

Freemasonry in the Western Hemisphere



GEORGE WASHINGTON

The Greatest Freemason in the Western Hemisphere

(Pres. Truman speaking at the dedication of the great statue of Washington in the Geo. Washington Masonic National Association Building, Alexandria, Va.)

Ray V. Denslow

1953

Kilwinning and later joined the Grand Lodge of Scotland. It disappeared about 1816.

FREEMASONRY ON MARTINIQUE

Martinique is one of the Windward Islands of the West Indies and has belonged to the French since 1635. Here is the famous volcano, Mount Pelee, 4900 feet, whose eruption occurred May 8, 1902, and destroyed the city of St. Pierre with its more than 30,000 inhabitants. Martinique is the birthplace of the Empress Josephine. It has an area of 380 square miles and a quarter million population. Its capital is Fort-de-France.

There were two periods when England owned the island, 1794-1802, and 1809-1815. Consequently, we find both English, Irish, and French lodges.

The French were first on the scene with their lodges:

1738 La Parfait Union
1760 St. Pierre des Freres Unis
1765 Latendre Fraternite
1777 La Sincerite des Freres Choises (May have been *1781)
1786 Le Zele et la Bienfaisance
1786 Le Paix (dormant 1832)
1786 La Parfaite Amitie.

Ireland issued a warrant to the following:

1801 No. 690

England gave but one known Charter:

No. 359, in 1813, to *Lodge of Chosen Friends* (dead 1832).

From the name of the lodge it would appear that it was a new name given the old French lodge in 1814, *Les Freres Choises*, for at that period the English were in control.

During the period of the French rule, 1803-1814, the French Grand Lodge gave warrants to the following:

1803 L'Harmonie
1814 Les Freres Choises

And when they again acquired control in 1815, they gave additional charters:

1820 La Concorde
1821 La Bienfaisance.

If there are yet French lodges working in Martinique we have no knowledge; at any rate until the Grand Orient and Grand Lodge of France become generally recognized, there will be little inter-visitation.

FREEMASONRY ON THE ISLAND OF CUBA

It cannot be said that Freemasonry thrives on persecution, but it can be said that Masons who maintain their membership and activity under the strains of persecution have a much higher conception of the institution and appreciate their connection with the fraternity more than do those whose greatest hardship has been the payment of annual dues.

For more than a century, in Cuba, to be a Freemason was to be a martyr; in fact being a Freemason in any Latin American country in times past, or even at the present time, requires a great amount of that Masonic virtue known as Fortitude, for many a Freemason has given up his life in the defense of principles. The story of Freemasonry on the Island of Cuba is filled with these stories of persecution, of hardships, of strife between grand lodges, of contention between "higher bodies" which sought to dominate grand lodges, and finally, the formation of a "united" grand lodge which is today carrying on the traditions and customs of Freemasonry in a way which has caused it to secure recognition from practically all the Masonic world.

And because they have such an interesting history, and because they are our next door neighbors, and because they are *good* neighbors, we feel that our brethren in the English speaking world should know more about *Cuban Freemasonry*.

But, first, just a word about Cuba and its history. The Island is only ninety miles distant from the American City of Key West; it has an area of 44,164 square miles, and a population estimated at 4,199,952. It lies in the Gulf of Mexico, the largest island of the West Indies group. Only fifty miles separate it from the neighboring island of Haiti, and 85 miles from the island of Jamaica. It has a length of 730 miles and an average breadth of 50 miles. It has a coast line of 2,500 miles with excellent harbors, largest of which is Havana, one of the finest ports in the world. One of these ports, Guantanamo, has been leased to the United States as a naval base and played an important part in World War II.

It is a country of plains and mountains, one peak rising to a height of over 8,000 feet; the soil is fertile, and the tropical heat and humidity make rich vegetation, and tropical fruits and vegetables flourish. The population is two-thirds white.

The island was discovered by Columbus on his first voyage in 1492; its name is an Indian name, and with the exception of a brief period in 1762-63 it remained a Spanish colony until the Spanish-American War of 1898, when under the terms of the Treaty of Paris it became a ward of the United States. The island became a republic in 1902 and its government is modeled after that of the United States, with the exception that presidents serve one term of four years and cannot succeed themselves.

Education is compulsory between the ages of 7-14. Catholicism predominates; the language is Spanish, although English is widely understood.

AN EXCITING HISTORY

Cuba has had an interesting, yet exciting, history. Velasquez's invasion in 1511 drew many immigrants to the island in the hopes of securing some of the untold wealth which the island was said to have. The transfer of Jamaica to England caused many Jamaicans to move to Cuba. Then for two centuries the island proved to be the abode of pirates and buccaneers which were the basis for the island's wealth. Then in 1762 Havana was captured by the British under Admiral Pocock and the Earl of Albemarle; the following year it was given back to Spain in return for the Floridas. When a portion of the island of Santo Domingo was ceded to the French, most of the Spanish residents left and located in Cuba. During the black revolution, many French left Santo Domingo and settled in Cuba.

Havana was restored to Spain by the Treaty of Paris in 1763 and thereafter there was a series of liberal governors, so much so, that Cuba might have been said to be independent. There was a limited amount of freedom politically for a few years under the constitution of 1812, and in 1818 the island was opened to the commerce of the world. But underlying all of this was a jealousy between those born in Spain and those born in Cuba, a desire by many to be annexed by the United States, and a plotting for independence.

Then came the period of rule by "Captains General," together with the "special laws" laid out by the mother country for the control of the people. Cubans protested these laws, and especially the law which failed to give them a voice in the Cortes (General Assembly). Under O'Donnell there occurred a bloody persecution of the blacks.

And some of the great powers began to be interested in the political future of the island; England, France, Colombia, Mexico, and even the United States were said to have been involved. Presidents Pierce and Buchanan were for acquiring the island by purchase, and from 1849 to 1851 there were no less than three filibustering expeditions organized in the United States, which had for their objective the "liberation" of Cuba. Two of these were led by the Spanish General Narcisco Lopez, a Freemason.

Corrupt administration and other forces brought about the Ten Years' War. The Separatists were led by Carlos Manuel de Cespedes; the war was waged largely in the eastern part of the island. There was much pillage and destruction by the forces of both sides. Many hoped for American intervention—which never came. But this rebellion which began in 1868 was settled by the Treaty of Zanjon in 1878.

But the treaty failed to bring about all that was demanded. In

1881 the Spanish Constitution of 1876 was proclaimed in Cuba. General Calleja suspended the constitutional guarantees Feb. 23, 1895, and the leaders of the Ten Years' War again took to the field. Among these were Generals Maximo Gomez, Jose Marti, Antonio Maceo, and Calixto Garcia; this time the seat of war was in the western provinces. President McKinley, in the United States, did not wish to recognize the rebels, but did believe in intervention to stop useless bloodshed. Spain was very resentful of this attitude and the ground was laid for an explosion. And it was an explosion. The U. S. Battleship "Maine" blew up, or was blown up, in Havana harbor in February, 1898.

The United States demanded the withdrawal of Spanish troops; war followed at once. A Spanish naval squadron was destroyed while leaving the port of Santiago de Cuba; the port was surrounded with land forces and fell to the invaders. In December of that year Spain "relinquished" the island in trust for its inhabitants. Spanish rule ceased January 1, 1899, and the military rule of the United States on May 20, 1902.

The first Cuban Congress met May 5, 1902; Governor Thomas Estrada Palma was elected the first president. A threatened insurrection in 1906 was quashed by the establishment of a provisional government sponsored by the United States. January 28, 1909, the republic was again inaugurated and shortly thereafter the American troops were withdrawn. Since that time there have been several minor disturbances and some severe financial crises.

The Cubans have been deeply appreciative of the support of the American government; they have stood solidly behind us during various international congresses; they declared war on Germany in 1917 and again in December, 1941. In return, our government has enabled them to float loans, has loaned them money, and in all ways attempted to be a good neighbor. That Freemasonry has had a large part in this policy will be fully understood by a careful reading of the story of Freemasonry on the Island of Cuba as here recounted.

CUBA'S FIRST LODGE

During the formative period of Freemasonry it was a generally accepted custom in the Grand Lodges of Scotland, England and Ireland to establish military lodges. These lodges were regularly chartered and were usually attached to a regiment of foot soldiers. Of this we have many examples in our own country in which military lodges were chartered in English, Irish and Scotch regiments stationed temporarily in such cities as Boston and Philadelphia. The military has played an important part in the establishment of Freemasonry throughout the globe.

This was particularly true in the Island of Cuba, for we learn that

in 1762, when England had conquered Cuba, a regiment of soldiers was sent to the city of Havana; this regiment was the DeWebb regiment belonging to the brigade of General Walsh. The Grand Lodge of Ireland gave a warrant to the members of the fraternity connected with this regiment, it being registered as Lodge No. 218, and it carried on an existence until the regiment left the Island, July 6, 1763. When, where, and how it worked, the records do not tell; there is little trace of its existence. Tradition has it that the lodge worked in the ancient convent of San Francisco, the convent being occupied by officers of the conquering army and later used as the custom house; in recent days it served as the city post office.

To the Ars Quatuor Coronatorum we are indebted for a photograph of this lost Cuban Masonic document. It was written on parchment $8\frac{3}{4}$ inches in length by $8\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide, the manuscript is sealed with red sealing wax, upon which in relief is an arm holding a Mason's trowel; attached to the seal are two ribbons, the broader one being blue, the narrower one yellow. The existence of this lodge is certified to by Brother Robert Freke Gould, but who adds that the names of the officials given in the charter are not those of any officers of the regiment. The lodge probably did not work upon candidates, other than those in the army of occupation. Gould reports that the charter was granted in 1750, and there is evidence to show that eleven members of the regiment were initiated during the stay on the Island.

