

**COMPILED LAW OF THE GRAND LODGE
OF FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS OF
THE STATE OF MICHIGAN:
REVISION OF A. L. 5873, A. D. 1873,
WITH AMENDMENTS TO AND
INCLUDING A. L. 5886, A. D. 1886**

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Compiled Law of the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the State of Michigan:
Revision of A. L. 5873, A. D. 1873, with Amendments to and Including A. L. 5886, A. D. 1886
by Various

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VARIOUS

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MICHIGAN Grand Lodge, 1886

COMPILED LAW
OF THE
GRAND LODGE

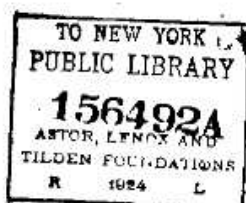
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PREFACE.

R. W. Bro. Foster Pratt, in the preface to the original compilation, said:

"The recent and thorough revision, by the M. W. Grand Lodge of Michigan, of the Constitutional and Statutory Law of its Masonic Jurisdiction, makes the following compilation a great convenience, if not a necessity, to all Lodges and Brethren that wish to study its provisions.

"The first place in the volume—the place of honor—has been assigned to the 'Ancient Charges and Regulations,' not because they are, in form, binding on us, but because they are universally recognized as the beginning and basis of all the 'written law' of the Craft; and also because they embody many of those 'Ancient Landmarks' which give 'metes and bounds' to the Rules and Regulations of Symbolic Masonry.

"The careful and thoughtful Masonic student, that delves in the 'rubbish' of this Ancient Law, will find the 'Landmark' embedded, not in the surface *debris* of its forms and details, but deep down in the sub-soil of its fundamental principles. For Masonry, like the man who cultivates it, has outgrown the *swaddling clothes* and the *feebleness* of infancy; but, like the man, too, it preserves every original and essential limb, and organ, and function; and, though greatly differing in development and power, the infant and the man are identical. It is also true, that the essential elements of Masonry, like those of a true Mason, are not to be found in drapery, manners and customs, the fashion of which may change, but in its physical, mental and moral attributes which, (except as increased by growth,) are unchangeable, and which, by its inherent vitality and generative power, are propagated from generation to generation. The unchangeable 'Landmarks' of Masonry, too, like the attributes of a true Mason, are external and internal—written and unwritten—of which the internal or unwritten are the more important, and are to be learned and observed only in secret; while the external or written, which relate wholly to its organic form and visible functions, are those by which the Legislative, Executive and Judicial powers of the Craft are bound to be governed and guided. These written 'Landmarks' are few in number, simple in form, broad in their scope, and relate wholly to the essential externals of Masonry; even the written Law of our Jurisdiction, with all its complexity of detail, is but the varied expression of one of these comprehensive principles, which, like a 'Corner Stone,' determines the bearings and form of the entire structure. This underlying principle of our Masonic law may be thus formulated:

"It is the right of the Lodge to make and regulate Masons, subject only to the power of Grand Lodge, limited by Landmarks, to make and regulate Lodges.

"Of the relative importance of the different departments of our Law, it may be well to say: that, while the Constitution and By-Laws of Grand Lodge, which

declare its organic structure and define its functions, are fundamental and worthy of careful scrutiny and observation, the *Regulations of Chartered Lodges* are of vital importance to the Craft; if carefully studied, thoroughly understood and faithfully observed, they will exert a powerful influence in purifying, elevating and preserving the Masonry of this Grand Jurisdiction. The *Penal Code* is, (as it was intended to be,) but a summary of the Law of Masonic Trials. It is simple and elementary in form, that it may be the more easily understood by those who, without experience, find themselves compelled to conduct a trial.

"No one will presume to say that the Masonic Law of this Grand Jurisdiction, as now revised and compiled, is perfect. Perfection cannot be inscribed on anything of human origin. But the Masons of Michigan may congratulate themselves on the solidity, symmetry and harmony that now characterize, in a high degree, the body of their Law. If, with true Masonic 'freedom, fervency and zeal,' we study and obey it, we shall, from time to time, be able to eliminate its defects and enhance its merits, until it shall stand, as all Masonic structures should, the unmistakable exponent of 'Wisdom, Strength and Beauty.'"

This language is equally applicable to this compilation, which is simply the revision adopted in 1873, with such amendments as have been since enacted.

Grand Lodge has included herein a classified synopsis of approved decisions and rulings in appealed cases. It must be remembered that this addition is but a digest, and where possible the full text of the decision or ruling, as it appears in the proceedings to which reference is made, should be examined. This digest embraces all approved decisions and all rulings of the Grand Lodge since 1860, when decisions were first reported to Grand Lodge. But few questions can arise which have not been ruled upon and reported hereth. Masters should thoroughly familiarize themselves with both statutes and decisions. In the matter of Lodge trials the endeavor should be to avoid error. When charges are received hasty action is unnecessary. If questions are raised with reference to jurisdiction or regularity, Masters should take time to consider them, so that if the charges are irregular, or the Lodge is without jurisdiction, the necessary amendments may be made, or the work and worry of a Lodge trial may be avoided.

The exercise of care will not only prevent improper persecutions, but it will encourage and promote proper disciplinary measures.

Fraternally,

WILLIAM P. INNES,

Grand Secretary.

