

OPINIONS
ON
SPECULATIVE MASONRY,
RELATIVE TO ITS
ORIGIN, NATURE, AND TENDENCY.

A COMPILATION,
EMBRACING RECENT AND IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS ON
THE SUBJECT,

AND EXHIBITING THE VIEWS OF THE MOST DISTIN-
GUISHED WRITERS RESPECTING IT.

BY JAMES C. ODIORNE.

I spake openly to the world, and in secret have I said nothing.
JESUS CHRIST.

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PREFACE.

THE several documents comprised in the following work have been published at various times, and in different sections of our country. They have principally appeared in the *pamphlet* form; and wherever circulated have been read with avidity, and have exerted a powerful influence. Those which have been presented to the public only through the medium of *newspapers* have not received that general circulation and perusal which their value and importance demand, owing to the fact, that those organs of communication are for the most part subjected to masonic influence, and that but few papers are enlisted in the Anti-masonic cause.

They are here republished, with the hope that they may receive from the public that attention which they merit; and that the influence which they are calculated to exert may be felt, and be widely extended.

Collectively, they form a volume which may be of some service to those who have given to the subject on which they treat but little attention, and who have not informed themselves in relation to the principles of the Masonic Institution, as they have been developed by recent investigations.

The nature and tendency of the institution are here clearly exhibited, and its principles and practices fully illustrated and exposed. From the fact that most of the writers of the pieces herein contained have been members of the institution, and consequently acquainted with its secret principles and designs; and also from the uniformity of their testimony, we may rely on their statements as correct, and consider their representation of its character as in accordance with truth.

The increasing demands of the public for information on the subject of Masonry, and the persuasion that a work which should present at one view the opinions of the most distinguished writers respecting it, would be useful, and well adapted for distribution, were the causes which led to the publication of the present volume. The compiler indulges the hope that it may subserve the cause of truth, by diffusing light on the subject of Masonry, and by exciting a more general inquiry into the nature of its claims.

Boston, Feb. 22, 1830.

RECOMMENDATION.

THE *State Anti-masonic Committee of Massachusetts* have examined the Prospectus, and a considerable portion of the Documents proposed to be published by Mr. JAMES C. ODIORNE, in a distinct volume. The work appears to be judiciously selected, well arranged, and ably conducted. A great mass of information, of the most important kind, is brought together in a manner deserving the attention and patronage of the public.

ABNER PHELPS,

Per Order.

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FREEMASONRY.

EARLY HISTORY OF FREEMASONRY.

THE early history of Freemasonry, like that of Rome, is involved in obscurity. The conquerors of the world were not satisfied with the plain truth of their national origin. They taught that the "Eternal City" was founded and first ruled by the son of Mars, whose name was Romulus; who was taken to the gods in a tempest of lightning, and became QUIRINUS, the patron saint of the city, and one of the chief gods of Rome. This was lofty and sonorous, and unexceptionable, had it been true.

Our modern power, which seeks, with Roman ambition, to lord it over the whole habitable earth, also styles itself *eternal*, as did Rome; deduces its origin from Heaven; claims the wisest man for its lawgiver; and some mighty thing in the nature of the philosopher's stone for its secret—all which is equally credible and as well attested as that Romulus was nursed by a wolf, or Jupiter was a god that could save. And the masonic fables are told, to cover the meanness of Freemasonry's origin; for she, too, sprung from a confederacy of lawless plunderers: and it mortifies the pride of the high priests, it tops the vanity of the grand masters, and makes the puissant sovereigns of Freemasonry to tremble for the security of their thrones, to be told that their boasted order, sprung from the mire of the Rosicrusians, and spread abroad over the face of the earth upon the licentious cupidity of its speculative fathers; that it originated within the 18th

century, among men capable of the most atrocious falsehoods, and base enough to sell their reputation for money, and to barter a good conscience for the delusion of a lodge room; men who sold masonic charters for an appearance of mystery, but of a truth for gold.

Stone masons, in common with ninety-one other crafts and trades in the city of London, have been in the habit for centuries, of meeting in club, for the purpose of improvement in the elements of their business and craft. Each craft has its public hall, its admission fee, its coat of arms, and its charity fund. The companies are given by name in the order of their rank, in Rees' *Encyclopedia, Art. Company*; and out of only eighteen whose form of government is particularly mentioned, sixteen are governed by a *Master, two Wardens, and a various number of other assistants*. So Freemasons' lodges are governed; and the titles, *Worshipful and Most Worshipful*, now peculiar to masonic officers, were common to gentlemen of the 16th and 17th centuries, as Esquire and Honorable are common at the present day.