The document referred to as appearing in Ars Quatuor Coronatorum, is a membership certificate and reads:

"And the Darkness Comprehended it Not—

In the East A place full of Light where Reins silence and peace We the Master wardens and Secretary of the Worship full of Free and Accepted Masons Dedicated to St. John No. 218 on the Registry of Ireland held in the Forty Eight Regiment of Foot (Ne Varietur) A Dornd with all their Honours and Assembled in Due Form—

Do hereby Declare Certifie and Attest to all men Lightned spread on the Fact of the Earth that the Bearer hereof Alexander Cockburn hath been Received an Entered Apprentice and fellow Craft and after sufficient proof and Tryall we have given unto him the sublime Degree of Master and he May Lawfully and Safely without any Demur be Admitted into And Accepted off by any Society to whome these Presents Come Greeting—

Given under our Hands and Seal at our Lodge Room at the Havanna this 3d Day of May in the year of our Lord 1763 and in the Year of Masonry 5763—

William Smith, Master
James Lee,
Rich'd Coombs (?), Wardens

(Seal)
Peter Tobin: Secretary."

To understand the beginnings of Cuban Freemasonry we should remember that in the early history of the Island it was nothing but a

Spanish Colony, or rather a territory exploited by Spain, without possessing any political rights whatsoever. It was subject to the rule of bigoted monarchs who were enemies of liberal ideas in general and Freemasonry in particular. England had chartered lodges in Gibraltar and Madrid as early as 1727, and from this simple beginning the fraternity was spread over many parts of Spain. At the instigation of the Holy Inquisition, Ferdinand VI, in 1761, forbade the practice of Freemasonry in any of the Spanish territories under penalty of death. He did not succeed in extinguishing the lights in all the countries of the Spanish Crown, for we know the *Grand Logia Espanola* changed its name to *Gran Oriente* in 1767, and was recognized by the Grand Lodge of England, consequently we are not surprised that at the end of the Eighteenth Century there was little Masonic light in this far western possession.

About 1800 the Spanish and French were driven from the Islands of Santo Domingo and Haiti; many of these settled in Oriente Province. Some of these settlers were members of the fraternity, but the charters under which they had worked authorized them to work only in the Island of Santo Domingo. With their arrival in Cuba began a new era in Cuban Masonry, but to the brethren of the military lodge must go the credit for having implanted Freemasonry in that country,

THE LAND OF PERSECUTION

For some unaccountable reason Freemasonry appears to thrive under persecution. If this statement be true, then it is ample explanation for the present status of Freemasonry in Cuba. The historian, Emanuel Rebold, tells us:

"In no place except Cuba has one seen Freemasonry exposed to such atrocious persecution as in this Catholic reign par excellence, persecution founded on the bulls of Clement XII (April 27, 1738) and Benedict XIV (March 18, 1751), and the edict of Cardinal Colsalvi (August 12, 1814), in all of which Freemasons are excommunicated and the severest punishments, including that of death, were inflicted upon them."

We have previously referred to the establishment of lodges in Madrid and Gibraltar. The ultra Catholic Spanish clergy showed itself here as an enemy of the institution. However, Jose Torrubia, censor and an official of the Holy Office of the Inquisition in Madrid, was charged by his superiors, in 1750, to form a Masonic Lodge under a false secular name, with the purpose of obtaining the secrets and becoming familiar with the doctrines of the fraternity. For this purpose he obtained from the Papal Delegate the necessary dispensations relieving him from any oaths he might have to take on becoming a Freemason. He next visited the various lodges in the Provinces of Spain and, as a climax, presented himself before the Supreme Tribunal of the Inquisition, where he proceeded to denounce Free-

masonry as the most abominable institution that existed in the world and accusing its members of all types of vices and crimes. He handed over a list of ninety-seven lodges which had been established in Spain and urged that the full power of the Inquisition be turned upon them.

Because of the growing power of Freemasonry, the Holy Office persuaded the King to issue an interdict against the fraternity, which was done. All Freemasons who were discovered to be such were put to death, and thus Freemasonry did not again show signs of life until the French Invasion of 1807, after which it soon reappeared and again spread throughout the Kingdom, so that by 1809 there existed various Grand Lodges in Spain, but in 1814 the Inquisition was re-established and Freemasonry was again compelled to go under ground. Cuba, being a Colony of Spain, Freemasonry naturally underwent the same treatment as it did in Spain itself, and during the period of the Inquisition none of the Spanish Grand Orientes exercised any authority in Cuba.

August 15, 1814, King Ferdinand VII, of Spain, ordered the Supreme Council of the Inquisition to publish the edict of Pope Pius VII, proclaiming in effect "that if the ancient Roman Senate passed stiff penal prohibitions against certain groups of people because they might be working against the government or the public welfare, with much greater right the Holy Church should work against so-called Freemasonry, the Illuminati, or the Egyptian mysteries which accompany their shady operations with rites, ceremonies, which were suspicious in view of their secrecy, at least and without doubt conspiring against the established religion, especially that of Christ, of which the Roman Pope was established as head, master and guard by the Divine Founder." Former Popes had issued edicts against the fraternity. Pope Clement XII, in a bull, April 27, 1738, ordered all Freemasons to be excommunicated, and from which only the Pope could absolve them. Then followed Benedict's papal bull, May 18, 1751, confirming the edict of Pope Clement, but giving additional reasons why Freemasonry should be prohibited. The Pope's Secretary of State published an edict, January 14, 1739, in which he decreed against these Masonic sinners the most severe temporal punishment, at the same time giving orders to assure their execution. Benedict XIV, to give force to the same provisions, charged that all magistrates apply these punishments with every possible vigilance. Pope Pius VII, "to rid the world of a gangrene that might infect the whole body of the State," ruled that the whole force of the law should be applied in all territory ruled by the Apostolic Chair, urging that all who might have the misfortune of participating in any manner in the criminal Masonic association, to reflect seriously about the abyss of perdition to which they had submerged their souls, "that they would be excommunicated here and even in that Eternal Tribunal

where there is nothing hidden, and that they should return sincerely penitent to the arms of the Mother Church."

The government knew, of course, where the Freemasons were congregating; they knew the names of those who were officially connected with the lodges, and these names and places were turned over to the Presidents of the Tribunal. The general edict which went forth at this time prohibited any one in Rome, or the Holy Pontifical Dominion, "to continue, receive anew, renew, or start any so-called Masonic association under name of any kind, and to give neither aid nor help to such individuals." None were to be permitted to keep in their possession any instrument, seal, emblem, statue, or thing involved in the exercise or carrying on of said association. Any one who had knowledge of secret meetings must immediately communicate it to the government or the church, being assured that all such information would be kept secret and that the informer would be well paid when he gave sufficient proof for conviction. Punishment decreed against a violation of the edict would be severe bodily punishment, total or partial confiscation of goods or wealth, which would be apportioned between the ministers and executors of the Tribunal in proportion to their diligence in discovering the guilty parties. All buildings were to be taken, reserving to the owner, in case of his being ignorant as to his tenant, the right of being reimbursed.

Persecution of Freemasons was the order of the day in Cuba, even up to the time of the American occupation. According to a document dated July 17, 1814, one Don Manuel Ramirez was thrown into jail without a hearing, one of the complaints set forth against him being that he was a Freemason.

Dr. Vidal Morales y Morales, in his book about the martyrs of the Cuban Revolution, tells us:

"Juan Clement Zenea, in a work of which we have seen only 104 pages, which was printed in Mexico in 1868, says that one Roman de la Luz, uncle of Jose de la Luz, was carrying on a revolutionary project with some members of the fraternity in Havana, Freemasons who at that time had great prestige and had counted on the influence of the lodges which were under their direction. The conspiracy could not have had very much importance since there was nothing heard or published about it, and we only know that it ended by one of those intrigues which have disorganized all that which illustrious honored people have tried to organize."

Roman's wife, in a confession to her priest, told of the matter; she was absolved from her sins, but had opened the doors of persecution against her heretical husband. He was deported to Spain, where he died in confinement. Although he was rich, he received no money during his exile. The sum which his wife had sent him monthly passed through the hands of her confessor, and the latter took care to withhold it, thus ending the first tentative revolution in the Island of

Cuba and marking the lamentable end of a leader who, it was said, was active, intelligent and brave.

In July, 1830, we learn that various Freemasons were put to death, or in prison and given sentences of various length, by the military commission. One Jose Solis was charged with being a Freemason and conspiring as a member of the society of the Black Eagle. He was given a sentence of ten years in prison in Ceuta. Whether these Freemasons conspired under the guise of a secret society or not, it is certain that they were sentenced because of their membership. Morales says in his article about the Black Eagles:

"He saw the diploma of the Rose Croix of Jose Solis, who incidentally, with other prisoners, was pardoned on the occasion of the birth of Isabel II. This diploma gives us an idea of the state of art of that period. The diploma is illuminated with a multitude of colors, its appearance is beautiful, but that which is clearly written upon it is more beautiful still. The invocation is striking 'in the name of the Most Holy and Indivisible Trinity,' that is to say that our Masonry in that epoch, as was that of England and France, was Trinitarian, a fact of which we have been ignorant since in Cuba we have always been governed by American customs and traditions in the affairs of Freemasonry.

"It was dated December 3, 1825, and stamped with the names of Lucas Arcadio de Ugarte, M.S.M.; Felix Rodriguez Hermida, First Vigilante; Juan Saldana, Second Vigilante; Marcos Fernandez Castaneda, Secretary; Gabino Hernandez, Treasurer; that is to say, all, except Saldana, who had died, were condemned as Freemasons because they had used their own names on the signature instead of their symbolic names as they could have done."

During the governorship of Don Miguel Tacon and Rosique, from March, 1834, the Freemasons were persecuted constantly, and one does not exaggerate in stating that during the four years of his rule there was no evidence of Masonic activity. Queen Christina, in 1834, issued an edict of amnesty to all who had belonged to any secret society up until April 26, 1834, but any who might have had a part in any secret society, or had loaned assistance to any member, were liable to lose their employment, to suffer imprisonment, exile, or to have their property confiscated. This was sufficient reason for Freemasonry remaining latent until 1857.

June 22, 1849, when the newly organized Grand Lodge met to hold a festival in honor of St. John the Baptist, the Grand Master warned the representatives "to meet with all possible secrecy in order to avoid surprise on the part of the police" who visit the meetings frequently to see if there were prohibited activities.