GRAND RAPIDS, March 18, A. L. 5886.

THE
CHARGES
OF A
FREE-MASON,

EXTRACTED FROM

The ancient Records of Lodges beyond the Sea, and of those in England, Scotland, and Ireland, for the use of the Lodges in London. To be read at the making of New Brethren, or when the Master shall order it.

THE GENERAL HEADS, VIZ.:

- I. Of God and Religion.
- II. Of the Civil Magistrate, supreme and subordinate.
- III. Of Lodges.
- IV. Of Masters, Wardens, Fellows and Apprentices.
- V. Of the Management of the Craft in working.
- VI. Of Behavior, viz. :
 1. In the Lodge while constituted.
 2. After the Lodge is over and the Brethren not gone.
 3. When Brethren meet without Strangers, but not in a Lodge.
 4. In Presence of Strangers not Masons.
 5. At Home and in the Neighborhood.
 6. Towards a strange Brother.

I. *Concerning God and Religion.*

A Mason is oblig'd, by his Tenure, to obey the moral Law; and if he rightly understands the Art, he will never be a stupid Atheist, nor an irreligious Libertine. But though in ancient Times Masons were charg'd in every Country to be of the Religion of that Country or Nation, whatever it was, yet 'tis now thought more expedient only to oblige them to that Religion in which all Men agree, leaving their particular Opinions to themselves; that is, to be good Men and true, or Men of Honor and Honesty, by whatever Denominations or Persuasions they may be distinguish'd; whereby Masonry becomes the Center of Union, and the Means of conciliating true Friendship among Persons that must have remain'd at a perpetual Distance.

II. *Of the Civil Magistrate, supreme and subordinate.*

A Mason is a peaceable Subject to the Civil Powers, wherever he resides or works, and is never to be concern'd in Plots and Conspiracies against the Peace and Welfare of the Nation, nor to behave himself undutifully to inferior Magistrates; for as Masonry hath been always injured by War, Bloodshed, and Confusion, so ancient Kings and Princes have been much dispos'd to encourage the Craftsmen, because of their Peaceableness and Loyalty, whereby they practically answer'd the Cavils of their Adversaries, and promoted the Honor of the Fraternity, who ever flourish'd in Times of Peace. So that if a Brother should be a Rebel against the State, he is not to be countenanc'd in his Rebellion, however he may be pitied 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.

III. *Of Lodges.*

A Lodge is a Place where Masons assemble and work: Hence that Assembly, or duly organiz'd Society of Masons, is call'd a Lodge, and every Brother ought to belong to one, and to be subject to its By-Laws and the General Regulations. It is either particular or general, and will be best understood by attending it, and by the Regulations of the General or Grand Lodge hereunto annex'd. In ancient Times, no Master or Fellow could be absent from it, especially when warn'd to appear at it, without incurring a severe Censure, until it appear'd to the Master and Wardens that pure Necessity hinder'd him.

The Persons admitted Members of a Lodge must be good and true Men, free-born, and of mature and discreet Age, no Bondmen, no Women, no immoral or scandalous Men, but of good Report.

IV. *Of Masters, Wardens, Fellows and Apprentices.*

All Preferment among Masons is grounded upon real Worth and personal Merit only; that so the Lords may be well served, the Brethren not put to Shame, nor the Royal Craft despis'd: Therefore no Master or Warden is chosen by Seniority, but for his Merit. It is impossible to describe these things in Writing, and every Brother must attend in his Place, and learn them in a Way peculiar to this Fraternity: Only Candidates may know that no Master should take an Apprentice unless he has sufficient Employment for him, and unless he be a perfect Youth, having no Maim or Defect in his Body, that may render him incapable of learning the Art of serving his Master's Lord, and of being made a Brother, and then a Fellow-Craft in due Time, even after he has served such a Term of Years as the Custom of the Country directs; and that he should be descended of honest Parents; that so, when otherwise qualify'd, he may arrive to the Honor of being the Warden, and then the Master of the Lodge, the Grand Warden, and at length the Grand Master of all the Lodges, according to his Merit.

No Brother can be a Warden until he has pass'd the part of a Fellow-Craft; nor a Master until he has acted as a Warden, nor Grand Warden until he has been Master of a Lodge, nor Grand Master unless he has been a Fellow-Craft before his Election, who is also to be nobly born, or a Gentleman of the best Fashion, or some eminent Scholar, or some curious Architect, or other Artist, descended of honest Parents, and who is of singular great Merit in the Opinion of the Lodges. And for the better, and easier, and more honorable Discharge of his Office, the Grand Master has the Power to chuse his own Deputy Grand Master, who must be then, or must have been formerly, the Master of a particular Lodge, and has the Privilege of acting whatever the Grand Master, his Principal, should act, unless the said Principal be present, or interpose his Authority by a Letter.

These Rules and Governors, supreme and subordinate, of the ancient Lodge, are to be obey'd in their respective Stations by all the Brethren, according to the old Charges and Regulations, with all Humility, Reverence, Love and Alacrity.

V. *Of the Management of the Craft in Working.*

All Masons shall work honestly on working Days, that they may live creditably on holy Days; and the time appointed by the Law of the Land, or confirm'd by Custom, shall be observ'd.