

FROM
A. B. CHAMBERLIN,
GALVESTON, TEXAS.

"MEXICAN
MASONRY"

MEXICO

"GANTE PRESS," CALLE DE GANTE No. 5

1893

AN INSIDE VIEW
OF
MEXICAN MASONRY.

DEDICATED TO THE YORK RITE
IN THE
UNITED STATES AND PARTICULARLY TO THE GRAND LODGE OF MISSOURI.

HALL OF TOLTEC LODGE

No. 520 A. F. & A. M.

Under Charter from the
Grand Lodge of Missouri.

CITY OF MÉXICO, MARCH 31st. 1893.

TO THE GRAND MASTER OF THE GRAND LODGE OF MISSOURI.

DEAR & HONORED SIR & BROTHER:—

It is now over ten years since Toltec Lodge, N°. 520, came into existence through the decree of your Worshipful Grand Lodge. It was instituted in 1882, and held its first meeting on December 28th of that year. It was chartered in the following year under your honored predecessor, Lee A. Hall, Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Missouri, and has continued under the obedience of that Grand Lodge up to today, working strictly in accordance with the Ancient Landmarks of the Order (see letter of J. H. Vandeman at end)

Before proceeding farther, we must notice that at the time that this Lodge was chartered, the Grand Lodge of the York Rite formerly existing in this country had disappeared some fifty years before amid the storms of revolution. The present Grand Lodge of the Federal District and its competitor, the so-called Grand Dieta, slumbered as yet in the womb of time. There was even no Grand Orient to represent the Scottish Rite, and the only governing body of that Rite then in existence was the Supreme Council of the 33°. The founders of our lodge, as a matter of courtesy only, obtained the waiver of the said Supreme Council of any jurisdiction over us, and that paper is preserved in your archives today.

TRANSLATION.

THE EXACT TRANSLATION THEREOF IS AS FOLLOWS

AB UNIVERSI TERRANUM ORBIS SUMMI ARCHITECTORIS GLORIAM

GR.: SEC.: GEN.: NUMBER 3616.	"A SEAL"	VALLEY OF MEXICO, 27th. MAY, 1882 (E.: V.:)
----------------------------------	----------	------------------------------------------------

"ORDO AB CHAO"

TO THE SUB.: P.: R.: † W. J. DE GRESS, Present.

SAL.: EST.: POD.:

EX.: AND P.: CAB.:

This Gr.: Sec.: has duly received your Com.: of the 25th. Inst. [E.: V.:] in which you manifest your desire to establish in this Or.: a Lodge of the York R.: Work- ing in the English language, for the purpose that all the American.: M.: Mas- sons.: already here and those constantly coming to the country, could assist at its meetings, who do not visit the Lodges.: established here, on account of their not speaking the Spanish language, and I beg to tell you in answer, that the "Supre- me.: Council.:" finds no objection against said purpose, provided that the authorization for the work.: in the York Rite of the aforesaid Lodge.: proceeds from a Gr.: Lodge.: legally and duly established and universally acknowledged, in which case the Supreme.: Council.: offers to you all its aid in everything you might consider useful for your purpose and the Masonic Temple, so that after lawfully establishing the new Lodge.: you might perform in it your works.: because said Sup.: Con.: esteems in all its value the benefits that said action will bring on humanity.

Please Receive My A.: F.: [Signed] E. CHAVERO,
Gr.: Sec.: Gene.:

In a letter addressed to me by Sov. Grand Commander, Ignacio Pombo, of the Supreme Council 33.°, dated February 20th. 1893, he says "alluding to the above" The Supreme Council will maintain (the above) and all its resolutions, until some properly founded motive arises to change them." In conversation with Sov. Grand Commander, Pombo, he states that he regards Toltec Lodge as as entire- y and undoubtedly legitimate as any other now at work in this Republic.

NOTE—A waiver had previously been obtained from a Grand Lodge of the Valley of Mexico, A. and A Scottish Rite, which is as follows.

TRANSLATION.

A.: L.: G.: D.: G.: A.: D.: U.:
TO THE ILLST. BROTHER W. J. DEGREES.

S.: E.: U.:

In answer to the laudable and just motives you manifest in your letter of the 28th Inst. E. V., in which you request me to ask the necessary authorization to enable you to establish in this Jurisdiction a Lodge working in the English language, at an extraordinary meeting of this Grand Lodge held yesterday, it was un- animously approved to give you absolute faculty to bring about your desire to establish a Lodge here, which will undoubtedly contribute to the benefit of the Universal Masonry, addressing yourself as you desire to the M. W. Grand Lodge established in the Jurisdiction of Missouri, to which you belong, communicating to them your noble resolve.

Please Receive, Illst. Brother, our Dear and Fraternal Regards, Jurisdiction of Mexico April 20th, 1882. E.: V.:

(Signed) FRANCISCO HERNANDEZ Y HERNANDEZ,
Grand Master.

(Seal) ATTEST. (Signed) RAF. GARCIA MARTINEZ,
Grand Secretary.

Many efforts have been made within two or three years to induce us to join our fortunes with the Mexican bodies of Masons. We have not as yet thought proper to accept any of those offers, and the present letter shall be devoted to an exposition of the reasons why we have not cared to sever our connection with the Worshipful Grand Lodge of Missouri.

It may not be out of place to note in this connection, that the present writer, now for the second time elected to the honorable position of Worshipful Master of Toltec Lodge, has resided in this country more than twelve years; is thoroughly acquainted with the Spanish language and with all the social classes here, and has, during the last three years, made a special study of the subject of Mexican Masonry. His opinions thereon have been formed from conversations with Mexican Masons, from documentary evidence, and from the statements of many American brothers who have been connected with, or who have visited Mexican Masonic Lodges. [See the Statements at end of this paper.] Every fact that may be stated in this communication can be promptly and indubitably verified.

WANT OF UNION.