On March 21, 1869, Brother Jose Rosell, who had been imprisoned since February 11 of that year, with several others, was taken to the Colony of Santa Isabel de Fernanda Poo; later he was taken to Vera Cruz. The lodge with which he had been connected (No. 12) began to suffer persecution, and lodges were ordered to suspend their activities in order to avoid political complications. Five lodges which work-

ed in the Temple at Havana ceased meeting; later they began holding communications in the residences of members, but always with the greatest watchfulness and care. During this critical time numerous schools were founded by the members of the fraternity, causing a Cuban Brother to remark:

"What a singular thing. The more our Order is persecuted the more it lives for its country, the more it aids its government by the establishment of public schools."

In 1868, the Provisional Governor of the Archbishopric of Cuba, the Priest, Jose Orbera y Carrion, published a scurrilous circular against Freemasonry in which he stated that the Freemasons were attempting to undermine the religion of the people of his Archbishopric, all of which should cause alarm and consternation to the parents of families and all good citizens. He said the Freemasons were sacrilegious in that they called secret the locale of the meeting place of the lodge; the silence which prevailed in the lodge was described as religious, in fact everything they did was either sacred or religious. The zealot quoted from the edicts and bulls of the Popes, beginning with the time of Clement XII, in 1738, and continuing to the time of Pius IX in 1865. He stated that civil power had found it necessary to prohibit the fraternity. All sinners were asked to return to the fold of the church.

Maximiliano Galan made a brilliant reply to the Reverend gentleman. He opened by stating that Freemasons believed they were teaching life as Christ had taught it, and they worked toward that holy purpose promulgated by the Divine Master in his attempt to transform all humanity into one family of friends and brothers. He referred to the fact that the charges made against the Freemasons were also applied to the early Christians; he expressed his belief that the Priest alone was to blame, for it was he who had cast the aspersions, not only upon the Masonic brethren, but also upon their mothers, wives, and children. These were best able to state as to whether Freemasons were atheists, for most everyone knows that one of the first conditions demanded of those who desired to be initiated was to express a firm belief in a Supreme Being. Galan asked the Priest to pardon him if he had offered any offense to him, because such was not his intention, and although the Priest might be called an enemy of Freemasonry, the Freemasons should love him because had not the Master taught that people could not love God and hate their brother?

In the year 1870, during the Grand Mastership of Andres Puente, the Spaniards attributed to the Freemasons the existence of a secret society in Santiago de Cuba, which, it was purported, aided the insurrectors. Commander Boet arrested fourteen members of Fraternity Lodge No. 1, at a meeting and took them to the City of San Juan, where Puente was assassinated; he was shot as a traitor. All

great causes have martyrs and the cause of Freemasonry had one in Most Worshipful Brother Andres Puente. The Grand Master had fallen a sacrifice to his integrity, but the institution, in the meantime attained external development.

Brother Nicolas Dominguez Cowan, an enthusiastic Freemason, proposed that they celebrate funeral honors in memory of the late Grand Master. While the idea was approved by the active members of the lodge San Andres, over which he had presided, there were many who did not agree because of the danger which the act entailed. The meeting was called for 6:30 p. m. March 5, 1870. It was generally known, not only among the Freemasons but publicly, that the object of the meeting was to do honor to the late Grand Master. The appointed night and hour arrived; the lodge temple was full, the membership were there en masse. Shortly afterward, armed uniformed men appeared in the streets leading to the temple; later this had grown to an immense crowd, all crying "kill the conspirators, death to the Cuban Council." The outside guard informed the Worshipful Master that the populace were mounting the stairs. The Master said to his brethren:

"Do not be alarmed, my dear brethren, our fate, whatever it may be, we must face with courage; we must save our charter above everything else."

A brother responded that he would guard it with his life. Finally, breaking out of the lodge hall, and with unusual bravery, he reached the home of a brother, where he safely deposited the charter. The man who carried the charter to safety was Brother Edward Godwin, an employe of the custom house. There were more than one hundred brethren in the temple on that evening; some fled, others were protected and gained permission to leave, forty or more were made prisoners. During their stay in jail the brethren exemplified to the other prisoners what Freemasonry meant, and bore out the doctrine of the equality of men. None denied that they were Freemasons, each stated the official position which he occupied in the lodge. The Mayor decreed the freedom of the group, because in the Spanish penal code there was no law which set forth that Freemasonry was a crime. So, three days later, they left the prison—free men.

But the good news was not to last. A few days later, in the official newspaper, there appeared a decree ordering them to be returned to prison for the purpose of "paying satisfactory bail." All returned to prison voluntarily, even three of the brethren who had left Cuba. When Easter Sunday arrived, the prisoners displayed true Masonic ideals by taking up a subscription of \$1,632.00 with which they proceeded to redecorate the chapel and altar of a Catholic church, bought and presented some magnificent candlesticks, and supplied the chapel with a new rug. Even the Priest and their doctor were so impressed

that they promised to use their influence in seeing them released. The order for release was obtained by these two men and delivered to the commanding officer, who doubted the advisability of turning them loose, but when the Captain General returned to Havana he was persuaded to permit them to leave jail under bond, after having spent one hundred days as prisoners.

A most curious incident connected with Independencia Lodge is recounted by Brother F. de P. Rodriguez, the Cuban historian:

"One of the members was General Donato Marmol, who always regarded Freemasonry as a religion. A notice was once sent to him, while commanding the Division of Bayamo, that a Spanish Lieutenant was to introduce into the City a convoy of provisions badly needed by the hungry population there sheltered. General Marmol set to work and captured the convoy, together with the Lieutenant. The Spanish officer, when taken into camp, asked to see the General, to whom he gave a Masonic sign and pleaded for his deliverance, reminding the General that the provisions were not for the soldiers, but for the many Cuban refugees. General Marmol was touched, and thinking of the Lieutenant as a Mason and not as a soldier, released the Lieutenant, and handed him back the convoy. This act was harshly condemned by the General's subordinate officers, who knew nothing of Masonry and among whom was Maximo Gomez, who was afterward initiated into Independencia Lodge and in course of time arose to be the Generalissimo of the Cuban Army, when we achieved our independence long afterward. General Marmol, that fine specimen of manhood, died shortly after the above incident. The President, Cespedes, was treacherously shot the year following at San Lorenzo, Independencia Lodge dying with him, after an existence of over three years. That was the only military lodge known to have existed during our Ten Years' War."

In 1891, Manuel Ruiz Inza, well-known Cuban author, published a short story concerning the beginnings of Freemasonry in the Island of Cuba. In this article he tells us:

"The Grand Lodge of France, founded in 1748 in the City of Guarico, now Cape Haiti, the first lodge on the Island of Santa Domingo, with the name of St. John of Jerusalem, and, in 1765, in Los Cayos, the second lodge, with the name Reunited Brothers. This was followed by the establishment of additional lodges, named successfully Reunion of Hearts, Harmony, Perseverance, Hope, Friendship, Truth, Beneficent Concord, all of which were organized in 1795 into a Provincial Grand Lodge. Brother Huet de la Chapelle, a Civil Judge and Lieutenant of Almirantazgo, was the Grand Master of the Provincial Grand Lodge, and also of a Grand Chapter of the Rose Croix of Heredom, the latter having been established by the Grand Lodge of France at Petit Goave, then the military and general government headquarters of the Colony."

Being forced to leave the Island of Santo Domingo, because of a change in government, the members of these lodges came to the Island of Cuba, where two of the lodges, La Concorde and La Perseverance, continued to work in the Cities of Baracoa and Santiago de Cuba; the other two, L'Amitie and La Benefique Concorde in Havana, although their charters authorized their working only on the Island of

Santo Domingo. The latter two lodges changed their names to the Spanish equivalent, Amistad and Benefica Concordia. Apart from the fact that they gave their names to two streets of the city, very little of their activities is known.

At the conclusion of the war between France and Spain, in 1808, the Governor General of Cuba forced all immigrants from Santo Domingo that had not been naturalized, to leave the Island and to destroy the two lodges in Oriente Province, Concordia and Perseverancia. These two lodges later reappeared, in 1810, in New Orleans, La., with charters issued by the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania, where they, with three other lodges in that city, formed the Grand Lodge of Louisiana in 1812.

In 1804, brethren who were members of some of these lodges, and others who were members of lodges dependent on the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania, petitioned the latter named Grand Lodge for a charter in order that they might found in Havana a lodge under the title *Temple of the Theological Virtues No. 103*, December 17, 1804.

TEMPLE OF THE THEOLOGICAL VIRTUES LODGE NO. 103

The first charter for a Cuban lodge was that issued by the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania, December 17, 1804, with the above name. The lodge is variously referred to under its French or Spanish name of "Le Temple des Vertus Theologiques," or "Las Virtudes Teologales." This lodge was intimately connected with Joseph Cerneau, its founder.

In the early part of the last century the name of Cerneau was prominent in the affairs of the Scottish Rite because of his attempts to establish the higher degrees in competition with an already established Supreme Council. Joseph Cerneau was born in 1763 in Villeblerin, France; he was a silversmith. During the War of 1804 he settled in Havana and had attained to all the degrees of the Scottish Rite, which, at that time, were climaxed by the 25th degree. His associates in the new lodge, of which he was to be Master, were two other Frenchmen, Pierre Courroy and Pierre Bauschey. He was expelled from the country in 1806 because of his French origin and revolutionary character; he proceeded thence to New York, where he proceeded to establish the Grand Consistory U. S. A. His death occurred in France in 1815.

During the year 1817 and 1818 there is no record of the lodges Concorde, Friendship or Theological Virtues, and it is barely possible they did not meet, or, if so, met secretly.

In 1805-06 three lodges, *Reunion des Coeurs*, *Concorde*, and *Perseverance* were reorganized at Santiago de Cuba. They were dispersed in 1808, but many of their members showed up in New Orleans where, on October 7, 1810, the first two consolidated under the

title *Concorde Lodge No. 117*; the other lodge became *Perseverance Lodge No. 118*. At this time, during the years from 1818 to 1822, lodges numbers 157, 161, 166, 167, 175, 181 were granted charters. All but the last two had surrendered their charters by the year 1822, and in 1826 the last two charters were revoked because of the failure of the lodges to meet and make report.

