

GOULD'S HISTORY  
OF  
FREEMASONRY  
THROUGHOUT THE WORLD



VOLUME IV

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only in Old and New Spain (Hispaniola), the Cape Verde Islands, Cuba and Jamaica, but is also met with both in Central and South America.

It will be seen, therefore, that a study of the Masonic history of the West Indies is beset with a new class of difficulties, differing materially from those which have been already encountered in the previous researches. A great part of the information is contained in old *Calendars* where the name of a town or an island is, as often as not, given without any real approach to exactitude. Less uncertainty prevails, as we gradually sail down the river of time, but even when approaching our own times, the references to Lodges in foreign parts (*en pays étrangers*) under Continental Jurisdictions, by the most discursive of writers, are, in too many instances, both vague and misleading.

#### CUBA

Le Temple des Vertus Theologales, or Las Virtudes Teologales, No. 103—with the notorious Joseph Cerneau as first Master—was chartered at Havana by the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania, December 17, 1804. During the progress of the Negro Revolution, three Lodges originally constituted in Hispaniola—Réunion des Cœurs (French), Concorde and Persévérance (Pennsylvanian)—were reorganized at Santiago de Cuba in 1805-6. Again dispersed in 1808, many of the members removed to New Orleans in 1809, where—October 7, 1810—the two Lodges first named amalgamated, as No. 117 (Concord), under the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania, by which body a Charter—No. 118, Perseverance—was also granted the same day to certain petitioners, “chiefly refugees from San Domingo and Cuba.” Other Lodges were erected under the same sanction—Nos. 157, 161 in 1818; 166, 167 in 1819; and (at Santiago de Cuba) 175 in 1820 and 181 in 1822. All, however, but the last two had died out by 1822 and, in 1826, the Charters of Nos. 175 and 181 were revoked, because the Lodges had failed to meet for more than a year. The privilege of warranting Lodges on the island was next assumed by the Grand Lodges of Louisiana and South Carolina, under the former of which bodies sprang up Nos. 7, 1815, 11 and 14, 1818; and, under the latter, Nos. 50—La Constancia, 1818 and 52—La Amenidad, 1819. Then followed the Grand Orient of France with a Lodge and consistory (32°), 1819; and two further Lodges—La Constante Sophie and L’Humanité (at Saint Yago, ? Santiago de Cuba), 1821. In the year last named a circular was received by the Grand Lodge of South Carolina from the Grand Lodge of Ancient Freemasons in Havana, stating that a Grand Lodge had been organized there, to which Lodge La Amenidad requested permission to transfer its allegiance. A favourable answer was of course returned, but the Grand Lodge of South Carolina retained on its roll La Constancia for a few years, when the Warrant was surrendered by the members “in consequence of the religious and political persecutions to which they were subjected.”

For many years Masonry languished in the “Pearl of the Antilles,” its votaries

practising their rites in secret, but not daring to indulge in any overt acts, which might entail not only expulsion from the country, but also confiscation of their property. At length, however, a faint revival set in and a Warrant was granted, November 17, 1859, by the Grand Lodge of South Carolina to St. Andrew's Lodge, No. 93, "for the purpose of establishing, with two other Lodges (Albert Pike and Josiah H. Drummond concur in the belief that these were Spanish Lodges, i.e. holding Warrants from some Peninsula authority) already existing on the island, a Grand Lodge," which was accomplished on December 5 of the same year.

An independent Grand Lodge of Colon was thus established at Santiago de Cuba and—December 27, 1859—a Supreme Council of the Ancient and Accepted Rite 33° was founded in the same city by Andrés Cassard, under the sanction of the Supreme Council for the Southern Jurisdiction of the U.S.A., "for the Masonic Jurisdiction of Cuba and other unoccupied West India Islands."

At this time, it must be recollected, the practice of assembling as Freemasons was forbidden by the Spanish laws, which laws, moreover, though destined to become—after the dethronement of Queen Isabella (1868)—innocuous in the Peninsula, remained for a long time in full force in Cuba.