The first objection that we have to Masonry as it exists in Mexico is the want of union amongst Mexicans themselves. It has been falsely asserted, and these assertions have been propagated largely throughout the United States, that the so-called Grand Dieta of Mexico has united within itself all bodies of Mexican Masonry and that it properly assumes the exclusive jurisdiction over the Symbolic Degrees in this country, from the fact that it represents the fusion of all pre-existing Rites. This is not so.

The Mexican National Rite, which has been in existence ever since the year 1825, has always protested, and protests strongly against the claim of the Grand Dieta to exclusive jurisdiction, and has maintained its own individuality. The head of this Rite at the present time is Mr. Francisco P. Gochicoa, who is now the Postmaster General.

The Reformed Scottish Rite is a much younger organization than the Mexican National Rite; it goes back only to the year 1871. The Sovereign Grand Commander, Joaquin Peña, 33.°, of this Rite also strongly objects to, and protests against the claims of the so-called Grand Dieta to the exclusive jurisdiction over the symbolic degrees. The Reformed Rite claims sovereignty over the Symbolic Degrees through the Independent Grand Lodge of Free Masons of the Federal District of Mexico.

There is yet another Body which is perhaps better known in the United States than either of the above; it is called the Grand Lodge of the Federal District, F. & A. M., and is quite distinct from the Independent Grand Lodge mentioned above. The Grand Master of this Lodge is Mr. Benito Juarez, the son of the great Juarez, the Saviour of Mexico, and one of the greatest figures of our century. This organization also protests against the asserted supremacy of the Grand Dieta, and has not united itself with that body, nor has it any intention of so doing.

HISTORY.

The history of the above bodies may be of interest. The Mexican National Rite was formed, as we have stated, in the year 1825, by the fusion of the York and Scottish Rites, as far as they could be fused by the efforts of some nine or ten Masons of both Rites. The Scottish Rite in its present form was introduced into this Republic about the year 1866. The Reformed Scottish Rite was the result of a split from the A. & A. S. Rite in 1871, which left the Supreme Council with only 25 members remaining under its allegiance.

In the year 1883 the Supreme Council 33.^o announced that it would renounce what jurisdiction it had over the three Symbolic Degrees of masonry. This same body had before had a number of Symbolic Lodges working under its direct supervision. In pursuance of the proclamation above alluded to, a number of these lodges, through their representatives, organized the body which is now known as the Grand Lodge of the Federal District, F. & A. M. The only Lodges which took part in this movement were Lodges of the Scottish Rite, and although it is now claimed by this Grand Lodge that it is a York Rite body, I cannot see why it can be deemed any thing else but a Scottish Rite body, having originated in the decree of the governing body of that Rite, and by the fusion or assent of various Symbolic Lodges previously working under the Supreme Council of the 33.^o degree.

The beginning of the Grand Lodge of the Federal District was attended by some dissensions amongst the Symbolic Lodges and another Grand body, claiming to have equal jurisdiction and powers, was organized on the same night and in another department of the same temple by the discordant parties. We believe that this second organization was afterward converted into or became a body known as the Grand Orient of the A. & A. S. R.

In the course of some years which followed the organization of the Grand Lodge of F. & A. M., the powers which governed the A. & A. S. R. became dissatisfied with the working of that Grand Lodge and on December 27th 1890, the Supreme Council 33.^o, of the A. & A. S. R. issued a decree which called into existence a new body for the government of Symbolic Masonry, to be known as the Grand Symbolic Scottish Diet of the Republic of Mexico. This body, in pursuance of the said decree, came into existence in February 1891, some eight years after the institution of Toltec Lodge.

It will be seen, and is a fact, that the organization of the Grand Dieta, which now claims exclusive jurisdiction over Symbolic Masonry in this Republic, was not the result of any convocation or convention of Masons; it was the act of the Supreme Grand Council A. & A. S. R. which called the Grand Dieta into existence, and it still exists by the will of that Supreme Body. Having been thus called into existence, it cannot have any other powers than it derived from its origin. That origin being from the governing body of the Scottish Rite, the Grand Dieta cannot, or ought not, to claim any jurisdiction whatever over bodies of the York Rite, such for example as Toltec Lodge, and especially when our Lodge was in existence at least eight years before the Grand Dieta was even thought of. This would be the case even were there no competitors for the supreme jurisdiction of the Symbolic Degrees in this Republic, but when there are existing, as we have shown,

at least three other bodies who claim exclusive jurisdiction here over the Symbolic Degrees, it still further vitiates the title to the supremacy which is claimed by the Grand Dieta.

UNIVERSAL MASONRY.

I had a very pleasant interview with D. Ermilo Canton, the Grand Secretary of the Grand Dieta, on February 22 nd.

He stated to me that the Grand Dieta has dropped the word "Scottish" from its title and is known simply as the "Grand Symbolic Dieta." He also stated that the Grand Dieta is now neither a York nor a Scottish Rite body; he claims that it practices "Universal Masonry" which is in accord with and embraces all Rites, including the Rite of Memphis, &c. &c. and in fact everything calling itself Masonry. This leads directly on to the more important subject of the differences which exist between our work as York Rite Masons, and the workings of all the Mexican Masonic bodies.

The so-called Mexican National Rite gives 18 degrees, including, of course, the three degrees of Symbolic Masonry. What the other 15 degrees are, I have not informed myself, but it is not too much to presume that a body which claims exclusive jurisdiction over 18 degrees, and which works them, as I am informed they do by the Grand Master himself, in the same way as the A. & A. S. R., it not too much to assume, I say, that the differences of that rite from ours would be so great as to render it impossible for us to join them. This same observation may be applied to the Reformed Scottish Rite and to the so-called Grand Lodge of the Federal District. We may admit that any of these bodies might control Scottish Rite Masons in the three Symbolic Degrees, but we cannot see why any of them can claim jurisdiction over the York Rite. As well might the Supreme Council of the Northern Jurisdiction resident in Boston claim to rule over the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts.

DIFFERENCES IN RITUAL.

