and children sooner than any others.

Question by Walter Paine, jr. Do you consider that as a mason, you are under any obligation to answer a masonic sign that is given you by a stranger or any other person that is a mason?

Answer. I don't know how far I should be bound—I never had any such made me, but if one should be made, I should notice it of course; and should act according to the circumstances!

Witness says, "a worthy mason can at all times be freely admitted into any Lodge, as a visitor."

MOSES RICHARDSON was called, and said before taking the oath, he would observe that he would answer the thirty-four questions the committee had prepared, and twelve more which he had prepared himself, but he would not answer any questions from that side of the house, (pointing to those who were proposing some questions as antimasons.)

The committee, Mr. Simmons, said he could not make any new rules, and if he declined to be examined, he had no power to compel any body to an examination. They could only swear people, and if they refused to answer there was no power in the committee to make them—any body might lead a horse to water, but it would be hard to make him drink after he got him there. Mr. Richardson then sat down.

Peter Grinnell, General Grand Treasurer, was called, and before being sworn, said, that with the understanding that the committee had heretofore put upon the ceremonies, he would cheerfully be sworn, and state truly all he knew about the obligations: but having been entrusted with certain forms and secret ceremonies, that he did not think could affect any but masons, he must claim to be excused from answering any such questions as was calculated to disclose them.

Mr Paine said he would state what questions he wished to have masons answer. He wished to know if the signs given on entering and leaving a lodge were not designed to impress upon the minds of the members that their penalties are to be understood literally—and also, whether many of the ceremonies, lectures and charges did not directly impress the mind of the members with a literal execution of the penalties for divulging their secrets.

The committee, (Mr Simmons,) said the committee had concluded that they had not a right to ask any thing about the signs or ceremonies, unless they went to explain their obligations.

Mr. Harris. The words of the obligations themselves, if communicated from one to another openly as other people communicate, would not be so dangerous, but we consider the ceremonies and signs very important to show how these oaths can be used to effect other people or the public; and the means of secret concert and conspiracy which they give to Freemasons.

Mr. Simmons said that the committee thought differently. It would be right to ask these gentlemen if there was any sign or ceremony in masonry which could effect any body but masons; or to ask them, whether there is any thing in masonry which would explain the oaths, or give any other construction than they had already given, or whether it had ever affected them differently from that which had been stated.

This explanation seemed to satisfy and pacify Mr. Richardson, and Mr. Grinnell gave way for him to be examined.

MOSES RICHARDSON, Treasurer of the Grand Encampment, sworn to "tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth."—Presented his written discourse, which he proposed to read himself. Mr. Simmons said he could better understand it if he read it himself. He then read it.

Mr Richardson, in his dissertation, swore to the whole of Preston's history of the Antiquity of Freemasonry, the same as he would have sworn to facts within his own knowledge. He also swore that "every Major General in the army of the Revolution, except Arnold the traitor, with all those worthies who signed the Declaration of Independence, except four, all the Presidents of the United States except two, [the Adamses] were Freemasons. He also swears that political Antimasons were 'anti to every thing that is charitable, friendly, social, instructive, or beneficial to the community.'

He also swore to the following very important fact:—

"I was a member of the General Grand Chapter which was in session in the city of New York, in September 1826, when the news was received that William Morgan had been abducted, and the lamented De Witt Clinton, who presided at the meeting, immediately issued his proclamation, and offered fifteen hundred dollars reward for the apprehension of the culprits, and it was published the next day in the newspaper, WHICH WAS THOUGHT SUFFICIENT."

COMMENTS ON DE WITT CLINTON.