Several, indeed, of the Captains General and other officers who ruled the island were Masons and, therefore, from time to time the Craft was tolerated, but its members being always compelled to work to a great extent in the dark, found it necessary to observe the most inviolable secrecy, even to shield themselves under "Masonic names," lest by the discovery of their own, they might incur the most grievous penalties. Among the names given in an official report dated August 6, 1873, of the officers of the Supreme Council of Colon are "Bismark" and "Josaphat," but a paragraph states—"the real names of the officers you will find in the enclosed slip, they are not stated here, to prevent their being divulged should this communication come to print" (*New England Freemason*, February 1874, p. 80). For the same reason the Supreme Council and the Grand Lodge, which soon after united in forming a Grand Orient, found a convenient title for the amalgamated body in the name of Colon—the Spanish for Columbus—it being desired above all things to conceal from the public ken the seat of the "Grand East" of the Society.

At the formation of the Grand Orient of Colon, a *Constitution* published at Naples in 1820, was adopted as that of the new organization. By this the Supreme Council necessarily became a section of the Grand Orient. In 1865 a new *Constitution* was promulgated. The Sovereign Grand Commander of the Supreme Council became—*ex officio*—Grand Master of the Grand Orient, but the Grand Master of the Grand Lodge was still required to submit himself for election. All Charters for Lodges were issued by the Grand Lodge, but had to be confirmed and *viséd* by the Supreme Council. According to Lecerff, however—"in Naples a Grand Orient was founded, which in 1830 [not 1820] enacted its *Constitution* and *By-laws*, entitling the book *General Statutes of the Scottish Rite*; these came to America and happened to come to hand of (*sic*) Brother Andrés Cassard,

the propagator of Masonry in South and Central America ; in establishing Masonry in those countries, he gave the *General Statutes* as the universal laws of Masonry and the Grand Orient system with the allegiance of all to the thirty-third Degree was provided for therein" (*Proceedings Grand Lodge of Cuba, 1879*).

In 1867 the Grand Lodge promulgated a Constitution of its own, in which, while recognizing its continued membership of the Grand Orient, it claimed the exclusive power to enact its own By-laws, issue Charters, constitute and regulate Lodges. Their right to do this was denied by the Supreme Council. In 1868—September 30—the Grand Lodge suspended its Constitution until a meeting took place of the Grand Orient, convoked for November 30. But before that time the revolution broke out and Freemasons, being regarded by the Spanish government as revolutionists, the Grand Orient could not meet. The Grand Lodge, so far as it was possible, resumed labour. But the times were unpropitious. In the winter of 1869, at Santiago de Cuba, by order of Gonzales Bret, an officer of the government, eighteen persons were seized without warrant and immediately shot, without a trial, for being Freemasons—one of them the Grand Master of Colon—and many others were arrested and committed to prison for the same offence.

The number of Cuban Lodges, which, in 1868, was about thirty, 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 1873—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 and that it should establish a Provincial Mother Lodge (instituted in April and dissolved in July 1875) in the western section of the island to govern the Lodges there, but in submission to the laws of the Grand Lodge. After this compact it is contended that the Grand Lodge, though still nominally a section in the Grand Orient, had full jurisdiction over Symbolical 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, on the last of which—August 26—it declared itself free from all other authority, a sovereign body, with full and unlimited powers over its subordinates.

This action, however, was accelerated by an event which had taken place on August 1, when the representatives of nine chartered Lodges (six chartered before and three after 1865), together with four under dispensation from the two Provincial Mother 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, which it willingly consented—December 31, 1876—should be ruled in Cuba by the Grand Orient of Spain. In a circular of September 4, 1876, the

Grand Lodge of Colon claimed to have on its register 36 Lodges and 8,000 members ; whilst its newly formed rival, the Grand Lodge of Cuba, in 1877, possessed an apparent following of 17 Lodges. In the latter year—June 3—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. From a circular of the Grand Lodge of Cuba, we learn that, in 1879, the three Lodges which formed the Grand Lodge of Colon at Santiago de Cuba in 1859 and four others, adhered to that body ; but that the remaining Lodges—excepting those under the Grand Lodge of Cuba—were subject to the control of the Grand Lodge of Colon at Havana. To local jealousies must be attributed this multiplication of Grand Lodges. The representatives of some of the Havana Lodges seceded from the old (or original) Grand Lodge of Colon at Santiago de Cuba, met as the Grand Lodge and decreed its removal to Havana.