The differences in rituals and secret work between us and these bodies are very great. They involve, to my mind, the abandonment of some of the most prominent Landmarks of Ancient Craft Masonry. In this communication, which, although not intended for the public eye, might possibly fall into the hands of the profane, it would be out of place to specify too closely what these differences are. I may, however, mention that according to the Rituals in my possession and to the best oral information that I have received, the obligations in the lodges under the jurisdiction of the Grand Dieta, and of other Mexican Masonic bodies, are taken on *honor, only*, while no restrictions, such as we designate by the name of penalties, are attached thereto.

WOMEN IN MASONRY.

The admission of women to the three degrees of Symbolic Masonry is a well attested fact. I have myself seen women clothed with regalia enter and be seated in a Mexican Masonic lodge, when all parties not Masons had been notified

to retire. It is stated, indeed, by the Mexican Masons, that these women have an organization of their own, separate from the male bodies; and known by the name of the Adoptive Rite. My own investigations, however, and the statements of several well informed brethren, leave no doubt whatever that these women are invested with all the signs and passwords of the Symbolic Degrees from the first up to the fourteenth degree of the Scottish Rite. They have been seen in the Symbolic Lodges of the first three degrees during the conferring of degrees, giving Masonic signs, and have been seen in more public celebrations identifying themselves in every way with the male members of the craft. This is of itself sufficient to exclude the bodies who admit such persons, however estimable they may be, from any Masonic standing in connection with the York Rite bodies of the United States.

NO BIBLE.

Another grave matter is the exclusion of the Bible from all Mexican Masonic lodges. This rule and guide of our faith finds no place upon the altar of Mexican Masonry, and it is even stated by some brethren that in some of the lodges they have visited, the idea of the presence of God is altogether disallowed as part of the standards of Masonry.

There exists in this city a Lodge chartered by the Grand Orient of France, and working under that charter. This Lodge is in full and fraternal communication with Mexican Masonry. The Grand Officers of the Grand Dieta attend the meetings of this Lodge and take part in its festivities, and the Official Bulletin of the Gran Dieta states that it counts amongst its most honored correspondents the Grand Orient of France. (Vol XI, 2nd. Epoch, Nos 5 and 6, March & April, 1892, page 334)

I need not state to you, Honored Sir, that infidel Masonry, symbolized by the Grand Orient of France, has long since been excluded from Masonic communication with all bodies of the York Rite, and that the communion which the Grand Orient of France has with the Mexican Masonic bodies, and the exclusion of the Bible from all Lodges in the country, except Toltec Lodge, are sufficient of themselves to stamp with irregularity and with infidelity the bodies who have thus removed our oldest and most conspicuous Landmark.

POLITICS.

We may next turn to the subject of Politics. The Mexican National Rite has been connected with every revolution that has been had in this country since its organization in the year 1825, and has been denied recognition by all foreign Masonic Bodies on account of that notorious fact.

We also know that in the early part of the year 1892, resolutions were introduced into the bodies subordinate to the Grand Dieta favoring the reelection of General Diaz as President of this Republic. We know also that the Grand Dieta made a public proclamation, which was published in the newspapers in this city, of its interest in the re-election of President Diaz, and stating its desire that the same should take place.

The members of the various bodies under the Grand Dieta are nearly all of them officeholders of one kind or another under the Federal Government. The members

of the Mexican National Rite are nearly all of them connected with the Postoffice Department. The Reformed Scottish Rite and the Grand Lodge of the Federal District are preserving an attitude of hungry expectancy. They represent the "Outs" while the brethren of the Grand Dieta and of the Mexican National represent the "Ins" at this moment.

There can be no doubt, in view of the declarations made by the Gran Dieta, and the above facts, that these bodies are nothing more nor less than well organized political clubs, a part of the machinery by which certain prominent men perpetuate their hold on power.

TEXAS AND MEXICO.

We will now direct attention to a very singular event in Masonry which happened during the year 1891, and that is, the recognition of the Grand Dieta of Mexico by the Grand Lodge of Texas. I have in my possession a copy of the report of the Grand Lodge of Texas for the year 1891, and the facts upon which I base the following observations have been in a great measure gathered from that report.

In the section thereof entitled "Masonry in Mexico and The Treaty of Monterrey," we learn that brothers Foster of Laredo and Kelso of Eagle Pass began an investigation of the authority by which the Mexican lodges along the Rio Grande were held and by correspondence and interviews with prominent Mexican Masons along the border, arrived at the conclusion that there had been a reorganization of Masonry in Mexico, and that the sole ruling power here is a Central Grand Body known as the Grand Symbolic Diet of the United Mexican States, that it is seated in this city, and that it has State Grand Lodges in the various States and in the Federal District, and that it has Subordinate Lodges throughout the Republic. How far this assumption was true you may learn by an inspection of the former part of this letter.

The then Grand Master of Texas, fortified by the acquaintance and guidance of a Mexican friend, proceeded to Monterrey in the State of Nuevo Leon, more than four hundred miles away from the seat of power of the Grand Dieta. He was utterly unacquainted with the Spanish language, of course largely at the mercy of his kind entertainers, and through interpreters, he made the famous treaty which we have alluded to above.

Does it not occur to you, Honored Sir, reviewing in cold blood this most remarkable transaction, that from first to last the Grand Master of Texas never consulted on this measure except with parties friendly to the Grand Dieta of Mexico, and all of whose interests would lead them to induce him to that step which he finally took? When we reflect that all of those gentlemen with whom he treated were Federal office holders and owed their daily bread to the patronage of the chiefs of the Grand Dieta, it does not seem strange that they should have strongly counseled the recognition of that body.

Not one American Mason, whether residing in this city or elsewhere in the Republic, was, so far as I can learn, consulted on this matter.