[The fact sworn to so distinctly by Mr Richardson, that on the 17th of Sept. 1826, the General Grand Chapter, sitting in New York, were informed, by a Mason, of the abduction of Morgan, is very important. It brings home to that body a knowledge of the outrage from the first, and a silent sanction of the crime from the beginning. Mr. Richardson had sometime previous, inadvertently stated, this fact, in presence of three persons, in order to show as he thought, how prompt De Witt Clinton and the Masons were, in offering rewards to detect the kidnappers. Knowing that this fact would be stated, he anticipated it in his deposition. De Witt Clinton, however, instead of being so prompt, was in fact compelled to make his first proclamation, which he did October 7 1826, on a petition from the West, signed by so many persons, he could not disregard it. But he offered no reward then. The first reward he offered, was October 26, 1826, more than a month after the deed, and the sum was three hundred and not fifteen hundred dollars. The second reward offered 19th of March 1827, was \$1000. Now if Moses Richardson swears truly that Clinton, knew as a Mason that Morgan was abducted, five days after the abduction, and held back from offering a reward as Chief Magistrate for a month after, until pressed to it by petitions he could not resist—how stands his relative duties as a Mason and a Governor? Even the apologist of Masons, Mr. Hazard himself, condemns De Witt Clinton's conduct. He says, in his report, p.71:

"It was testified by Mr. M. Richardson, that he was present in the General Grand Royal Arch Chapter in New York, when the news of the abduction of Morgan was communicated in that body, to the late Governor Clinton, who presided, and that he, the next day, advertised a reward of \$1500, for the apprehension of the culprits, which Mr. R. said was thought sufficient. But was it sufficient? Gov. Clinton acted as Chief Magistrate of the State, not as head of the Masonic Chapter. The criminals were Masons, and members of the Masonic bodies, subordinate to the body then in session. The crime had been committed in the name of Masonry, and as the perpetrators contended, under Masonic authority? Yet it does not appear that any notice whatever was taken of it by that body."

Here is the delinquency of De Witt Clinton.—Though he knew, as a Mason in Sept. 1826, of this crime, he took no means, as the head of the Masons, to detect or punish it, and was forced by petitions to all the means he did take as a civil magistrate, to detect the offenders. Such is the pernicious influence of Masonry upon the most exalted minds.]

Question by Walter Paine, Jr.—Was the person who brought the news of Morgan's abduction to the city of New York, while the General Grand Chapter were in session, a Mason? If so, was the news considered official by the Chapter? and what was the doings in relation to the affair?

Ans. I presume he was. I don't say whether it was considered official. I saw the young man that brought the news and the offer of the reward—that I have stated; and that is all I know about it.

Question by the same. Was you in the Masonic meeting which adopted and published an address of

the Grand Lodge to the people of Rhode Island, signed by Joseph S. Cooke and others?

Ans. Yes, I was there at the time.

[*NOTE*—In the meeting here referred to, held in August 1831, an address was adopted, in which it is asserted that 'of that *supposed* act' [the outrage upon William Morgan by Masons] 'we can only say we can neither affirm nor deny, BECAUSE WE KNOW NOTHING ABOUT IT!' And yet Moses Richardson, who represented the Rhode Island Masons, in the General Grand Chapter, at N. York, in 1826, swears that he saw the Masonic messenger who brought to that body, news of the abduction of Morgan! a fact he could not have concealed from his Masonic brethren, when he returned to Rhode Island. Nevertheless this same Moses Richardson and these Masons, solemnly resolve and assert, in a meeting of Masons, that they know nothing about the *supposed* outrage on Morgan! '*Supposed* act?' yes '*supposed*,' when in 1826 they *knew* he was stolen by Masons, and when the Lockport trials which proved his murder, had been published in the Rhode Island American, right under their eyes! And yet these innocent souls had got no further than '*supposed*,' in their knowledge of the violence done to Morgan. The *Cretans* must have been *Freemasons*!]

Question by Samson Almy. What was the name of the young man who brought the information to the General Grand Chapter?

Ans. I do not know.

Question by do. Would you, rather than renounce Masonry, suffer the penalties annexed to your obligations?

Ans. Yes, eight times over, if it were possible.

[*NOTE*.—After he had finished his examination, Mr Richardson took this answer and struck out the words 'eight times over if it were possible,' and inserted 'I would suffer all the punishment the lodge could inflict, viz. expulsion.'