In 1815 the Grand Lodge of Louisiana granted a charter to Lodge No. 7, and in 1818 to lodges Nos. 11 and 14; South Carolina chartered *Constancia Lodge No. 50* in 1818, and *La Amenidad Lodge No. 52* in 1819; The Grand Orient of France implanted a lodge and consistory in 1819, and in 1821 gave charters to the Lodges *La Constante Sophie* and *l'Humanite*.

There are many statements and opinions as to the lodges which existed in Cuba at this time. Alvarez, in his History of Masonry in Cuba, lists the following:

"Established by the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania: Temple of Theological Virtues No. 103, Havana, Cuba, chartered December 17, 1804; this lodge was undoubtedly the No. 1 mentioned in other lists; *Las Delicias de la Habana* No. 157, Havana, March 2, 1818; *La Recompensa de las Virtudes* No. 161, Havana, May 9, 1818; *La Union de Regla* No. 166, Regla, April 5, 1819; *La Fidelidad Habanera* No. 167, Havana, September 16, 1819; *La Benevolencia* No. 175, Santiago de Cuba, November 8, 1820; *The True Philantrophy* No. 181, Santiago de Cuba, April 1, 1822.

"Established by the Grand Lodge of South Carolina: *La Constancia* No. 50, Havana, March 27, 1818; *Amenidad* No. 52, Havana, March 31, 1820.

"Established by the Grand Lodge of Louisiana: *Union Fraternal de Caridad* No. 14, Havana, 1815; *El Templo de la Divina Pastora* No. 19, Matanzas, 1818; *La Rectitud* No. 22, Havana, 1822. (The last three did not form a part of the Spanish Grand Lodge of the York Rite.)"

Alvarez does not accept the statement that on March 27, 1818, the Lodges of Theological Virtues, *Delicias* and *Constancia* met in the convent to establish the Spanish Grand Lodge of the York Rite.

Dr. Albert G. Mackey, in his history, tells us that the Grand Lodge of South Carolina recognized the Spanish Grand Lodge of the York Rite March 30, 1821, as a result of a communication received from that Grand Lodge announcing its formation "and seeking friendly relations with the Grand Lodge, stating at the same time that Lodge *Amenidad* No. 52 of our jurisdiction, asks permission to return its charter inasmuch as its members desire to become a part of the Grand Lodge of Havana."

Brother H. B. Jeffre is our authority for conditions which existed at this period:

"De Clouet was a member of the 'Grand Orient' of France, and as such founded in Havana in April, 1818, a 'Grand Consistory' of 32°, 'del Rito Escoces Antiguo y Aceptado, Principes del Real Secreto,' to which he gave authority to found lodges, chapters and councils, and to confer the 32°. The Grand

Orient of France approved his work under charter dated April 7, 1819. It appears doubtful, whether three lodges that were working at that time in Havana and Matanzas, really did combine with this Grand Consistory, but we accept that De Clouet formed several more lodges and also brought others that had been working independently, under the authority of this Grand Body. One lodge at least, 'La Constante Sophie,' received its charter from the Grand Orient of France direct. Of other bodies between the 3° and 32° nothing is known, except that the work of the blue or symbolic lodges was under the direction of a 'Gran Oriente Simbolico de la Isla de Cuba,' also known as 'Gran Oriente Simbolico de la Nueva Thebaida.'

"Shortly after the formation of the Grand Consistory, the Grand Orient of France ceded its Masonic authority over Cuba to the 'Gran Oriente Nacional de Espana.' As this body was divided in various factions, each of which claimed to be the only authorized and competent one, obedience was denied by Cuban Masonry. A factor contributing to this denial probably can be found in the desire of our Cuban brethren to be free Masonically as well as politically.

"Out of the Grand Consistory founded in 1818 by De Clouet d'Obernay developed the 'Grande Oriente Territorial Espanol-Americano-Rita Escoces de Francos-masones antiguos y aceptados—' regularly established in the City of Havana. This Grand Orient was divided in two sections, viz: The 'Grand Oriente Simbolico,' or 'Camara Simbolica' and the Grand Consistory (32°). It is interesting to note that many of the members of these two bodies were officers of the Spanish army and navy, also that these bodies claimed jurisdiction over the Island of Puerto Rico and seemingly over Mexico too, as on the roster appears a lodge in Tabasco, 'Los Amigos Filantropicos.' Jurisdiction was also claimed over the Floridas and New Spain (Santo Domingo and Haiti).

"The situation in 1822 was such that the bodies working in the York Rite were 'free and sovereign,' whilst those of the Scottish Rite were still subject to the influence of the 'Gran Oriente Nacional de Espana.' In order to free the blue lodges of the Scottish Rite of this influence and counteract at the same time the attempts and claims of the Consistory to control the blue lodges, at the instigation of the 'Gran Oriente Simbolico Escoces,' negotiations were entered into with the Grand Lodge of York Rite Masons. On November 7, 1822, the fusion of both rites under the name of 'Gran Logia Espanola del Rito York' was approved and signed. The Grand Master and other officers of this new symbolic body were chosen by lot drawn by each pair of corresponding officers. The roster, after this fusion, shows 66 lodges subject to the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge, as of January 29, 1823.

"This would seem to indicate a flourishing Masonic life in this Island at the beginning of the third decade of the past century. However, the political upheavals of this epoch—the wars of liberation against Spanish domination in the Americas were in full swing—made themselves felt in Cuba. In 1824 a decree of the King of Spain forbade again all Masonic and other secret societies, which order was carried out faithfully by the military governor of the Island. Neither the Grand Lodge nor the Consistory could hold meetings and on January 1, 1828, the Grand Lodge of York declared itself officially dissolved.

"This state of affairs lasted for about thirty-five years, though there were Masons in Cuba, some of them initiated in foreign countries. In 1857 'Prudencia' Lodge in Matanzas was founded under a charter granted by the irregular Supreme Council of Louisiana. Two lodges, 'Prudencia' and 'Fraternidad' came into being in Santiago de Cuba under the jurisdiction of the 'Gran Oriente Hesperico Reformado' of Barcelona, which in spite of all persecutions tried to continue its Masonic work."

The Grand Lodge of the York Rite was declared officially dissolved January 1, 1828, although neither this Grand Lodge nor the Spanish Grand Lodge had been holding any regular communications. Then followed a period of persecution when several of the members were placed in prison or otherwise punished.

REVIVAL OF FREEMASONRY IN COLON

The word "Colon" was taken from the Spanish name of Christopher Columbus. Under the heading of Colon the territory included West Indies and all the Antilles; in the Grand Lodge it referred particularly to Cuba and Puerto Rico. The revival of Freemasonry began in 1859, even under the despotic rule of General Don Jose de la Concha, and largely as a result of the labors of one man, Andres Cassard. Cassard is noted for having printed a Spanish monitor for the fraternity. He came to Cuba with authority from the Supreme Council at Charleston, S. C. He found a lodge in Matanzas working under the auspices of an irregular Supreme Council in Louisiana; the name of the lodge was Prudence. There was also another lodge established in December, 1857, known as *Fraternidad*. These two lodges offered the only beginnings for the re-establishment of the fraternity in Cuba.

To establish a Grand Lodge required an additional lodge, and in March, 1859, three Masons from Santiago de Cuba, who were living in Hudson, N. Y., and four initiates in *Fraternidad* No. 387, petitioned the Grand Lodge of South Carolina to found the Lodge *San Andres*, and in November, 1859, *San Andres Lodge No. 93* was established. *Fraternidad* Lodge became No. 1, Prudence No. 2, and San Andres No. 3 in the newly established Grand Lodge, this act occurring November 27, 1859. Francisco Grinan y Mozo became the first Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Colon.

On May 22, 1860, a lodge was established in Jiguani; it was known as Lodge *Restauracion* No. 4. This was followed by the establishment, in 1861, of *Amor Fraternal* No. 5, *Segunda Prudencia* No. 6, and *Dicipulos de Salomon* No. 7. Members of *Amor Fraternal*, in Havana, formed a new lodge in February, 1762, known as *Masonic Faith* (Fe Masonica), although the formation of this lodge met with no little opposition.

Alvarez tells us that Albert Pike gave authority to de Castro "to regularize any error that Andres Cassard might have committed in organizing the bodies of Cuba, and to establish that peace and harmony that should exist among the ancients in the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite." Alvarez is not clear as to what caused Pike to feel that such an authority was necessary.

Brother Jeffre in his "Beginnings of Masonry in Cuba" gives us additional information:

"Nor are the reasons clear why de Castro should have established a 'Supremo Consejo y Gran Oriente de Cuba y Las Antillas' in Havana, on March 28, 1862, instead of cooperating with the 'Gran Oriente de Colon' at Santiago. Castro did not succeed in absorbing, as he wished to do, the Grand Bodies established at Santiago, but it seems he had better success with brethren in Havana and the rest of the Island. 'Cuba y Las Antillas' were recognized by the Supreme Councils of France, England, Scotland and other European countries. A number of lodges formed in Havana by de Castro established in 1868 the 'Gran Logia de la Habana.' This Grand Lodge had a very short life indeed, as it was dissolved on October 10th of the same year (Grito de Yara). At the same time too, the 'S. C. y Gr. O. de Cuba y Las Antillas' ceased to exist on account of internal dissensions.

"The influence of this irregular body on the development of Masonry in Cuba must not be underestimated. Due to the political situation and also lack of communications, Santiago, as the main seat of Masonry, was rather isolated. Havana, however, as the capital of the colony, and due to its geographical location, had greater facilities and it must be admitted that the Order received a great impetus under de Castro, even if the 'S.C. y G.O. de Cuba y Las Antillas' is not considered legal, Masonically speaking.