The existence of Toltec Lodge, chartered by the Grand Lodge of Missouri in this city, was well known in the State of Texas. It was visited by the Grand Commandery of Texas when on a tour to this City some years ago, and if I do

not mistake, some of the Grand Officers of the Grand Lodge of Texas, were among those visitors. It seems strange that the opinions and sentiments of the above Lodge should not have been inquired into with the object of getting an outside view of the remarkable new institution claiming supremacy over the Symbolic Degrees, and then less than one year old. It seems to me that it would have been more dignified, less precipitate, wiser and better, in view of the great interests involved, to have sent an investigating committee to this Capital before taking definite action. It appears to me, and to all American Masons with whom I have conversed on this subject, that the proverb "Look before you leap" is as applicable in Masonic business, and even to the actions of the Grand Master of Texas as to other worldly affairs, and it seems strange to us, Honored Sir, that the Grand Lodge of Texas should coolly hand over the jurisdiction of Symbolic Masonry in this country to a so-called Grand body anomalous in its nature and doubtful in its antecedents, thus indirectly excluding its own Rite of York from this whole country.

It is impossible to believe that the Grand Master of Texas or any York Rite Mason would condone the absence of the Bible, the admission of women to Masonry, the obligations without penalties and the many other differences of secret work that would have been evident upon the slightest inquiry into that branch of the subject. The only conclusion from this is that no examination whatever was held of the secret work of the Grand Dieta; that that body was supposed to be legitimate only from the fact of calling itself so, and that ordinary caution was entirely lost sight of in the whole transaction. This being the case, it seems to us that the Grand Lodge of Texas has received this whole Mexican Rite into its fellowship with less precautions than are usually taken in allowing a single strange Mason to visit a Lodge.

The very slightest investigation conducted in a proper manner would have shown the above differences of Ritual that I have mentioned. It would have shown that the Grand Dieta is not a reorganization of Masonry in general and that its claims of sovereignty to the whole of Symbolic Masonry in this country have, as I have heretofore stated, been vigorously resisted and earnestly protested against by all other bodies of Mexican Masons.

The assertion that General Porfirio Diaz, now President of Mexico, is also the Grand Master of the Grand Dieta may or may not be true. In any case, the political position of any particular Mason can have no bearing whatever upon the question as to whether the body to which he belongs is or is not entitled to supremacy in Masonry, or is or is not within the limits of true and regular Masonic work.

It appears to us, in view of all the facts that I have stated, and which can be proven in many ways, that the only thing for the Grand Lodge of Texas to do is to withdraw its hasty recognition of the Grand Dieta of Mexico. If the Grand Lodge of Texas should persist in admitting to its fellowship a body that has so far diverged from the great landmarks of the Order, it will soon drift far away from the principles of all other Grand Lodges of the York Rite now existing within the United States of America.

TOLTEC LODGE.

By our investigation and experiences in this country we have been led to believe, and do believe that Toltec Lodge is the only representative of legitimate Symbolic Masonry, now at work in this Republic. We believe we should forfeit all of our rights as Masons were we to incorporate ourselves with any Mexican body now existing. In fact we are determined not to incorporate ourselves with any Mexican body, and should the Worshipful Grand Lodge of Missouri see fit to withdraw the charter now in our possession, it is our intention to dissolve our present lodge and not unite ourselves in any way whatever with Mexican Masonry.

The result of this action would be a loss to you of a loving, obedient and regular lodge. It would be a gain to no one. We ask your earnest consideration of the above facts before deciding.

FUSION IMPOSSIBLE.

It is our opinion that the tenets of Freemasonry as practiced by us are so very far from the tenets of Freemasonry as held by the Mexican Masonic bodies, that communion or fusion between us is, at the present time, impossible, although we feel the utmost good will towards them and would be pleased to be on good terms with them as far as consistent with adherence to the Ancient Landmarks of the Order. We have not made these remarks to depreciate in any way the Mexican people. They are in many ways a noble and intelligent race, but the so-called Masonry in Mexico has no more real relation to Masonry in the United States or England than have the Knights of Pythias or the Odd Fellows.

So far is this the case, that it would be impossible for any Mexican Mason, however well instructed he might be in his own Ritual, to work his way into an American Lodge by examination. The passwords are not greatly different, but the signs and the Lecture are entirely so, and would never be recognized by any examining committee that knew its duty.

INVASION OF JURISDICTION.

No charge of invasion of jurisdiction can ever be urged against the Grand Lodge of Missouri, on account of the founding of Toltec Lodge, except by persons entirely ignorant of the facts in the case. To such it might well be asked, Whose or what jurisdiction has been invaded?

The Mexican National Rite and the Scottish Rite are the only two organizations that were here before us, if we leave the Reformed Scottish Rite out of the question.

The Mexican National Rite has never claimed jurisdiction over us or over the York Rite at all, and, as I have mentioned, the waivers of jurisdiction by the A. & A. Scottish Rite, as I have copied them, are on file in the archives of the Grand Lodge of Missouri.

Between Toltec Lodge and the Supreme Council 33.^o of the A. & A. Scottish Rite, the utmost good feeling prevails. Last May I received a letter from that Supreme Body, signed by Gen. Porfirio Diaz, expressing its satisfaction at

hearing of the continued existence and prosperity of Toltec Lodge, and now the letter of February 20th 1893, referred to before, and personal assurances from Sov. Grand Commander, Pombo.

The only bodies that are said to have objected to our presence here are the so-called Grand Lodge of the Federal District and the Grand Dieta.

Both of the above Bodies are younger than Toltec Lodge, and both of them derive such powers as they possessed while working in legitimate Masonry from the same Supreme Council of the 33.^o which, in the beginning of our Lodge, formally waived all jurisdiction it might have had over us.

Having once divested itself of such jurisdiction, it is evident that the Supreme Council could not transmit to any subsequently formed body the powers it did not then possess; consequently we do not owe any allegiance whatever to either of the above named Bodies, even did there not exist the great differences of Rite, Ritual and Secret Work to which I have before alluded, and which should exclude both the above Bodies from communion with York Rite Masons.

The Grand Lodge of California recognized the Grand Lodge of the Federal District in 1886; the Grand Lodge of Texas recognized the rival body, the Grand Dieta, in 1891; but we respectfully decline, for reasons heretofore stated, to join either one of these contending parties, as we are persuaded that upon more thorough investigation of the facts, both Texas and California will take the same view of the subject as we do ourselves.