The Lord Mayor of London, at his election usually makes himself *free*; i. e. becomes a member of one of the twelve principal societies, if he were not a member of one of them before: "for these twelve," says the *Cyclopedia*, "are not only the oldest, but the richest; many of them having had the honor of kings and princes to be their members, and the apartments of their halls being fit to entertain a monarch." But Masons are not among the first twelve: their rank is 31, hall in Basing Hall-street, charter Charles II., 1677. Some of these societies meet by prescriptive right; the oldest charter is that of the Parish Clerks, A. D. 1233, Henry III.; the Bakers, A. D. 1307, Edward II. Six were chartered in the 14th century, eighteen in the 15th century, twelve in the 16th century, forty, (and among them the Stone Masons,) in the 17th century, and some in the 18th century.

Handicraft Masonry is an ancient *trade*, and has ever received the fostering attention of distinguished princes. Both in France and in Scotland, the craft were allowed a peculiar jurisdiction over all disputes growing out of the exercise of their trade. (Lawrie's *History of Masonry*, p. 110, and p. 297.) This was granted in France, A. D.

1645 ; and in Scotland, near two hundred years earlier, to real builders.

In the rude times, when men, ignorant of chirography, impressed the seal of their parchments with the tooth in their head for their signature, it was usual for master masons to give their apprentice *a grip or sign*, by which he should make himself known to any mason as a regularly entered apprentice to the trade ; and another when he had completed his apprenticeship, and passed to the rank of a journeyman or fellow-craft ; and a third, when by assiduity, experience, and skill, he had become himself a master of work, took buildings to rear, hired fellow-crafts or journeymen, and received apprentices. The *word*, the *sign*, and the *grip*, in those unlettered ages, were the certificate of the craft to its regularly taught members ; and in Germany were common before *Freemasonry* was imported from England. (See Prof. Robison's Proofs, p. 54.)

Masonic historians claim the men to be Freemasons against whom the statute was passed in the 25th of Edward III., and again in the reign of Henry VI., forbidding them to assemble in lodges and chapters. (See *F. M. Library*, p. 25 ; *Hardie's Monitor*, p. 20 ; *Lawrie*, p. 94 ; *Encyclopedia Britannica*, Art. *Masons*, Sec. 62.) Now Edward III. dealt with Englishmen of that day, as George III. would have dealt with Americans in his day ; as if they had been slaves. A plague had swept away a fearful portion of the English population, and the scarcity of laborers, caused all classes of mechanics to demand an increase of wages. Edward had several castles and magnificent edifices in building, and to make his money hold out, must compel the masons and mechanics to work at the old rates. He issued such an ordinance, and enforced it by his sheriffs. Under that ordinance, masons were returned from the several counties of England to work on Windsor Castle, as jurors were returned to serve in the king's courts. (See Hume's History of England, reign of Ed. III.) This was equally agreeable to the Lords of Parliament and to himself, and accordingly it was enacted A. D. 1350, that " as servants, not willing after the pestilence, to serve without taking excessive wages, had been required to serve in their accustomed places at the rate

they had received in the 20th year of Edward III.; and as it is given the king to understand in this present Parliament, that the said servants have paid no regard to the said ordinance, but to their ease do withdraw from the service of great men and others, unless they have livery and wages to the double or treble of that they were wont to take in the said 20th year and before, to the great damage of the great men, &c. be ordained and established the things underwritten."

Chap. 1. Fixes the day and year wages of *farm servants*.

Chap. 2. The price of threshing all sorts of corn by the quarter.

Chap. 3. Prescribes the wages of several sorts of artificers and laborers; among whom *Carpenters* and *Masons* are particularly specified.

Chap. 4. Requires artificers to make oath that they will use their *crafts*, as they did in the 20th year of the same Edward III. (See Ruffhead's English Statutes, Vol. 1, p. 251.)

Seventy-four years after the enactment of this statute, which plainly is applicable only to handicrafts, Henry VI., in Parliament at Westminster, ordained that "no confederacies and congregations shall be made by masons in their general chapters and assemblies, whereby the good course and effects of the *statute of laborers*, (25th Ed. III.,) are violated and broken, in subversion of law; and if any be, they that cause such chapters and congregations to be assembled and holden, shall be adjudged felons." Coke's 3d Ins. p. 99.