"To return to Santiago, we have seen that at the end of 1859 the 'Gran Oriente de Colon' came into being. But already in 1860 differences arose between the Grand Lodge and the Supreme Council, in spite of the fact that the officers of one body in many cases also belonged to the other high body. The Consistory believed it had the right to supervise the working of the blue lodges, and even some, not all, brethren of high degree pretended to have authority over brethren of a lower degree. Charters for new lodges were occasionally granted by the Supreme Council without consulting the Grand Lodge. Add to these differences the fact that Masonry in Cuba was split in two factions, one high body in Santiago and another, the more active one, in Havana, and it will be easily understood that the 'Gran Oriente de Colon' did not prosper as desired.

"Finally, in August 1867, the Grand Lodge, under Grand Master Andes Puente decided to give itself a constitution, claiming absolute control of the blue lodges and refusing to acknowledge the right of the Supreme Council to interfere with the symbolic lodges, but leaving to the Supreme Council the control of all other Masonic bodies. This constitution was approved in September 1867 and a corresponding notification was sent to the Supreme Council. Albert Pike publicly gave approval to this separation of powers.

"Although, from a legal point of view, as a section of the 'Gran Oriente de Colon,' the Grand Lodge had a perfect right to give itself a constitution, the Supreme Council refused to accept as definite the step taken by the Grand Lodge and after prolonged negotiations which led nowhere, arbitrarily dissolved the Grand Lodge, on September 5, 1868, assuming control over all degrees of our order.

"In their desire to preserve harmony and avoid irreparable damage to our order, the Grand Lodge declared a recess until a general convocation of the 'Gran Oriente' at which all lodges of the jurisdiction were to be represented. This assembly was to have taken place on November 25, 1868, but was never held because on October 10th Carlos Manuel de Cespedes, Worshipful Master of Buena Fe Lodge at Manzanillo, raised the battle cry against Spain.

"Thus, at the beginning of 1869, Masonry in Cuba was faced with the fact that the 'slightly irregular' S.C. y Gr. L. de Cuba y Las Antillas' in Havana was dissolved and that in Santiago the Supreme Council had assumed, but did not exercise, the functions of the recessed 'Gran Logia de Colon,' and further that the Supreme Council, now the only supreme organism of Ma-

sonry, was completely paralyzed. This was due, partly to the sickness or absence of its officers, and partly to the strictest surveillance by the Spanish authorities. Very few, if any, meetings were held and no further records are on hand, except to show that the Supreme Council transferred to Havana, in 1882, where in 1876 already the present 'Gran Logia de la Isla de Cuba' was founded."

Gould's history (Scribner edition), tells of the condition of Cuban Lodges in 1868-70:

"Thirty lodges had fallen in 1870 to about seven, and in the latter year, the Supreme Council organized a Provincial Mother Lodge at Havana, against which the Grand Lodge very naturally protested. The warrant to this Mother Lodge was soon after recalled, but the dispute between the Supreme Council and the Grand Lodge continued. In 1875—April 11—the Grand Lodge resumed work openly, and in the following year entered into a compact with the Supreme Council whereby it was agreed that the former should have exclusive jurisdiction over Symbolic Masonry with the sole right of chartering lodges. . . .

"After this compact, it is contended that the Grand Lodge, though still nominally a section of the Grand Orient, had full jurisdiction over Symbolic Masonry. Nevertheless, it is quite clear that there was a divided authority and, apparently, great Masonic confusion on the Island. The Grand Lodge of Colon held five meetings in August 1876; it declared itself free from all other authority, a sovereign body with full and unlimited powers over its subordinates. This action was accelerated by an event of August 1, 1876, when the representatives of nine chartered lodges . . . met at Havana and formed the Grand Lodge of Cuba. This body, from the very first, kept itself free from the blighting influence of the so-called high degrees. . . . The Grand Lodge claimed to have on its roster 36 lodges, and 8,000 members; its formal rival, the Grand Lodge of Cuba of 1877 possessed an apparent following of 17 lodges. In the latter year—June 3rd—a second Grand Lodge of Colon, or Columbus, at Havana was added to the two existing Craft grand bodies. Thus, we find three organizations, each claiming to be the regular Grand Lodge. . . .

"Eventually, however, the Grand Lodges of Colon at Havana and Cuba formally united, and, March 28, 1880, the Grand Master of one body became Grand Master, and the Grand Master of the other body became Deputy Grand Master. The title assumed by the new organization was 'The United Grand Lodge of Colon and the Island of Cuba' and it entered upon its career with a roll of 57 lodges, and between 5,000 and 6,000 Masons.

"The lodges under the original Grand Lodge of Colon at Santiago de Cuba remained true to their allegiance. In 1885 the number of lodges had increased to 82, with Provincial Grand Lodges Santiago de Cuba and Puerto Rico; but from the official list of 1886, there were then only 58 lodges upon the roll; of these 30 were at the Capital or in its vicinity, and 28 in other parts."

ATTEMPTS TO SECURE RECOGNITION

Recognition of the newly established Grand Lodge was slow. Grand Lodges in this country had been presented with so many claims as to jurisdiction that they were undecided as to what recognition should be extended. The fact that many of these claims were in Spanish resulted in their failing to be presented to Grand Lodges for consideration. Their action was further influenced by the fact that—

"In 1873 the Supreme Council of the Scottish Rite had notified lodges and other bodies, including the Grand Lodge of Colon, that they were under the direction of the Consistory and would report not to the Grand Lodge but to the Supreme Council. The same decree provided that all possessors of either the 31°, 32° or 33° were by that fact honorary members of all the lodges and entitled to participate in their deliberations. . . .

"In July 1876, the Provincial Grand Lodge, having insisted upon an accounting for the large sum of money paid into the treasury of the Supreme Council by the lodges, it was summarily suppressed."

The Spanish-American War did much to bring about new life in the affairs of the fraternity in Cuba. In the first place, it freed our Cuban brethren so that they might carry on publicly and without interference the work of their Grand Lodge; again, it brought Cuban affairs directly under the surveillance of the Grand Lodges of the United States. An influx of American citizens and members of the military establishment was an additional encouragement to the Cuban brethren; many of those high in authority in the American military government were members of the fraternity. Admiral Schley, General Shafter, General Scott, Colonel Theodore Roosevelt, General George M. Moulton, and many others had part in the re-establishment of Freemasonry on the Island.

There are 205 regularly constituted lodges working under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of the Island of Cuba. These lodges are apportioned to districts, of which there are 75, each district being in charge of a District Deputy Grand Master. There are four English-speaking lodges in Cuba—*Island Lodge* in Havana, *Landmark Lodge* in Camaguey, *Kane Lodge* at Banes, and *Santa Fe Lodge* on the Isle of Pines. The total membership of these English-speaking bodies in Havana is about 300, while the membership of all these lodges in Cuba will not exceed 400.

There are a few clandestine lodges in the eastern part of the Island, but we are informed that these are gradually being weeded out and their membership is becoming affiliated with regular Grand Lodges.

The present membership of the Grand Lodge of the Island of Cuba is 15,000, and we are told:

"Order has been brought into quarters where temporary differences had produced dissension. Honesty and business-like administration of finances is insisted on and a special commission appointed to look after this matter, and supply standard models for bookkeeping transactions. . . . The Grand Master holds that it is better to have fewer lodges and fewer members than men who cannot, or will not, submit to Masonic law and cooperate to maintain the high reputation which Cuban Masonry has won after years of struggle against attacks and misinterpretation by opponents outside of the lodges."

Many new Masonic Temples have been erected in various parts of the Island and are dedicated to the purposes of Freemasonry. There is a uniform national Masonic band. The government recently donated to the Grand Lodge a valuable piece of property in the City

of Havana in recognition of its fine work in having provided a school for children and a public library. It is well to know that this property was obtained through the influence of Dr. Antonio Bosch, who is not a Freemason.

In the city of Camaguey, one lodge maintains a dental dispensary for children; another lodge has given an ambulance to a hospital; almost \$4,000.00 was sent to Puerto Rico for relief in the devastated regions a few years ago. In one year more than sixteen thousand pairs of shoes were given to children, enabling them to attend school. This is frequently referred to in the proceedings as *El Zapato Escolar*, an association founded January 6, 1920. Then there is a National Masonic Home, called *La Misericordia*, which recently housed almost two hundred residents.

While the Grand Lodge proceedings are not issued regularly, when issued they convey much information concerning the internal affairs of the Grand Lodge. The last proceedings placed in our hands comprise 624 pages, but includes the years 1933-36. In the period 1926 to 1936 the number of members was almost doubled. In the year 1929, 2,524 initiates were reported. The number of lodges increased from 61 in 1906 to 195 in 1936.

OTHER RITES AND DEGREES

Royal Arch Masonry has been represented officially in Cuba since February 19, 1907, when the General Grand Chapter, Royal Arch Masons of the United States of America gave a dispensation for the formation of Island Chapter No. 1, R.A.M. Acting under this authority the companions of the new chapter assembled in the Masonic Hall in Havana, April 4, 1907, and proceeded to open Island Chapter U.D. It worked under dispensation until the triennial meeting of the General Grand Chapter in 1909, at which time it was chartered and on December 17, 1907, was officially constituted under the direction of Marcus Endel, a past grand high priest of Florida.

An attempt had been made as early as 1906 by a number of companions, headed by Orlando Ducker, to establish a chapter, but the General Grand Chapter was somewhat wary of establishing additional chapters outside continental United States. Brother R. B. Armour, High Priest, and Walter M. Daniel, the King of the Chapter U.D., visited the General Grand Chapter in 1909 to insure the chartering of the chapter. Later on an attempt was made to establish a chapter at Camaguani, but interviews with leading brethren there convinced those in authority that the city was not large enough to support a chapter.

Island Chapter No. 1 continues to work, largely among Americans and English speaking brethren. The last published report (1951) showed 153 members.

A Council of Royal and Select Masters has been organized recently. Grand Master of the Grand Encampment, Joseph K. Orr, reported to the Grand Encampment in 1922 that he had visited Havana in 1914 and was impressed with the zeal of the American members of the fraternity; he found about fifty members of the commandery there and January 1, 1921, authorized the formation of a Commandery by issuing Dispensation to Havana Commandery U.D., K.T., with Walter M. Daniel as Commander. General George M. Moulton visited the commandery at its institution. The commandery was chartered April 27, 1922, and on July 1, 1951, it reported 91 members.