We are ready to promote and assist such investigation by all means in our power, whether undertaken by private individuals, or by any regular Masonic Body that desires further light in this matter.

Hoping that the above will receive due and favorable consideration, I remain

Yours Fraternally,

RICHARD E. CHISM,

W. M. of Toltec Lodge N.^o 520

ADDRESS:

RICHARD E. CHISM,

3.^o Independencia No. 1,

City of Mexico, MEXICO.

AN OUTSIDE VIEW OF TOLTEC LODGE.

CHATTANOOGA, TENN., 1—20—93.

R. E. CHISM,

W. M. Toltec Lodge 520. F. & A. M.

DEAR SIR & BRO:

Your esteemed favor of the 14th inst is before me. I take great pleasure in replying, and, first let me thank you for the expressions of good will and favors shown me by yourself and other members of your live and active Masonic Lodge.

I never visit any place, when away, but (if then, only a day or two) but what I make it my business to visit a Masonic body, and I assure you I was *much pleased* with not only the reception tendered my self and friend, but the harmonious working of your Lodge, the strict observance of the Ancient Landmarks of Masonry (for wick I am a great "Stickler") and the strict but just examination of visitors before their admission, conducted, if I am correct, by the Master himself. (December 2nd. 1892.) I have been a Master Mason for 25 or more years, 11 years of that time the W. M. of my lodge; have held important positions in the Grand Lodge of Tennessee, High Priest of my Chapter for many years, T. Ill. M. of my Council for some seven years, and my visit to your lodge, was in strict accord with our work in Tennessee, opening and closing identical—ditto the working, as far as seen, the officers well up in their duties, and I was not only pleased and gratified with the working of the Lodge, but I hope benefited by my visit.

The G. Lodge of Missouri has, in your Lodge, not only a helpmeet in the great work of Masonry, but we trust a nucleus, parent Lodge, from which many men may spring up in the near future, and I can only wish the new ones may have the same spirit manifested, the same zeal in the good work exemplified, and the same cordiality extended to all visitors as in now displayed in Toltec Lodge N.º 520 F. & A. M.

With my best wishes for the continued prosperity and usefulness of your Lodge and yourself and officers thereof, I have the honor to be

Very Respectfully,

Your Obt. Sert.,

J. H. Van Deman,

Late W. M. Chattanooga Lodge,

No. 199 F. & A. M.

P. S. Give my kindest regards to friend Bush.

A true Copy on honor,

RICHARD E. CHISM,

W. M. Toltec Lodge.

STATEMENT

Made by Bro. Paul Randolph in the presence of R. E. Chism, Master and J. C. Mordough, Senior Warden, Toltec Lodge No. 520, A. F. & A. M.

Q. State your name, residence and occupation.

A. Paul Randolph, City of Mexico, occupation Book keeper.

Q. Your home is where?

Q. Washington City, D. C.

A. State your present Masonic connection in the United States, if any.

A. I have none, except Toltec Lodge.

Q. Have you ever been connected with any Lodge working under the Grand Dieta of Mexico?

A. Yes; two, the Polar Star Lodge No. 1, Durango, and Regeneration No. 103 of the City of Mexico.

Q. Have you ever visited any Lodges besides these?

A. Yes, pretty much all of the Lodges in the City of Mexico, including Anahuac Lodge.

Q. Why did you leave Mexican Masonry?

A. Because I refused to recognize the jurisdiction of the Grand Dieta.

Q. How many degrees have you received in the Scottish Rite as practiced in Mexico?

A. Three degrees.

Q. Is, or is not, the Grand Dieta a Scottish Rite body?

A. Is is, to my understanding, as far as my knowledge goes.

Q. Have you ever seen a Bible in any Mexican Masonic Lodge, or used therein?

A. Never.

Q. Have you ever been present at the taking of any of the degrees of Entered Apprentice, Fellowcraft or Master Mason in any Mexican Lodge?

A. Yes.

Q. In what Lodge or Lodges, and under what jurisdiction?

A. In several Lodges in the City of Mexico under the jurisdiction of the Grand Dieta.

Q. Are the obligations of the above degrees in said Lodges taken on honor, or have they a penalty annexed thereto?

A. The obligation is taken on your honor as a man, and the Deity does not figure in it at all.

Q. Are the above obligations taken in a standing position?

A. Always, with the hand resting on the Book of Constitutions.

Q. Is any of the clothing removed from the person about to take the obligation?

A. Nothing but rolling up the trousers leg, and having the coat half on and half off.

Q. Are any mineral or metallic substances removed from the candidate?

A. They are sometimes and some times they are not.

Q. Are any cable ties used on or about the person about to take the obligation?

A. Yes.

Q. Is, or is not the candidate blindfolded at the time of taking said obligation?

A. I think he takes it with his eyes uncovered.

Q. Is it true that all business in Mexican Masonic Lodges is done in the Entered Apprentice degree?

A. Yes.

Q. Is that degree in effect the principal degree of the Lodge?

A. It is the principal working degree, and all the business in the Mexican Lodge is done in that degree.

Q. Do you consider the practices of Masonry under the jurisdiction of the Grand Dieta and other Mexican bodies, as lawful and just according to the usages of the York Rite in the United States?

A. I do not.

A. What is the internal discipline of the Mexican Lodges alluded to as far as you have seen?

A. It is very lax in every sense.

Q. Can you give any particulars?

A. Well, Yes. In the first place a visitor when presenting his diploma is almost invariably admitted without any further examination, or any thing else.

Q. Do you know whether the exclusion of women from Masonry is prescribed under the Symbolic Degrees of Mexicans.

A. No, it is not.

Q. Do you know whether any women in Mexico possess the secrets of Masonry in the three Symbolic Degrees.

A. I do. Numbers of them. I do not know them by name. There is a Lodge composed entirely of women and working in the three degrees.