Question by John S. Harris.—Was the check degree and test oath communicated to the Rhode Island delegation in the General Grand Encampment or General Grand Chapter in New York, or at any other place at that time in that State or city; to be engrafted in Rhode Island Masonry, as a necessary guard in consequence of the Morgan difficulties?

Ans. I should like to make two answers to that question, and first I would answer Mr. Harris and tell him it is none of his business, and then I would answer the Committee that I never heard any thing of this in New York.

Question by Walter Paine, jr. Are there any ceremonies in the Institution of Freemasonry which refer to, or in any manner explain the oaths? if so, what are those ceremonies?

Mr. Simmons refused to put this question; and asked witness, is there any thing in Freemasonry that is designed to give a different construction to the obligations, than you have given, and if so; has it ever had its effect to give to them a different construction by you?

Ans. No, I have no knowledge of any such thing.

Question by George W. Jackson. Would not the Masons who were concerned in the abduction and murder of William Morgan of New York, and who have not as yet been expelled from the Masonic Institution, be received in full communion by the lodges in this State?

Ans. If we know them to be the murderers of William Morgan, instead of receiving them into communion, we would seize them and carry them to the proper place for trial; or if we knew them to have had any concern in it, we would do the same. I would, and presume all good Masons would.

Question by Walter Paine, jr. Should Eli Bruce, James Gauson, Burrage Smith and Loton Lawson apply to your lodge and give the requisite signs, should you admit them?

Ans. I don't know any thing about the men, and of course don't know whether they were concern-

ed. If Mr Paine knows, he can answer for himself. In the last question my answer covers this completely.

Question by same. Is the history of Freemasonry which you have given in your deposition, sacred, profane or Masonic history?

Ans. I take it would be called profane; all history I take is profane that is not sacred.

Question by George W. Jackson. Have you ever known or heard the penalties attached to the Masonic obligations, inflicted in the slightest degree upon delinquents?

Ans. It is an impertinent question, I never knew of any other penalties being inflicted than what is contained in the 15th article of the by-laws of St. John's lodge, and don't believe there is any one that does; and that is explanation enough. [But And yet he swears that he *knew* in 1826, that Morgan was kidnapped by Masons for violating his oaths!]

Question by Samson Almy. What is the object of the oaths and obligations taken by Masons?

Ans. I have already answered this question—when I said, what construction I put upon my obligations.

Question by John S. Harris. Where did you get the information, that all the signers of the Declaration of Independence except four, and all the Major Generals of the Revolution except Benedict Arnold were Masons—and also, which two of the Presidents were not Masons?

Ans. I shall answer and say to the gentleman, it is none of your business. (The Committee said, that answer would not do.) Well, I have got history for it, and if any gentleman wishes to see it, I will show it to him. [Mr. Richardson has never produced the history.]

CHRISTIAN M. NESTELL,

As a citizen, is a chair painter. As a Mason, he holds the following among other titles. Grand Recorder, Super-Excellent Master, High Priest, Roman Eagle, Knight of Jericho, Knight of the Mediterranean Pass, and THREE KINGS!

Mr. Nestell, being called, said, *I wish to be distinctly understood*, Mr. Chairman, *that the obligation you are about to administer, cannot compel me to divulge in the least degree, the secret principles and ceremonies of Freemasonry.*

Mr. Simmons asked Mr. N. if he had heard what had been said on that subject to other gentlemen who had been examined.

Mr. Nestell said he had, and with that understanding had no objection to being sworn.

He was then sworn "to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth," and produced his written essay on Freemasonry.

In this essay, he swears, among other things, "The internal secret forms and ceremonies attached to each degree, I view as a species of private property, which I have justly and lawfully purchased, [But] So has the counterfeiters lawfully purchased his dies] and which I never will consent to yield up to any man or body of men, who are not as justly and lawfully entitled to the same as I am myself, even were my life and property to be the forfeit-ure." [Of course, then, this witness would never disclose these secrets, under any requirement of a court of law, and yet he too affirms that he holds his civil obligations paramount to his Masonic obligations! This witness also asserts that he has doubts whether any outrage has been committed on Wm. Morgan.]