There is a Supreme Council of the Scottish Rite for Cuba. The activities of this rite are quite fully discussed elsewhere. We have no statistics as to the present membership of the Supreme Council.

There has been established in recent years a society for the daughters of Freemasons, known as Daughters of Acacia, which has become strong numerically and is highly esteemed because of the charitable work which is being carried on by them. The organization was established by the wife of a prominent Cuban Freemason.

PATRIOTISM OR CONSPIRACY?

The one thing which stands out in all of the history of Cuban Freemasonry is the persecution which the brethren of that country have had to undergo as a result of their belief. Charges have been made that these brethren "conspired" against the government. Did not a lot of our American brethren "conspire" against the English government in the early history of our own country? Do we condemn them for having so "conspired"? George Washington, one of the chief conspirators has become the Father of our country, honored and respected because he stood loyal to an ideal. Shall we condemn these early Cuban patriots for doing the same thing? We think not. Nor does the Cuban citizen of today think so.

Brother F. P. de Rodriguez, writing in the *Builder* (August, 1916) proves that the Fraternity as a fraternity did not conspire, but that Masons, individually, did do so.

But he asks:

Can American Masons show on their shields, as we do, the having been imprisoned and sentenced to death for being Masons? We Cubans, more than once, became acquainted with damp dungeons, only to be more firm adherents of our convictions; that is an honor and glory that nobody can snatch from us. More yet, it is not far since 1870, when we had a Grand Master shot without a trial, only because he was the head of the Craft in Cuba. If so has been our history and our sufferings, why disdain us because we speak English.

American Freemasonry answered by recognizing the Grand Lodge of the Island and today every American Grand Lodge recognizes

the descendants of these men who fought for freedom and who carried out their Masonic ideals in so doing.

FREEMASONRY IN PUERTO RICO

In recent years, the Conference of Grand Masters in Washington, has been marked by the presence of one or more representatives from the Grand Lodge of Puerto Rico. Those in attendance have been impressed with the character of those who have come to our shores, representing this Island jurisdiction.

One of these representatives from the Grand Lodge of Puerto Rico, who came to this country attending conferences was Rodolfo Ramirez Pabon, Grand Master from 1929-1935. In September, 1944, he prepared for us a story of Freemasonry in Puerto Rico, and while we could have written such a story, nevertheless we know our readers would have it from the pen of so distinguished a Freemason, and an "on-the-spot" account.

And here is Bro. Ramirez-Pabon's story:

The early history of Masonry in Puerto Rico is a matter of uncertainty, due to the fact that there are in existence at the present time few authentic documents of that period and due to the fact, also, that a good deal of our present data are based upon tradition. There is no doubt that during the last quarter of the XVIII century there were some Masons in Puerto Rico, but there is no historical corroboration as to the existence of organized Masonry at that time. At the outbreak of the negro rebellion in Haiti, in 1791, the white population residing then in that French colony became victims of a merciless persecution, and because of this dangerous situation hundreds of French families were forced to migrate to Louisiana, Cuba, Puerto Rico, and some other places in America. During the first affluence of these immigrants, Puerto Rico offered refuge to a few personalities and families, being these French immigrants, according to tradition, the pioneers of Masonic ideals among our people.

The early history of Masonry in Puerto Rico is closely connected with the growth and development of Masonry in Cuba, and it is pretty definitely known that the first Masonic lodge in Cuba was organized in 1804, under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania, with the name of *Le Temple des Vertus Theologiques*.

According to Dr. Cayetano Coll y Toste, Puerto Rico's Official Historian, in 1805 there were some lodges established in San Juan, our capital city, practicing the old Scottish Rite and working under the jurisdiction of a Grand Lodge whose Grand Master was Brother C. Honis, as reported in official documents. Brother Honis, according to some authorities, was an immigrant from Haiti, and it is to be presumed that the members of the lodges subordinated to that Grand Lodge were mostly, if not wholly, French immigrants.

Many of these French immigrants settled themselves in the western section of Puerto Rico, and there is evidence that in 1811 they established a lodge in Mayaguez with the name of *La Restauration*, under the jurisdiction of the Grand Orient of France. This lodge worked intensively for several years.

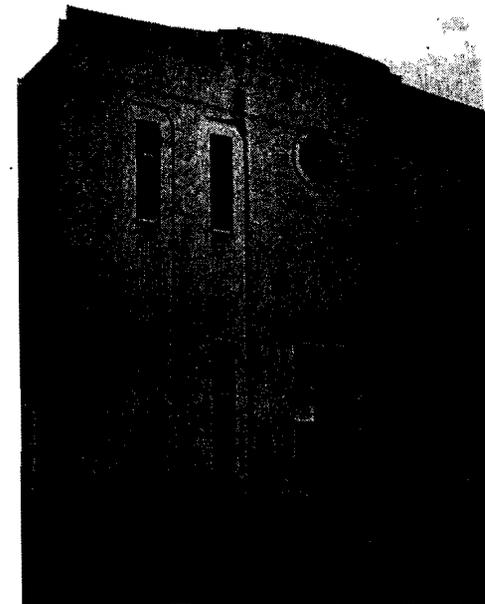
The oldest and best known Masonic document in Puerto Rico is a "charter" constituting a Chapter of Rose Croix under the name of *Minerva* in San Germán, dated April 10, 1824. The charter members of this chapter were Antonio de Jesús Blanco, Isidoro de Avila, Pascasio de Cardona, Juan Francisco Mahens, Luis L. Acosta, José de Rexren and Augusto Arrivante. This chapter is reported to have been established under the auspices of the Supreme Council, Southern Jurisdiction of the United States of America, located at Charleston, South Carolina, which later, with the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania, encouraged the growth of Masonry in Cuba, where a Grand Orient was organized December 5, 1859. "The establishment of this chapter indicates that there were members of symbolic lodges in Puerto Rico before" 1824, but "exact data in regard to these lodges is lacking." It has been reported that a lodge named *Yaguez* had previously existed for some time between Añasco and Mayaguez, in the western section of the Island, and some authorities claim that this lodge was the first one established in Puerto Rico.

Philosophic Masonry was established in Puerto Rico simultaneously with symbolic Masonry, there being an interesting documentary evidence on this subject. In 1821 several members of *La Restauration Lodge* asked for and obtained a charter from the Grand Lodge of the State of Massachusetts to establish a lodge in Mayaguez under the name of *L' Hereaux Reveil*. A chapter called *La Verité* was also founded in Mayaguez in 1821, under the auspices of the Grand Orient of France. It was organized by members of *La Restauration* and *L'Hereaux Reveil Lodges* and by members of some other French lodge established in a nearby town, which we presume was San Germán.

In 1823 and 1824 the Grand Consistory of New York, founded by Joseph Cerneau and presided then by the Hon. De Witt Clinton, Governor of the State and Grand Master of Masons in New York, established in Puerto Rico several Chapters of Rose Croix, a Council, a Consistory, and an Insular Council to govern these bodies in the name of the Sovereign Grand Consistory, appointing Illustrious Brother Francois Terreforte, 33, as its representative.

The Grand Orient of France, in 1824, converted *La Restauration Lodge* into a Chapter Lodge, thereby establishing *La Restauration Chapter* which worked in the French language only.

A decree given in 1824 by the Spanish King Ferdinand VII stopped Masonic work in Puerto Rico, as it did in Cuba, and it was



Masonic Temple, Guayama, Puerto Rico.



Quadradillas (Puerto Rico, Masonic Temple).

not until 1858 or 1859 that Masonry was revived in the Island. At about that time (1836) the National Grand Orient of the Republic of Venezuela established a lodge in Pueblo Viejo, which afterwards was transferred to San Juan, where it held its meetings in a building located in front of the Catholic Cathedral, between the streets called San Juan and Las Monjas, where the Episcopal Church stood later on. The building was fronted by two columns, and from this it has been asserted that it was built for masonic uses.

At the same time other lodges had been established in the Island, under charters from different Grand Bodies, but as our Masonic records date back only to 1884, when the Provincial Grand Lodge of Puerto Rico was organized, it is impossible to say how many there were. There is still in existence *Estrella de Luquillo Lodge*, in San Juan, which has been in activity since its foundation, having been chartered by the Grand Orient of Colón, Cuba, March 21, 1867.

The Masonic territory of Puerto Rico had been technically occupied by the Grand Orient of Colón, Cuba, by virtue of the powers granted by the Supreme Council of the Southern Jurisdiction of the United States to the Cuban Mason Andrés Cassard, to establish a Supreme Council in Cuba with jurisdiction over all the islands of the West Indies, among which was Puerto Rico. This took place in 1859, but the Grand Orient of Colón did not exercise its power in Puerto Rico until 1867, when it established in Bayamón the above mentioned *Estrella de Luquillo Lodge*, now located in San Juan.

While some lodges continued their work and others were closed, fearing the political and religious fanaticism of those days, the Grand Orient of Colón established, in 1874, its second lodge in San Germán, under the name of *Tercera Prudencia No. 28*, which was exposed to cruel persecution by the Government of the Island; fourteen of its members were sent to jail when they were surprised in session in a hidden place in the mountains, and sentenced some to four, and others to two years, imprisonment and heavy fines, "for being members of a secret society prohibited by law," as the sentence read.

When the Republican form of government was established in Spain after the disturbances of 1868, the Spanish Masons residing in the Island together with a group of distinguished Puerto Rican Masons organized various lodges under the auspices of the National Grand Orient of Spain, the principal one being: *Aurora No. 1* in Ponce (1871); *Conciliación No. 2* in Mayaguez (1872); *Iris de Paz No. 3* on the beach at Ponce (1872); *Filantropía No. 4* in Vega Baja (1874); and *Fraternidad No. 7* in San Juan (1874). These lodges worked for a very short time as the restoration of the Bourbonic régime in 1874 produced a new reaction against Masonry and all these lodges were closed. However, the two lodges chartered by the Grand Orient of Colón, Cuba, and the lodge chartered by the

National Grand Orient of the Republic of Venezuela continued their work without fearing the result of their activities.

