

Transcription

Correspondence upon the subject of our National Troubles between Most Wor. Bro. John R. McDaniel and Most Wor. Bro. Winslow Lewis, Grand Master of Massachusetts.

OFFICE OF THE GRAND MASTER OF MASONS IN MASSACHUSETTS.

BOSTON, DEC. 10TH, 1860.

Most Worshipful Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Virginia:

DEAR BROTHER,—The period has arrived (alas! that it should ever be so) when it behooves every one who has lived and flourished under the benign influences of our "glorious Union," to exert his best endeavors to obviate that sad impulse which threatens its dissolution. In the relations of *fellow-citizens* of a wide-spread Republic, our efforts have proved ineffectual. Fanaticism is the predominant demon, and the ties which have bound the South and North so long together, which carried them shoulder to shoulder in the days of our fathers, and have continued them in their prosperity as a united nation, are now in preparation to be severed.

Is it too late to avert the calamity? Is there naught remains of conservatism to be tried? Have we not an institution which binds us together, not only as fellow-citizens, but as brothers; and as brothers, can we lacerate those pledges the foundation of our Faith and Practice? Therefore may we not look to it as a strong element to allay the bitter anguish of these dark days in our nation's history.

It was my good fortune to visit Richmond with a branch of our Order, and to witness and feel the mighty operation which cemented the hearts of all the participants on that occasion.

The influences of that meeting are ineffaceable—the impress indelible. With such feelings of so powerful a fraternization, how disunion must pall the hearts of those whose affections as brothers are so warmed towards these so dear to them in Virginia, and as one, I was resolved to pour out my own, and to express to you what I deem to be the predominant sentiment in Boston, if not in the whole jurisdiction over which I have the honor to preside, and I assure you, my dear brother, that we cling to you, not only as brothers, but as fellow-citizens; and may that evil day be far removed, when Virginia and Massachusetts, the States which gave to our country a Washington and a Franklin, and to Free Masonry two of its brightest lights, shall be found opposed as enemies, and severed as components of United States.



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May God avert that terrible issue; and may He instil into the hearts of all of our Order, the observance of the precept of His Holy Word, that first lesson to every neophyte in Free Masonry, "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity;" and may all under your fraternal jurisdiction, demonstrate by their acts, that in the "Old Dominion," as well as among ourselves of the "Old Bay State," union as fellow-citizens, and Brotherly Love as Masons, shall now in this perilous hour, as heretofore, under the days of prosperity, be their aim and resolve.

"So mote it be."

Fraternally yours,

WINSLOW LEWIS, M. D.
G. Master of Massachusetts.

REPLY OF THE GRAND MASTER OF VIRGINIA.

LYNCHBURG, Dec. 31st, 1860.

DR. WINSLOW LEWIS, GRAND MASTER *of Massachusetts, Boston:*

MOST WORSHIPFUL SIR AND DEAR BROTHER,—Your very kind and fraternal favor of the 10th instant came duly to hand, and would have met with an earlier response had I been physically able so to do. By a fall a few nights before, I strained my right wrist and broke both bones in my right arm, which caused me much suffering. I am, and shall be for some time yet, unable to use it.

I most cordially unite with you in mourning the threatened destruction of our once glorious Republic.

It is sad to think of it, that the Stars and Stripes, the emblem of the noble patriotism of the heroes of the Revolution, and which has ever since floated in triumph, both on sea and land, wherever it has been thrown to the breeze, should now, by internal dissensions, be torn into shreds and "scattered to the four winds of Heaven."

As a body we can do nothing; but did every individual brother possess, and yield to the dictates of so true and fraternal a heart as beats in your bosom, much could be done as individuals—indeed this state of things would never have existed. Masonry teaches us to be "quiet and peaceful citizens, and cheerfully to submit to the government of the country in which we live." The tenets of our profession teach us to "render to every man his just dues;" but alas!



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Puritanical fanaticism seems to be the order of the day; constitutional rights are trampled under foot, and the same mad career which attacked our beloved institution in former times, is now leveling its shafts at our country. Can the shield of Masonry avert the deadly thrust? I fear not; but it may do much to weaken its force. Let each individual brother, whether at the North or at the South, feel the awful responsibility that rests upon him, and apply to his conduct the Plumb, the Level and the Square, and whatever they dictate as right, that do, and do it with a will.

The Masonic fireside, and in the body of the respective Lodges, are the places to correct this evil. There impress upon them the duty of going forth as individuals, exerting the influence of its teachings as good and true Masons should.

No Mason should be ostracised for his opinions in religion or politics when within proper bounds. The atheist is excluded, as so should be the enemy of his country.

I do not propose to discuss the questions which now agitate the country, but rather pursue the truly Masonic spirit of your letter, and seek means by which to allay the excitement.

Gladly would I co-operate in any proper way to effect the object, but in all sincerity and unfeigned regret, I say that all is now in vain. The Union is beyond doubt dissolved, and the only hope that remains is, that a peaceful separation may be effected, and the conservative element of both sections may so exert themselves, as to secure the most friendly relations; so that whilst we may not be able to live as one family, we may nevertheless continue forever good neighbors.

The blood of the Old Confederacy is upon the intriguing and unprincipled politicians, and the wolves in Christian clothing. They are welcome to the honor of their achievements. Masonry, pure and genuine, bearing the impress of our "Great High Priest," I trust, will remain unshaken, and whilst it cannot shield our beloved country from the impending storm, yet secure in our existence, we can continue to live in the full existence of Brotherly Love without regard to geographical bounds or political divisions.

Your friend and brother,

JOHN ROBIN McDANIEL, *G. M. of Va.*

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