The common pretence of Freemasons, that these statutes were levelled particularly against their mystic order, by the influence of bigoted priests, because the *secret* was not betrayed in the office of auricular confession, is too shallow, after once reading these statutes, to cover the nakedness of the falsehood, or to conceal the evident duplicity of its first publishers. But one thing these statutes conclusively show with the aid of masonic historians, viz. that in the reign of Edward III. and Henry VI., there were no Freemasons in England, but stone masons; who met in general chapters and assemblies, not to cultivate the knowledge of a wonderful mystery, but to impede the exe-

cution of the laws, and to violate the statutes of their country.

With this view faithful history fully concurs. That a society claiming the glories of Freemasonry should have existed for ages unnoticed by any writer, noble or contemptible, foolish or learned, is wholly incredible, and unworthy of belief. The Puritans and the Presbyterians, the Cabalists and the Rosicrusians, the Gypsies and the Necromancers, the Alchymists and the Jesuists, are each liberally noticed in the works of various authors during the 16th and 17th centuries; but *Freemasonry* has not so much as a name, until the 18th century. To any historical scholar, this alone is enough. We read of the *Fraternitas lathomorum*, or company of bricklayers; but it requires not a lawyer to discern, that these are the men against whom the statute of laborers was directed, in the 25th year of Edward III., and are not the men who have at this day in their lodges the language of Eden, and the mysteries of the Antediluvian world. * * *

Of the same tenor is the fact, that Papacy and Freemasonry cannot dwell together in peace; but we hear not a word of their disagreement, until the 18th century. Certainly Papacy is older than 100 years; and if Freemasonry be much above that, how did it previously escape a conflict which has never ceased since first it commenced, A. D. 1730 to '40? The canons of the church require full and free confession to the priests from all good Catholics. The oaths of Freemasonry require absolute secrecy upon the transactions of the brethren from every good mason. Now, these canons and oaths nowhere abide together without discord and a deprivation of church privileges, and they never could harmonize for one moment. Therefore, the time when they first fell out and contradicted each other, must have been near the beginning of one, or both of them. That time is determined by the Bull of the Pope, 1738, 1739. Wring and twist the brother mason may, but there is no escape; the date is correctly stated, *seventeen* hundred thirty-eight, issued by Clement XII. (See Lawrie's Hist. Mas. p. 122; Ency. Brit. Art. Masonry, last edition.)

What has been said is proof, not only that the account which Freemasonry gives of itself, is erroneous, but

grossly erroneous ; not only that the order was not organized by Solomon and patronized by St. John, but that it had no existence even in the days of Edward III., and of Henry VI. of England. The question becomes interesting, whence did it originate ? and who first promulgated its falsehoods ?

The Rosicrusian mania sprung up in Germany, A. D. 1610, nearly ; and overspread Christendom. This puff of indefinable extravagance originated from the writings of John Valentine Andrea, a celebrated Theologian of Wirtemberg ; (*see London Mag.* 1824, Vol. 9, p. 143,)—who amused himself with tales of spiritual wonder and mystical glory, as a literary hoax, in the style of Munchausen's wonderful adventures in his memoirs. The visionary minds of that day took his work in earnest. They claimed, in general, for the rosy cross philosophy, whatever is now particularly claimed for Freemasonry, a heavenly origin, a magic influence, a wonderful secret, and unbounded excellence. The universal medicine and the philosopher's stone, were gravely professed for the glory of its mystical laboratory ; and to so great a pitch of extravagance did its vain professors run, that modern Freemasons are sober men in the comparison. This folly was greatly admired in England by some men of a strange fancy, and of great learning ; and by others publicly professing the black art. Among the former, the name of Elias Ashmole, the antiquary, stands conspicuous ; and among the latter, Wm. Lilly, the astrologer ; and somewhere between them, is Robert Fludd.

This *Ashmole*, is greatly accounted of as a brother by masonic historians, and is the first accepted Freemason claimed by professor Robison. Ashmole says he was "*elected*" in Mason's Hall, Basing Hall-street, A. D. 1646. (*See Biog. Brit.*) This is the Hall of the London Company of Stone Masons, chartered 1677, 31 years after Ashmole's admission into its livery, and remaining to this day, as it ever has been, in the possession of the Stone Masons ; a society distinct from, and independent of the modern Freemasons. And it is evident that Ashmole was only made *free* of the Mason's Company as his friend Lilly was made *free* of the Salters Company, and as the Lord Mayor is usually made *free* of some one of the

12 principal Companies of tradesmen or mechanics in the city of London; and that Ashmole was *not* initiated, passed, and raised to the Sublime degree of Master Mason, as in a modern Lodge of Freemasons. Therefore we think the record must be wrong, which makes Ashmole a Freemason of the modern type.