Adelphia Lodge No. 40 was founded in Mayaguez in 1877, under the jurisdiction of the Symbolic Grand Lodge of Colón, Cuba, and in 1882 another Grand Orient of Spain chartered *Union Lodge* in Guayama; both lodges are still in existence.

Suspicion was directed towards Masonry at the time of the revolution of Lares (1867), and though it was never proven that it had any interference in this affair, persecution continued to follow our lodges for many years. José Pérez Moris, writing of the revolution of Lares, has the following to say regarding this matter:

"Although the revolutionary bands have been represented as being Masonic, we have no knowledge that there is any connection between them and the Masonic lodges. However, as it is difficult for the profane to distinguish between them, it would be wise not to permit Masonic lodges to operate in the West Indies, specially since the signs used by both the conspirators and the masons in making themselves known to each other are very similar."

Señor Pérez Moris was a writer and politician of the old days when the Spanish régime in the Island considered Masonry as "a secret society prohibited by law."

Although the fact that the National Grand Orient of Spain, as we have stated, had instituted lodges in Puerto Rico, and that a large number of Spaniards favoring national integrity had joined them, should have removed the cloud of suspicion on the part of the government; this was not the case, for persecutions increased from day to day and Masons in Puerto Rico could not work openly, but had to hold their lodge meetings in secret places, generally in the country, and, even thus, they did not entirely escape the persecution of the authorities.

At that time, there still existed Mayaguez *Conciliación Lodge No. 2* (supra), which worked under the jurisdiction of the National Grand Orient of Spain. It held its meetings in the playa, in a house belonging to Pedro Tolosa, a gentleman whom no one could accuse of conspiring against the government. Among the Brethren who were accustomed to gather there were Antonio de Aramburu, a man of progressive and liberal ideas, who was Master of the lodge; Dr. Claudio Federico Block, of Danish Origin, an enthusiastic mason and strong supporter of the Spanish government, who was Junior Warden of the lodge; Gaspar Bras, Spaniard, who was a member of the voluntary military forces in the Island; the above mentioned Pedro Tolosa; and other distinguished members of the Craft.

One night, on leaving the lodge, they found the Chief of Police and twenty-five men stationed around the place. The fact that the majority of them were Spanish, and above suspicion, saved the situation, because the police did not dare to arrest anyone. When

Señor Aramburu left the house, he was approached by the Chief of Police, who asked him his name. He replied without hesitation: "I am Antonio de Aramburu, and have just come from presiding over a meeting of *Conciliación Lodge*, under the jurisdiction of the National Grand Orient of Spain."

Antonio de Aramburu was one of the associates of Brother Santiago R. Palmer, the founder of our Grand Lodge, and one of the most congenial figures in Puerto Rican Masonry. His upright and unswerving character caused him to be the victim of innumerable persecutions, and it is said that as a consequence he lost all his property in a fire at Añasco in March, 1873.

On April 6, 1874, *Tercera Prudencia Lodge No. 28* was in session in the house of José del Carmen Balzac, between San Germán and Sabana Grande, in a rural district known as Machuchal. It was the moment for the initiation of a candidate into the mysteries of Masonry, when a strenuous knocking was heard at the door. The Guardia Civil (mounted police) entered the premises and arrested all those present, who were sentenced to terms of imprisonment, as already stated, "for being members of a secret society prohibited by law."

Among those arrested were Francisco María Quiñones, Ezio Fabiani, Antonio Lebrón, Angel Franco, Manuel Rodríguez Soto, as well as others.

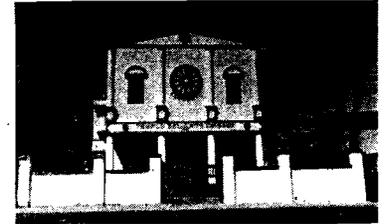
Dr. Julio Audinot de Coto, a prominent Puerto Rican Mason, undertook the defense of these Brethren, assisted by Attorney Ramón Nadal Cuebas. Their pleas were published later in a Paris newspaper called "Le Courier de L'Europe" though no newspaper in Puerto Rico dared print them. This Paris publication began a campaign in favor of the condemned Puerto Rican Masons. Through this campaign, the Masons of England became interested in the situation; a great number of English lodges addressed petitions to Lord Beaconsfield informing him about the oppression prevailing in Puerto Rico against the members of the Craft. Lord Beaconsfield, using his influence, and that of English Masonry, succeeded in having the condemned Brethren set free by the Spanish government.

In the meantime lodges were also established in other places of the Island which had more or less the same experiences and difficulties as those mentioned above.

One of the best known Masons of this period was Arístides Simón Pietri, of Ponce, who was several times elected Master of *Aurora Lodge*, and reorganized this lodge under the United Grand Lodge of Colón and Island of Cuba. He was the first to publish any Masonic literature in Puerto Rico: in 1873 he published a book covering the first three degrees with their secret work, the funeral and baptismal ceremonies, and an explanation of the origin of symbols and ancient

rites. He also published, in 1885, a book entitled "Historical Résume of Ancient and Modern Freemasonry."

In 1866, there came forth in Puerto Rico the man who was predestined to be the leader and organizer of our Grand Lodge. This man was Santiago R. Palmer, born in San Germán, Puerto Rico, February 25, 1844. He was initiated, raised and advanced to the Third Degree (1866) in *La Unión Germana Lodge No. 8*, of his native town. In 1874 he founded in San Germán *Tercera Prudencia Lodge No. 28*, and, in 1877, *Adelphia Lodge No. 40* was founded by him in Mayaguez. By that time he had been appointed Deputy of the Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of Colón and Island of Cuba for the Island of Puerto Rico. With the advice and support of the great Cuban Mason, Aurelio Almeida, he exhorted lodges and Masons into action, reorganized old lodges, gave legal status to several inactive Spanish lodges, and founded new lodges in various places on the Island.



Masonic Building, San Juan, Puerto Rico.

On October 11, 1884, on the initiative of Santiago R. Palmer, the *Provincial Grand Lodge of Puerto Rico* was established in Mayaguez, under letters from the United Grand Lodge of Colón and Island of Cuba. The following lodges, which then worked here under the jurisdiction of the Cuban Grand Lodge, constituted the body of the new Provincial Grand Lodge, to wit: *Adelphia* and *Conciliación* of Mayaguez; *Constancia* of Cabo Rojo; *Tanamá* of Arecibo; *Estrella de Luquillo* of San Juan; *Prudencia* of San Germán; *Esperanza* of Añasco; *Aurora* of Ponce; *Porvenir de la Vega* of Vega Baja; and *Amparo* of Caguas.

The representatives of these lodges met on the date given above, constituted the *Provincial Grand Lodge of Puerto Rico*, and elected the following Grand Officers: Grand Master, Santiago R. Palmer; Senior Grand Warden, Eliseo Defilló; Junior Grand Warden, Francisco María Quiñones; Grand Secretary, Manuel María Sama; Grand Treasurer, Carlos J. Monagas; Grand Master of Ceremonies, Antonio Ruiz Quiñones; Senior Grand Deacon, Emilio Ponce; Junior Grand Deacon, José Antonio Caroli. The United Grand Lodge of Colón and Island of Cuba approved these proceedings October 25, 1884. The five following lodges were shortly organized by the Provincial Grand Lodge: *Unión* of Guayama; *Florida* of Barceloneta; *San Juan Bautista* of San Juan; *Iris de Paz* of Arroyo; and *Porvenir* of Fajardo.

On March 29, 1885, a few months after the organization of the Provincial Grand Lodge, Grand Master Palmer petitioned from Cuba the cession of the Masonic territory of Puerto Rico, in order to establish an independent and sovereign Grand Lodge. The United Grand Lodge of Colón and Island of Cuba, by a resolution approved July 12, 1885, agreed to surrender her rights over the territory, and the provincial Grand Lodge of Puerto Rico, September 20, 1885, became the *Sovereign Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Puerto Rico*, with exclusive jurisdiction over the Island of Puerto Rico.

Santiago R. Palmer was elected Grand Master of the new Grand Lodge and Antonio Ruiz Quiñones, Grand Master of Ceremonies of the Provincial Grand Lodge, was elected Grand Secretary. The other Grand Officers elected were: Deputy Grand Master, Eliseo Defilló; Senior Grand Warden, Agustín Feliú; Junior Grand Warden, Antonio de Aramburu; Grand Treasurer, Carlos J. Monagas; Senior Grand Deacon, Emilio R. Ponce; Junior Grand Deacon, José A. Caroli; Grand Master of Ceremonies, José S. Vásquez.

Much of the progress in Masonry, up to this time, was due to the efforts of Grand Master Palmer, who worked in the face of almost unsurmountable difficulties. Not only were the civil authorities opposed to Masonry, believing it to have revolutionary tendencies, but the Catholic Church refused burial service, and even a grave in the cemetery, to Masons. Stories were circulated regarding the "immoralities" practiced in Masonic lodges, and, in 1886, Masons were sentenced to imprisonment in Fajardo and Mayaguez. Grand Master Palmer was arrested and imprisoned in El Morro Castle on account of his political opinions, and it was not until the Prince of Wales and other prominent European Masons had become interested in Masonic affairs in Puerto Rico, that tranquility was restored and Masons could meet without danger of arrest. In 1888 the "Ley de Asociaciones" (association act) was enacted, and taking advantage of this, the Grand Lodge and all its constituent lodges were organized and registered as legal associations. By this time the Real Audiencia (highest court under the Spanish régime of the Island) had decided

"That Masonry was a legal institution which could not be persecuted in view of the freedom then existing in Spain and its dominions."

Santiago R. Palmer was Grand Master until 1888, when Rosendo Matienzo Cintrón was elected to the chair. Grand Master Matienzo-Cintrón was succeeded in 1890 by Bernardo Escalona, who in turn was succeeded in 1894 by Rafael Arrillaga.

The seat of the Grand Lodge at this time was in Mayaguez, where the publication of the Official Bulletin was begun April 20, 1892.

