

Dependent membership – objectionable law

To the present writer, the hard and fast laws for dependent membership are among the most objectionable of these signs of 'progress.' He has no love for the non-affiliate; but, if the latter chooses to deprive himself of certain privileges, whose business is it? Granted that he frequently is an undesirable member; perhaps one who became a Mason from motives of self-interest, and has not got what he expected from the connection, or one who is disgruntled because others have been elected to office above him. It is entirely possible that both Lodge and Chapter would be better off without such a member, but that is not the point. If he is dropped from the Chapter, he is punished in the Chapter for an offence against the Lodge. If he renews his Lodge membership in order to remain in the Chapter, he is forced into the Lodge against his will, which is not only an interference with individual rights, but is very poor policy, as well ; for our membership must be voluntary in order to be strong and influential.

It must be remembered, also, that the members affected are not all 'undesirable members.' A worthy Companion may have perfectly legitimate reasons for allowing his Lodge membership to lapse, while wishing to retain his connection with his Chapter; but no, these laws apply to all alike.

Sources:

Proceedings of the Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of Canada at the annual convocation, 1910 report on Foreign Correspondence – MAINE