It is an undeniable fact that the conceited mystery of the Rosicrusians, and their vainglorious pretences to every thing good and great and magical, or *holy*, are united with the emblems and working tools of a handicraft mason, the compasses and level and square and leather apron, to form that lying wonder of the 19th century which is commonly called Freemasonry. This union did not take place in one day; nor until the false philosophy of the Rosicrusians fell into merited disgrace, and the sect ran out. Ashmole died A. D. 1692, and with him the last of the rosy cross philosophers; but the spirit of this order, after lingering a few years among men of less note, passed by a species of metempsychosis, into a new body, the company of masons, with whom it first appears in the early part of the 18th century.

When Ashmole died, 1692, Sir Christopher Wren was at the head of the English architects, holding the office of Deputy Surveyor of the king's buildings: in 1698 he was made by William III. Surveyor General of the public works; and in 1714 to 1718, for political considerations, he was removed from office by George I. All masonic historians call Sir Christopher Wren *Deputy Grand Master*, at the time when he was Deputy Surveyor, and *Grand Master of the Freemasons*, at the time when he was Surveyor General to the throne. But in doing this they make a very short rope to hang themselves; for by their own showing the first Grand Lodge was formed in 1717;* then, how could Sir Christopher Wren be Grand Master in 1698, nineteen years before there was a Grand Lodge?

During this period the Rosicrusian pretensions were seeking, like a troubled spirit, for some resting place.—The age is one of the most extravagant speculation: and moved with a strange desire of fame and money and conviviality, four companies of STONE MASONS, who were left

* See any masonic history of that year: *Preston, Dermott, Lawrie, et alias*.

of those that had been associated in building the proud edifices of London after the fire of 1666, met, the lodge that had worked on St. Paul's Church being at the head, and formed the Grand Lodge of London, in February, and elected their officers June 24th, A. D. 1717. With a view to fill up their ranks, and to increase their consequence, they voted to accept men of other trades and professions, as members of the society. (*Vide Preston, Smith, Lawrie, Hardie, Tannehill, et alias*, particularly the Ahiman Rezon of *Lawrence Dermott*, quoted in the 4th No. of the A. M. Review and Magazine.) Three years they struggled, accommodating the Rosicrusian pretensions to the emblems of a handicraft mason; and then, in 1720, burnt their papers for the benefit of the mystery. (See all the above writers.) They gave out that this bonfire was made "*by some too scrupulous brethren*," who feared that the secrets of masonry would be exposed in the Book of Constitutions about to be published; but the smoke of that fire was not thick enough to envelope the origin of their mystic order in impenetrable obscurity. No doubt they hoped by burning their pretended parchments, to destroy all evidence disproving their claim to immemorial customs and imprescriptible rights, which claim was in a course of preparation for the public in the dreaded Book of Constitutions. After three years more, the volume came forth from the hands of Anderson and Desaguilliers, or Desaguliers, and blowed the first strain of masonic vainglory and unearthly mystery, which is heard from any book or printed treatise!

Anderson and Desaguilliers, a Scotchman and a Frenchman, in London, were the men who first published to the world, the high pretensions of Freemasonry; men of a low character, and of a base spirit, whose *Book of Constitutions of Masonry*, was ushered from the press, A. D. 1723, and is hardly older than our grandfathers! (See *Robison's Proofs of a Conspiracy*, p. 19, and p. 60; *Lawrie*, p. 92.) This Volume of mock Constitutions, is the basis of all masonic history, and its delusive statements have been servilely copied and greatly magnified, until the mystic wonder has grown beyond the size and power of the fabled monsters of antiquity.