At this time there were also published in Mayaguez the first Masonic periodicals, the best known being "La Idea," "La Adelfia" and "El Mallete."

The *Sovereign Grand Lodge of Puerto Rico* has jurisdiction only over the first three degrees of Masonry or symbolic lodges, and thus when September 20, 1885, our Masonic territory became independent and the Grand Lodge was established, the Supreme Council of Colón, which had been officially recognized by the Lausanne Convention of 1875, retained its jurisdiction over the Scottish Bodies, its first Deputy being Santiago R. Palmer, who at the same time occupied the position of Grand Master. Palmer was succeeded as Deputy of the Supreme Council of Colón by José Ramos de Anaya, who also became Grand Master of Puerto Rico a few years later.

One of the first efforts of Grand Master Palmer was to secure recognition from other Grand Lodges for the Grand Lodge of Puerto Rico, and to regularize lodges in existence in Puerto Rico which had been under the jurisdiction of other Grand Lodges. In both these movements he had excellent success, and his early efforts have been furthered by the work of his successors.

In 1896 the Government authorities ordered the Alcaldes (mayors) of the various towns to attend the meetings of Masonic lodges, a right conferred on them by the "Ley de Asociaciones" above referred to, and although some mayors did not take advantage of this right, while others were Masons and could lawfully attend, many lodges were closed on account of this situation, and on December 27, 1896, the Grand Lodge ordered work stopped in order to avoid suspicion on the part of the Government that Masonry had anything to do with the political activities that were then taking place in the Island.

This state of affairs continued until the arrival of the American troops in 1898, when the lodges which had been closed started again their work, since the former secrecy which had been necessary now could be dispensed with.

On February 27, 1899, the Grand Lodge met in Mayaguez and decided to transfer its seat to San Juan, where Past Grand Master Palmer was then residing after his return from the United States, where he had spent several years. On April 2, 1899, pursuant to the agreement reached in Mayaguez, the Grand Lodge established its headquarters at San Juan, and Past Grand Master Palmer was elected Grand Master for the fifth time. He continued his work of securing recognition for the Grand Lodge with the same zeal which he had previously displayed; in this task he was assisted by American Masons residing in San Juan, who helped him to secure recognition from many Grand Lodges of the United States. At this time *St. John the Baptist Lodge* was reorganized in San Juan to work

in the English language and under the York Rite, being subject, however, to the Grand Lodge of Puerto Rico, whose territorial jurisdiction was already undisputed and universally recognized by the leading American and European Grand Lodges.

The next year (1900) Carlos B. Meltz was elected Grand Master, but he died within a few months after his election and the Deputy Grand Master, José Francisco Díaz, completed his term. Díaz was elected Grand Master in 1901 and reelected in 1902. In 1903 the honors of Grand Master were awarded to José Ramos de Anaya, who then held the position of Deputy in Puerto Rico of the Supreme Council of Colón and had distinguished himself in his Masonic career.

As Deputy of the Supreme Council of Colón, Ramos de Anaya gave new impulse and life to Masonic bodies of the Scottish Rite, which had gradually ceased their work during the difficult period from 1885 to 1898. He reorganized "Caparra" and "Regeneración" Chapters in San Juan, "Aurora" Chapter in Ponce, "Unión" Chapter in Arroyo, "Amor Fraternal" Chapter in Humacao, and "Sigilo" Chapter in Arecibo; and established the new "Fiat Lux" Chapter in Coamo, "Jacaguas" Chapter in Juana Díaz, "Libertad" Chapter in Sabana Grande, "Betances" Chapter in Cabo Rojo, and "Estrella del Sur" Chapter in Yauco. There was already in existence a chapter named "Fenix" in San Germán, and these, together with a Council of Knights Kadosh in Ponce, and one in San Juan, and a Consistory in San Juan, constituted all the Scottish Rite Bodies in Puerto Rico in 1903, when Ramos de Anaya was elected Grand Master.

The Grand Lodge also received a great impulse from Grand Master Ramos de Anaya, who was very successful in increasing its external relations and in establishing new lodges under its jurisdiction.

After two years as Grand Master, Ramos de Anaya gave up the gavel in 1905 to Armando Morales, whose chief work consisted in purging Masonry of many undesirable initiates that had succeeded in passing its doors.

In 1906, Past Grand Master Palmer was elected Grand Master for the sixth time, but he died within 48 hours after taking the oath of office (March 31, 1906). Deputy Grand Master Antonio Cordero became then Grand Master and was reelected three successive times (1907-1909). It was during his term of office that arrangements for the purchase of a lot for the Grand Lodge building were made, and it was also during his period as Grand Master that a Grand Lodge meeting was held at which Luis Muñoz Rivera and José C. Barbosa, members of the Craft and leaders of the two chief political parties of the Island, were reconciled and renewed their friendship.

It was during the term of office of Grand Master Cordero that the Supreme Council of the Southern Jurisdiction of the United States assumed jurisdiction over the Scottish Rite bodies in Puerto Rico,

after Cuba had surrendered her sovereignty over them, just as in 1885 she had surrendered her territorial rights for the establishment of the Grand Lodge.

C. B. Parker, an American Mason residing in San Juan, was the first Deputy in Puerto Rico of the Supreme Council of the Southern Jurisdiction. The first Scottish Rite bodies established in Puerto Rico under the jurisdiction of this Supreme Council were Puerto Rico Lodge of Perfection, Regeneración Chapter, Borinquen Council and San Juan Consistory, all located at San Juan.

The Inter-Antillian Masonic Congress was held in San Juan, Puerto Rico, on September 24-26, 1922, under the auspices of the Grand Lodges of Puerto Rico, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, and Venezuela. This congress was of the greatest importance in fostering fraternal relations between our Grand Lodge and the other Grand Lodges attending it.

The Grand Lodge of Puerto Rico is recognized today by all regular Masonic Bodies of the World. It is universally known for its absolute regularity in its proceedings, for its severity in maintaining the traditional practices of Freemasonry, for its veneration of the Ancient Landmarks and to the modern written law, for its social enterprises, and for its benevolent work done in favor of the people in general.

Besides the Scottish Rite Bodies above referred to, there are in existence in Puerto Rico bodies of the York Rite, the Order of the Eastern Star, with a Grand Chapter and several chapters established throughout the Island, and a Club of Shriners.

General Grand High Priest James W. Taylor reported to the General Grand Chapter, Royal Arch Masons, in 1903, that he had on February 1, 1902:

Received a petition from a sufficient number of Royal Arch Masons, asking for a Dispensation to form a new Chapter at San Juan, Porto Rico, to be known as BORINQUEN CHAPTER. There being no Chapter within a reasonable distance, the petition was not accompanied by any recommendation as contemplated by our Constitution, but each of the petitioners was required to furnish a proper certificate of good standing in his Chapter. I consider this application very meritorious and hope the G. G. Chapter will find upon examination the need of a Chapter in that newly acquired territory. When we remember that only a few years ago strife, carnage, and bloodshed marked this spot made precious by the blood of the American soldier enriching the land with patriotism, we can but welcome the dawn of intelligence and prosperity, and hail with fraternal delight the waving of the flag of Capitular Masonry in company with "Old Glory."

A charter was duly granted, October 8, 1903, the three principal officers being Charles B. Morton, Byron W. Bates, and George A. Elliott; there were thirty-three charter members. The Chapter still works as a subordinate to General Grand Chapter.

The Commandery of Knights Templar, known as Puerto Rico Commandery No. 1, was chartered July 24, 1916 and works under the Grand Encampment, U.S.A.

The work of Masonic instruction is being accomplished through Lodges of Instruction established in various Masonic districts. Text books specially prepared in Puerto Rico are used by the instructors. There are a Grand Instructor General, an Assistant Grand Instructor and eleven District Grand Instructors, one for each of the eleven Masonic districts in which the Island is divided.

The Grand Lodge, the Masonic Home, and most of the 50 Lodges existing in Puerto Rico possess their own temples, built of solid construction, artistic style, large and well furnished.

Freemasonry in South America

A discussion of Freemasonry in this great South American continent leads us into many fields. Few realize the immensity of the country. Few know of the Freemasonry there. It has elements of many rites and systems; it has many languages, for there are English, Spanish, Portuguese, French, German and Dutch groups using the language of their homelands. Consequently, there are various Masonic systems to be dealt with.

Largest of these groups is the Brazilian Grand Orient and the State Grand Lodges. Most Grand Lodges of the world look upon the Grand Orient as an irregular type of Freemasonry; few understand the complexity of the Grand Orient system with its varied Rites and degrees. It appears to be dominated by a Supreme Council which renders its recognition almost impossible. And yet, the United Grand Lodge of England has a Treaty with the Grand Orient by which England maintains District Grand Lodges in that country; this was made before the advent of the State Grand Lodges which broke away from Grand Orient and set up a system of Grand Lodges similar to that in the United States. We have discussed both groups.

In the Guianas, British, French, and Dutch, we find traces of English, French and Dutch Freemasonry. There is no Grand Lodge existing in those territories.

In Colombia will be found five Grand Lodges; Colombia is a large country and the division into five Grand Lodges seemed necessary because of transportation difficulties, for sections of the country are separated by almost impassable mountain ranges. But Freemasonry in Colombia today is at low ebb; persecution makes it hard for a lodge to exist. We need not remark that it is religious persecution, which is by far the most fanatical of all.

In Peru we have two rival Grand Lodges; what appears to be the largest group, and quite generally recognized through Latin America, is not the group recognized by the Grand Lodges of the British Isles. We have not taken sides in the dispute, hoping that some consolidation may ensue in the years to come.

In Uruguay, there exists an element that does not look upon the Holy Bible as an essential bit of paraphernalia. Many Grand Lodges have refrained from extending recognition on that account; many have withdrawn recognition. Only our Uruguayan brethren may rectify this situation—and there are many of them that hope to do that.

In Argentina are two Grand Lodges; one—Federal Argentino—is quite irregular in the minds of the majority of the Craft.

And there are several small jurisdictions about whom little is known; these are Ecuador, Paraguay, and Bolivia. The Grand