Question by Walter Paine, jr. Have you not visited the lodges in this State since the year 1826 to give the check word or test oath?

Ans. I was appointed GRAND LECTURER for two years successively, and during that time I visited the lodges several times. The information which it was my duty to communicate in lectures to the lodges were the secrets of Masonry—and it being the secrets and ceremonies, I cannot now

vulge them. [This man had sworn to tell the whole truth.]

Question by same. Do you know where the check degree originated, and for what purpose it was formed, and when it was received in this State, and by whom? if so, please state it.

Ans. I don't know any thing about that degree—the check degree.

Question by same. Do you know of a check word, test oath, or any thing instituted in the Masonic Institution since the year 1826, or any addition of any kind since that year?

Ans. We have a great many different locks on our doors, but I don't feel it my duty to state what they are, or to let others know how to open them.

[Afterwards Mr. Nestell asked liberty of the Committee to strike out the word *different* in his last answer, which was done.]

PETER GRINNELL,

Is the General Grand Treasurer of the General Grand Royal Arch Chapter.

Mr. Grinnell was called and sworn to "tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth." On being asked if he had his deposition written out, he said he had began one, but had not finished it—he could add nothing, however, to what had been told by those who preceded him, Mr. Wilkinson and others. What he had written was then handed to the Committee as evidence.

Question by John S. Harris. Did you ever yourself as presiding officer of a lodge, or have you known others in that capacity, to inform the candidate when initiated, what was the oath he was about to take or the substance of such oath, previous to his taking it?

Ans. No, the oath was never repeated before his initiation—he was assured that it would not interfere with his politics or religion.

JOHN WILDER,

Of Providence, Innkeeper, sworn "to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth," said he has no deposition written out—has taken sixteen or eighteen degrees.

Question by High Priest, Barzillai Cranston. Will you give your views of the Masonic Institution and of the obligations?

Ans. I will. My own opinion of the institution is, that it is the best moral institution under heaven—I should not call it second to none except the christian religion—I would willingly subscribe to the testimony of those who have gone before me, as it respects the obligations.

LUTHER WOODWARD,

Of North Providence, Iron master, sworn.

Has taken twelve regular degrees up to the order of St John, [being here prompted by the brethren he said up to the degree of Knight Templars inclusive.] He swears to the same statements as preceding witnesses.

Question by John S. Harris. Do you know any individual Mason in this State or any where, that subscribed money to carry on the election in Bristol district in Massachusetts, in favor of Mr. Hodges?

Answer. I do not.

[NOTE. Here Mr. Moses Richardson asked Mr. Simmons, if he did not want to rest a few moments. He wanted to ask Mr. Harris one question, as we heard a good deal about bloody shirts &c. and as Mr. Wilkinson and Mr. Paine seemed to be gone he would ask Mr. Harris the question.]

Says Mr. R. we have read some number of years ago of one John Rogers who was burnt at the stake, and his wife and nine children, one at the breast, followed him. Now he would ask Mr. Harris how many there was in the whole, being one at the breast, nine or ten?

This dignified and grave interlude created some laughter at the time from the members of the 'best moral institution that ever existed under heaven.']

Question by John S. Harris. Do you consider that the oaths and obligations improve the morals? or what part of masonry is it?

Answer. The general principles of masonry, taken collectively as it is practised.

[Mr. Richardson, by Mr. Simmons' consent, took his deposition and the questions and answers home to compile, and return on Monday following.]

Mr. Simmons here adjourned without day.

NOTE.

MASONRY USED FOR SMUGGLING.—The deposition of Bateman Munro, [see p. 77.] has excited some inquiry in the minds of many, hitherto indifferent to the influence of Freemasonry upon society.