Q. Do they work the degrees the same as the men, with all the proper signs and passwords of the men?

A. Yes, and they are admitted up to the 14th degree Scottish Rite.

Q. Are any women admitted to the male Lodges of Masonry from your own knowledge, or have you only heard so?

A. I have sat in Lodge with them.

Q. Regeneration Lodge?

A. Yes, Regeneration Lodge.

Q. Do you know whether parties under 21 years of age are admitted to take the Symbolic Degrees?

A. No, they are not, but the son of a Master Mason can take his Apprentice degree at the age of 19.

Q. Do you know what precautions are taken to prevent admission of unworthy persons in Mexican Lodges, and if such persons are frequent there?

A. They are.

Q. What precautions are taken to keep them out?

A. Committees are very lax.

Q. Do you know what form of examination is used for admission of visitors in Mexican Lodges?

A. A series of questions; but they never ask a man but three or four questions and that is the end of it. The examination is a secondary thing altogether. If they can give the password and grip, they waive the examination.

Q. Do you believe that any of the Mexican Lodges have any connection with politics?

A. Only from hearsay.

Q. Do you know if any negro Masons hailing from negro Lodges of the United States have been admitted to Mexican Lodges?

A. Not to my knowledge.

Q. Do you know what the sentiments of Mexican Masons are in respect to said negro Masons?

A. No, I have never heard the matter mentioned.

Q. Do you believe they would be admitted if they would apply thereto.

A. I presume that they would.

Q. Is the Grand Dieta, or are other Mexican bodies in full communication with the Grand Orient of France?

A. My understanding is that they are.

Q. Has any other Mexican Masonic body protested publicly against the claim of the Grand Dieta to exclusive jurisdiction of the three Symbolic Degrees?

A. Regeneration Lodge protested against the jurisdiction of the Grand Dieta.

Q. You do not know of any other Lodges?

A. Yes, there are three or four, but I do not know what the names are.

Q. Do Mexican Masons talk publicly and in public places about Masonic matters?

A. Yes, everywhere.

Q. Are their rituals published in plain type?

A. They are.

Q. Do you know the name of that Lodge of women?

A. I do not remember now.

Bro. Randolph states that all the work in the Lodge is read by the officers from books printed in ordinary type.

Brother Randolph is a Master Mason

in good standing in Toltec Lodge, and I have acted as Stenographer, and am a Master Mason of Excelsior Lodge N. ° 41 of La Porte, Ind.

ALFRED M. DAKIN.

PAUL RANDOLPH.

Pte. de San Francisco N. °, 1
Attest,

RICHARD E. CHISM, W. M.

J. C. MORDOUGH, S. W.

City of Mexico, Jan. 13th 1893.

STATEMENT

Made by Bro. John Peter Klensch in the presence of R. E. Chism, Master, and J. C. Mordough, Senior Warden, Toltec Lodge No. 520 A. F. A. M. Jan. 16th 1893.

Q. State your name, nationality, residence and occupation.

A. John Peter Klensch, naturalized American citizen; residence City of Mexico, veterinary surgeon.

Q. Are you connected with any Lodge in the United States?

A. I am a member in good standing of Morning Star Lodge of Stockton, Cal.

Q. Have you ever been connected with any Lodge working under the Grand Dieta of Mexico?

A. I was an affiliated member of Anahuac Lodge N. ° 141 A. F. & A. Scottish Rite of the Grand Dieta of Mexico.

Q. How did you become a member of Anahuac Lodge without depositing a demit?

A. I was vouched for.

Q. They did not ask you for a demit?

A. They did not ask for a demit or any thing else.

A. How many degrees have you received of the Scottish Rite in Mexico?

A. None.

Q. Is the Grand Dieta of Mexico a Scottish Rite Body?

A. They work under the Scottish Rite in the three lower degrees.

Q. Have you ever seen a Bible in a Mexican Masonic Lodge?

A. In Mexican Lodges, no; in Anahuac Lodge, yes.

Q. Is Anahuac under the same jurisdiction as the Mexican Lodges?

A. Exactly the same thing.

Q. How is it that they use a Bible in Anahuac Lodge then and do not use it in any of the other Lodges?

A. I do not know.

Q. Have you been present at the taking of any of the degrees of Entered Apprentice, Fellowcraft or Master Mason in any Mexican Lodge?

A. I have. I was present in the first and third degrees.

Q. In what Lodges?

A. Regeneration. During my connection with Anahuac Lodge only one was made a Master Mason, and he by dispensation.

Q. Are the obligations in these degrees in Mexican Lodges taken in a standing position?

A. One is taken kneeling and the others standing up.

Q. Is it true that all the business in Mexican Masonic Lodges is done in the Entered Apprentice degree?

A. Yes, all the business of the Lodge is transacted in the Entered Apprentice degree.

Q. Then that degree is in effect the principal degree of the Lodge?

A. It is the principal degree of the Lodge. Any Mason who is an Entered Apprentice Mason has all the privileges of a Mason.

Q. Do you consider the practices of freemasonry under the jurisdiction of the Grand Dieta as lawful and just according to the usages in the United States?

A. My impression is that it is not.

Q. What is your opinion of the internal discipline of the Mexican Lodges as far as you have seen?

A. The discipline is very bad. I do not think there is any discipline at all.

Q. Do you know whether any women in Mexico possess the secrets of Masonry in the three Symbolic Degrees?

A. I have seen women sit in Mexican Lodges. I have seen 5 women in Regeneration Lodge who gave the signs of regular Masons. They were then asked by the Master to be seated, which they did and listened to the Secretary's report, etc. I have seen a body of Masonic women stand guard around the body of General Pacheco, properly dressed, with swords in hand, and were given a position in the funeral procession, and were acknowledged as Masons. I also heard from two Masons that these women were present at the election of Grand Master of the Grand Lodge.

Q. Are these women admitted to the male Lodges of Masons during the working of Degrees?

A. I have not seen them during the working of Degrees, but I firmly believe that they are admitted.

Q. Do you know what precautions are taken to prevent the admission of unworthy persons to membership in Mexican Lodges, and whether such persons are frequently found as members?