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 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 under the United Grand Lodge had apparently increased to 82, with Provincial Grand Lodges at Santiago de Cuba and Porto Rico ; but from the official List of 1886, there were then only 58 Lodges in all upon the roll. Of these, 30 were at the capital, or in its vicinity, and 28 in other parts. It is possible that further schisms may have disturbed the peace of Cuban Masonry ; and it is somewhat remarkable that the Provincial Grand Lodge of Porto Rico—with the 14 subordinate Lodges on that island, shown in sundry *Calendars* for 1886—wholly disappeared in the later official List.

To-day there are in Cuba 186 Lodges with 13,178 members, a net gain during the year of 349. 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 book-keeping transactions and the keeping of Minutes. Discipline is upheld with a firm hand. The Grand Master (Antonio Iraizoz de Villar) holds that it is better to have fewer Lodges and fewer members than men who cannot or will not submit to Masonic law and co-operate to maintain the high reputation which Cuban Masonry has won after years of struggle against attacks and misinterpretations by opponents outside of the Lodges. A Commission is to be created to act as a Supreme Court of Masonic Justice ; this will be composed of magistrates of established prestige and authority.

During 1929 a number of new Temples were dedicated and a uniformed National Masonic Band was formed. The Government has conceded to Grand

Lodge a valuable piece of property in the city of Havana, in recognition of its help in providing a school for children and a public library. A Masonic Temple (*Palacio de la Masoneria*) will be built on this property, which will be the headquarters of Grand Lodge. The property was obtained through the influence of Dr. Antonio Bosch, who is not a Mason.

One Lodge helps to maintain a dental dispensary for children in the city of Camagüey. Another gave an ambulance to a hospital. £687 were sent to Porto Rico for relief in the devastated regions there; 16,171 pairs of shoes were given to an equal number of children, enabling them to attend school. This undertaking is known as *El Zapato Escolar*. It was founded on January 6, 1920, the day which commemorates the visit of the Magi to Bethlehem. *La Misericordia* (the National Masonic Home) has, at present, 180 residents.

This Grand Lodge appears to be recognised practically universally among Masonic Grand Lodges, the Grand Lodge of South Australia being the only one whose statement of fraternal relations with it appears not to have been found.

#### HAYTI AND SANTO DOMINGO

This island is divided into the republics of Hayti in the west and San (or Santo) Domingo in the east. It was originally a Spanish possession, but the western portion was ceded in 1697 to the French, under whom it prospered rapidly and, in 1789, contained 793 sugar plantations, 3,117 coffee plantations, 789 cotton plantations and 182 establishments for making rum, besides other minor factories and workshops.

But the conflicting diversity of race and monopoly of political power by the whites, led to a rupture on the outbreak of the Revolution in the mother country. After fierce revolts of the mulattoes and negroes and inroads of the English and Spanish, all the inhabitants of the colony were declared free and equal in 1793, the command of the army being given to Toussaint l'Ouverture, who expelled the hostile intruders and restored peace to the island.

English troops arrived in Hayti from Jamaica in 1793 and, afterwards, were poured into the country; but they came to die. The 82nd Foot, numbering 880 men, lost all but 50 in ten weeks. Another regiment, in the same time, lost 700 men out of 1,000; and it is stated that the 96th Foot perished to a man (Bryan Edwards, *History of the West Indies*, vol. iii, p. 411). Major-General Sir Adam Williamson (Provincial Grand Master for Jamaica under the Grand Lodge of England—Moderns—1793-8), who succeeded the Earl of Effingham (Acting Grand Master of England, under the Duke of Cumberland, 1782-9) as Governor of Jamaica, ultimately followed the troops sent from that island, with the title of Governor-General of San Domingo. At the close of 1798, however, when the colony was evacuated, millions of treasure had been wasted, twenty thousand soldiers and sailors had perished, whilst there never had been any reasonable prospect of conquering the island. The loss of the English has been estimated at 45,000 men and twenty millions sterling.