It must be obvious to every one who examined the contrivance of Masonic oaths and secrecy, that it would be impossible to devise a more ingenious system than this for carrying on smuggling, or any other violation of the laws, requiring secrecy and caution, and certain mysterious obligations and penalties, to bind together rogues and desperadoes, who could have nothing else to pledge each other to mutual fidelity in crime. Hence it is that fraternities of thieves, robbers, pirates and desperadoes, are always found bound together by mysterious oaths and penalties. Honest men need no such pledges from each other, in all lawful enterprises.

There have unquestionably been innumerable violations of the revenue laws, through the influence of Masonic oaths and secrecy, which the ingenious contrivances possessed by Masons will forever conceal from the world. A person detected in smuggling was asked how he had contrived to evade the laws so long, when so many persons must have been engaged in assisting him? He replied that he employed none but Freemasons!

The deposition of Bateman Munro justifies us in believing, that if a man of acknowledged good character, as he is, would use his Masonry to violate the laws of other countries, there are not wanting very good Masons, who would not hesitate to make a profit, through their Masonry, at the expense of the revenue of their own country; and hence it is that we find Freemasons generally so loth to give up an institution through which they have been enabled to derive so many unfair advantages over the rest of mankind.

The character of Bateman Munro, and his motive in giving his deposition, will appear from the following certificate.

NEWPORT, March 25, 1832.

Bateman Munro is a very respectable man; an old sea captain, for many years in the employ of James D. Wolf, Esq. of Bristol, and was in his employ at the time testified to by him in his deposition. This deposition was given under a sincere impression that he was doing the Masonic cause good service, and the most elevated sense of the excellence and value of the Masonic Institution, and he has since expressed the same opinion in public, when I was present and several others, who will testify to the fact. He is now the proprietor of the Turnpike Estate, at the north end of this island, and the same man who was rejected as a juror, on Masonic grounds, by the Court of Common Pleas for this county.

GEORGE TURNER.

It is believed that some strong light was thrown upon the means resorted to by Masons to evade the revenue, in a deposition, which Mr. Hazard took

privately, and concealed, and suppressed, so that no one has been able to ascertain where it is, or what are its contents! Enough transpired however, to induce a belief that they related to Masonic smuggling. The Depoent was a Mr. Penniman, of New Bedford, then in Newport, who had been named to Mr. Hazard, as a witness, by Dr. Case, a seceding Mason. Instead, however, of examining this witness in a public manner, Mr. Hazard, (who appeared to have anticipated that the facts he might disclose must be suppressed, or they would put it out of even his power to justify Masonry) took the deposition of Mr. Penniman, one evening alone at the Tavern of Nichols Hassard, in Newport. For this purpose he took the witness into a back room, by himself, without giving notice to any person of his intention to take the deposition, and no person was present, but Mr. B. Hazard and the witness! The deposition, or whatever Mr. Hazard drew from the witness, in this mysterious interview, was never shown to any person, not in the Masonic secrets, and it has been

entirely suppressed in Mr. Hazard's report, he having paid no attention to repeated calls by individuals and in the newspapers, to explain this extraordinary conduct, in the Chairman of a Legislative Committee! The public must draw the inference.

CONCLUDING NOTE.

The above is a faithful narrative of the extraordinary and important investigation it details. The report of Mr. Hazard, on one part, and of Mr. Sprague Jr. on the other, were drawn from these facts. Mr. Hazard attempted to justify, but closed with condemning Freemasonry, and Mr. Sprague in his minority report, fully explained the dangerous tendency and principles of the Institution. That report is more than sustained by the facts above recorded, drawn from the testimony under the civil oath of more than one hundred persons, a majority of them adhering Masons.

The principal Reporter of this Investigation has only to add, that if any of the material facts herein stated, are called in question, by any man or body of men, he is fully prepared to substantiate them in any form calculated "to establish truth and expose imposition."

BENJAMIN F. HALLETT.

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