

Relation of the General Grand Chapter to the several Grand Chapters

He was one of the Ohio delegation to visit the triennial of the General Grand Chapter at Savannah. He ventures to explain the nature of the relation of the General Grand Chapter to the several Grand Chapters "holding allegiance to it." He says:

"It was my first experience in participating in the deliberations of a legislative body whose only powers and authority over its constituents, with the exception of a few subordinate bodies, created by and under its immediate jurisdiction, were purely advisory. I must confess that I found much to admire in the principle of government there prescribed and practised. That principle, briefly stated, is, Companions, we have adopted rules of conduct, obedience to which we recommend, but leave their enforcement with you. Our only requirements are that you be guided in all your Capitular relations and dealings by your own best judgment and the righteous dictates of your own consciences."

It must be confessed that, to this reader, the foregoing is not very illuminating. The General Grand Chapter in announcing the formation and establishment of recently created so-called "Grand" Chapters, clearly states that they are "subject to the jurisdiction of the General Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of the United States of America." It is difficult to associate the "purely advisory" explanation with the claim of sovereignty on the one hand and admission of allegiance on the other. No Grand body can call itself such and acknowledge submission to another. If it is content with the doubtful independence of suzerainty it has no claim to distinction as a "Grand" body, and it is a question whether, under such circumstances, it has the right to appeal for recognition to sovereign bodies which do not acknowledge a superior. There is no desire to be captious, but the actual conditions present such a maze of anomaly that the oft-repeated plea of "advisory position only" of the General Grand as a set-off against its own declarations of possession of jurisdiction, renders such enlightenment as that furnished by Ohio's worthy G. H. P. to have about as clarifying an effect as the struggle of a solitary rushlight to pierce the gloom of the caves of Elephanta.

Sources:

Proceedings of the Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of Canada at the annual convocation, 1912 report on Foreign Correspondence - OHIO