A. In my Lodge, anybody was received showing the certificate of Grand Master Canton, and never examined in Anahuac Lodge. I was present when one such accepted visitor was refused in Toltec Lodge as a Mason he not knowing any thing about Masonry.

Q. Do you know what form of examination is used for visitors in Mexican Lodges?

A. I never was examined in a Mexican Lodge.

Q. Do you believe that Mexican Masonic Lodges have any connection with politics?

A. I firmly believe they do.

Q. Do Mexican Masons talk publicly and in public places about Masonic Matters?

A. I do not know.

Q. Do you know whether Mexican Masons preserve secrecy in regard to proceedings in their Lodges?

A. As regards Anahuac Lodge, no. But from personal experience I know nothing in regard to other Mexican Masonic Lodges.

Q. Have you ever been informed by any leading officer that there was no secrecy in Mexican Lodges?

A. I have been, yes. The Past Master of Anahuac Lodge told me five successive times that there was no secrecy in Masonry, and at the same time threatened to have me put in prison for signing the reports as a member of an investigating committee, the same report being unfavorable to the applicant, saying that I defamed the candidate's good reputation, repeating several times that I was liable to prison, and upon my arguing that I relied upon the secret character of that document and upon the official evidence that I had in my pocket, so I was not afraid of any prosecution.

Upon that the Past Master replied that there was no secrecy in Masonry, repeating the same five times. He added that the candidate knew of the secret work of the committee, he and the Acting Master having advised him about it.

Q. Do you make this declaration upon your honor as a man and a Mason?

A. I state this as the whole truth and nothing but the truth, upon my honor as a man and as a Mason.

J. P. KLENCH.

A. M. DAKIN,

Stenographer.

Attest,

RICHARD E. CHISM, W. M.

J. C. MORDOUGH, S. W.

STATEMENT

Made by Bro. Howard C. Walker in the presence of R. E. Chism, Master, and J. C. Mordough Senior Warden, Toltec Lodge No. 520 A. F. & A. M., January 16th 1893.

Q. State your name, nationality, residence and occupation.

A. Howard C. Walker, American, residence Mexico, former residence Charleston, S. C. and am General Agent of the Travellers Ins. Co. of Hartford, Conn

Q. State your present Masonic connections in the United States, if any.

A. I have none except Toltec Lodge.

Q. Have you ever been connected with any Lodge Working under the Grand Dieta of Mexico?

A. Yes.

Q. Which Lodges?

A. Regeneration N. ° 103.

Q. How many degrees have you received of the Scottish Rite as practiced in Mexico?

A. Thirty.

Q. Is or is not the Grand Dieta a Scottish Rite body?

A. I should consider it so.

Q. Have you ever seen a Bible in any Mexican Masonic Lodge, or used therein?

A. No.

Q. Have you ever been present at the taking of any of the degrees of En-

tered Apprentice, Fellowcraft or Master Mason in any Mexican Lodge?

A. Yes.

Q. Were those Lodges under the jurisdiction of the Grand Dieta?

A. Yes.

Q. Are the obligations of the above degrees in said Lodges taken on honor, or have they a penalty annexed thereto?

A. They have no penalties, and are taken on their honor.

Q. Are the above obligations taken in a standing position?

A. Yes.

Q. Is any of the clothing removed from the person about to take such obligations?

A. Not entirely removed.

Q. Is, or is not the candidate blindfolded at the taking of said obligations?

A. No, he is not blindfolded at the time of taking the obligation, but standing at the altar with his hands on the square and compass.

Y. Is it true that all the business in the Mexican Masonic Lodges is done in the Entered Apprentice Degree?

A. It is done in the Entered Apprentice degree.

Q. Do you consider the practices of Freemasonry under the jurisdiction of the Grand Dieta as lawful and just according to the usages of the York Rite in the United States?

A. No, not in accordance with Yorkine principles.

Q. What is your opinion of the internal discipline of the Mexican Lodges alluded to as far as you have seen?

A. Regeneration was a Well governed Lodge, but I do not know any thing in regard to the balance of the Lodges.

Q. Do you know whether any women in Mexico possess the secrets of masonry in the three Symbolic Degrees?

A. Yes, I do.

Q. Are any Women admitted to the male Lodges of Masons from your own knowledge, or have you only heard so, and if so, from whom?

A. I have seen them there while working in the Entered Apprentice degree.

Q. Do you know what precautions are taken to prevent admission of unworthy persons in Mexican Lodges, and whether such persons are frequently found as members?

Q. Yes, there are frequently very unworthy persons admitted, and the only precautions that I have seen is asking for their credentials from their lodges, but I have never seen the men examined.

Q. Do you know what form of examination is used for visitors of Mexican Lodges?

A. They are admitted on the presentation of credentials from their lodges without examination.

Q. Do you believe that Mexican Masonic Lodges have any connection with politics?

A. Yes, I do. According to my experience the Grand Dieta was formed as a political body.

Q. Do you know if any negro masons hailing from negro lodges in the United States have been admitted to Mexican Lodges?

A. I do not know. I never saw them.

Q. Do you know what the sentiments of Mexican Masons are in respect to said negro masons?

A. I have never heard an opinion.

Q. Do you think they would be admitted to Mexican Lodges if application was made thereto?

A. I do not know anything about these points.

Q. Do you know whether the Grand Dieta or other Mexican Masonic bodies are in communication with the Grand Orient of France?

A. I think that they are, but am not positively certain.

Q. Has any Mexican Masonic body protested publicly against the claims of the Grand Dieta to the exclusive jurisdiction of the three Symbolic Degrees?

A. The Grand Lodge of "Libres y Aceptados Maones" of the Federal District has protested against them.

Q. Do Mexican Masons talk publicly and in public places about Masonic matters?

A. On several occasions I have heard them do so.

Q. Are the rituals published in common type?

A. Not the whole.

Q. Do they use rituals in common type when conferring their degrees in the Lodges?

A. I have seen them use the Ritual in common type when conferring the first three Degrees.

Brother Walker is a Master Mason in good standing in Toltec Lodge, and I A. M. Dakin, have acted as Stenographer, and am a Master Mason of Excelsior Lodge No. 41 of La Porte, Ind.

Mexico, January 16th 1893,

HOWARD C. WALKER

Attest,

RICHARD E. CHISM, W. M.

J. C. MORDOUGH, S. W.

STATEMENT

Made by Bro. James C. Hill Jr. in the presence of R. E. Chism, Master, and J. C. Mordough, Senior Warden, Toltec Lodge No. 520 A. F. & A. M., Jan. 19th 1893

Q. State your name, nationality, residence and occupation.

A. James C. Hill Jr., born in Scottsville, Va., residence, City of Mexico, connected with the Mexican Telephone Co.

Q. State your past Masonic connections in the United States.

A. Between the years 1882 & 1889, I served as Senior Deacon, Senior Warden and Junior Warden, and Master of Scottsville Lodge, Scottsville, Va. and am now a Past Master. Am a member and Junior Warden of Toltec Lodge.

Q. Have you ever been connected with any Lodge working under the Gran Dieta of Mexico?

A. Yes, I was a member of Regeneration for several months. I retained my membership in Regeneration after they seceded from the Gran Dieta.

Q. If you have been connected with Mexican Masonry, why did you leave it?

A. I left it because I did not think there was any resemblance whatever to what I knew of Masonry in the United States.

Q. How many degrees have you received in the Scottish Rite as practiced in Mexico?

A. I took twenty six degrees in one afternoon, but I do not know whether they were regular or not.

Q. Is the Grand Dieta a Scottish Rite body?

A. I do not know whether it is or not; I understand that it claims to be.

Q. Have you ever seen a Bible in any Mexican Masonic lodge, or used therein?

A. I never have.

Q. Have you ever been present at the taking of any of the degrees of Entered Apprentice, Fellowcraft and Master Mason in any Mexican lodge?

A. I have of the three degrees.

Q. What lodges?

A. None except Regeneration.

Q. Are the obligations in the above degrees in said Lodges taken on honor, or have they a penalty annexed thereto?

A. To the best of my recollection it was simply on honor. I am not positively certain on that point.

Q. Are the above obligations taken in a standing position?

A. I remember at the ceremonies they played on a bass drum and cymbals, and flashing fire under the candidate's face, but I do not remember in what position the oath was taken. Also, that to be known to all Brothers, the candidate was told that it was necessary for him to be branded, which they did by blowing out a candle and applying it while it was hot to the candidate.

Q. Is any of the clothing removed from the person about to take said obligations?

A. I think none.

Q. Are metallic or mineral substances removed?

A. No, Sir.

Q. Is it true that all the business done in Mexican Masonic lodges is done in the Entered Apprentice Degree?

A. Yes sir, and the Master Masons' Lodge is only opened to confer the Master Mason's degree.

Q. Do you consider the practices of Freemasonry under the jurisdiction of the Grand Dieta as lawful and just according to the usages of the York Rite in the United States?

A. By no means.

Q. What is your opinion of the internal discipline of the Mexican Lodges alluded to as far as you have seen?

A. I do not know much about their discipline.

Q. Do you know whether any women in Mexico possess the secrets of Masonry in the three symbolic degrees?

A. I do not know. I have been told by women that they had the three Symbolic Degrees. I have been given the Master Mason's L. P. grip by a woman.

Q. Have you ever seen any women admitted to Lodges?

A. I have only seen women on public occasions with regalia and sitting in the Lodges. I have only a seen them on public occasions with regalia marching in processions.

Q. Do you know what precautions are taken to prevent the admission of unworthy persons in Mexican

lodges, and whether such persons are frequently found as members?

A. I think the usual precautions are taken, or at least so far as the appointing of a committee is concerned but I have known many unworthy persons to be admitted.

Q. Do you know what form of examination is used for visitors of Mexican Lodges?

A. A man is requested to show his receipts for dues in the Lodges of which he declares himself to be a member.

Q. Do you believe or know that Mexican Masonic lodges have any connection with politics?

A. I am inclined to think so. I was in the Lodge when a resolution was offered endorsing President Diaz for re-election, and I was afterwards informed by members of the Lodge that it was unanimously adopted, not having been present myself at the voting.

Q. Do you believe that negro Masons, hailing from negro lodges in the United States would be admitted to Mexican Masonic Lodges if they were to apply thereto?

A. I cannot form an opinion about it. I see no reason to doubt it.

Q. Do you know whether any other Mexican Masonic body has protested publicly against the claims of the Gran Dieta for the jurisdiction of the three Symbolic Degrees?

A. Personally, I do not.

Q. Do you know whether the Gran Dieta is in full communication with the Grand Orient of France?

A. From Mexican Masons I have heard so; I do not positively know it of my own knowledge.

Q. Do Mexican Masons talk openly and in public places about Masonic matters?

A. Not that I know of.

Q. Have you seen them use in the lodges rituals printed in common type?

A. No, but have seen them printed on a type-writer.

The above statement is made upon my honor as a Master Mason.

JAMES C. HILL JR.

A. M. DAKIN,

STENOGRAPHER

Attest,

RICHARD E. CHISM, W. M.

J. C. MORDOUGH, S. W.



NOTE.—Many other statements can be had similar to the above.

Anahuac Lodge, referred to in the above Statements, is an English speaking Lodge, under the Grand Dieta.

It will be seen that most of the above brethren suppose the Grand Dieta to be a Scottish Rite Body. As I have noted on page 7 it claims to work "Universal Masonry", according to the Grand Secretary, E. R. Canton.

To prevent any misunderstanding the writer will add that he is a R. A. Mason, a Knight Templar and a Scottish Rite Mason of the Northern Jurisdiction of the United States. He was raised, exalted and knighted in the year 1874 in Easton, Pennsylvania and has since visited in some twenty States of the American Union.

RICHARD E. CHISM.