Now the false spirit of the rosy cross philosophy was

fairly embodied with the emblems of a mechanic's society; and was brought forth by the *Book of Constitutions* in the form of Freemasonry. From the time of its birth the lying wonder began to run to and fro in the earth, wherever British commerce could convey it; and charters for holding masonic lodges were everywhere sold at a cash price, and an annual stipend, by the Grand Lodge of London. To that Grand Lodge the inhabitants of most parts of continental Europe, of the East and West Indies, of Africa and of America, paid an annual tribute for the right to confer the three degrees of Morgan's Freemasonry! The date, and Grand Master who issued the warrant, are carefully recorded, in *Preston, Smith, Tannehill*, and others, for holding lodges in all quarters of the earth. A. D. 1729, Freemasonry was first introduced into the East-Indies; 1730 the Grand Lodge of Ireland was formed; 1731 a patent was sent from England to erect a lodge at the Hague; 1733 Freemasonry established itself in North America at Boston; 1736 at Cape Coast in Africa, and at Geneva in Europe; in Scotland the same year the first Grand Master was elected: and so the triple-headed monster, ENTERED APPRENTICE, FELLOW CRAFT, and MASTER, went deceitfully round the earth while it was yet in its *teens*.

* * * * *

That masonry is as old as Babel, we do not refuse to believe; it is Freemasonry, otherwise called *Speculative Masonry*, of which we treat, and of which we affirm that its era is A. D. 1717; no man need mistake our meaning. Neither do we pretend that the order was then made up of new principles, or of a newly created race of men; but certain men and certain principles, previously existing, were then for the first time formally united and embodied into that mystic order called Freemasonry; and a system was formed, which did not exist before even by name, which system we know by the name of *Speculative Masonry*. We do not even suppose that all the materials of this coat of many colors came out of one fleece, or was spun and wove by the same king Solomon. The aprons and trowels and temple were taken from the masons; the divine origin, mystic virtues and wonderful secrets of the order came from the Rosicrucians; the magic and for-

tunetelling from the Necromancers ; the morals from the Jesuits ; and the horrid oaths of the order, from its own bowels. But the time that all these were first publicly stitched together to form Speculative Masonry, was when the only four companies of Operative Masons in the south of England, met at the Appletree tavern in London, Feb. 1717, and constituted themselves "the Grand Lodge" of England *pro tempore* in due form. *Vide Preston p. 166.* ANTHONY SAYER, *Grand Master.*

The proof that it had no earlier existence is perfectly conclusive. Speculative Masonry, or Freemasonry, is a matter of great notoriety. Any question in a future age, of its existence in the 18th or 19th centuries, could be answered satisfactorily by pointing to splendid Masonic Halls, to quarto volumes of constitutions, and octavo histories, to medals and monuments and deeds of parchment, as well as deeds of wickedness. The literature of this age abounds with it. Those who read the account of laying the corner stone of the Bunker-hill Monument, will point to that pillar of national glory, as a proof that Freemasonry existed A. D. 1825 ; and, if that is not enough, the foundation may be removed, and there a medal be found with inscriptions of vanity, which in this republic can only belong to Most Worshipful Freemasonry : unless an indignant people should justly tear the disgraceful plate from its proud resting place.

In vain we search for any proof of this sort existing earlier than the 18th century. We find constitutions of Jesuits, Rosicrusians, and Alchymists. We find histories of political parties, religious sects, and Bucaneers. We find text books of Cabala, necromancy, astrology, magic, fortunetelling, and various proofs of witchcraft ; but not a particle of evidence to show the existence of Freemasonry, or Speculative Masonry. It is not mentioned or alluded to ; it is not painted on canvass, or stamped on paper, or indented on plate. That its universal language must have been spoken ; that its mystic characters were certainly understood, and its omnific word even then possessed some share of omnipotence, no one who believes in Freemasonry, can for a moment doubt. But all the proof is found in pages and documents, in fraternities and monuments of the 18th and 19th centuries ; and this

in such abundance, as quite to supply the failure of *five hundred* years preceding ; although it admits of a doubt, whether there is enough to supply the deficiency of the other five thousand years from the year of light. Fifty centuries are a long period for the active labors of a great mystery spread over the face of the whole world, to pass entirely unobserved : and there is no accounting for it, only as a great mystery, and such, Freemasonry may undoubtedly be ; for men do not well understand it, when it is fully revealed.

We have read the volumes of Hume and Smollet and Bisset with care. They give a connected history of England from the earliest dates to the 19th century, and no mention is made of Freemasonry to our recollection. Then we have run over Mosheim, who gives a faithful history of the church, century by century, from the year of our Lord, to the 18th century, and Freemasonry entirely escapes either his notice or our memory. * *

We lay them away, and turn to honest Scotland. Robertson tells its story in the most exquisite manner ; he spreads upon his page every fact of importance, and Walter Scott fills the world with the poetry of its history. But where is the mention of Freemasonry, or Speculative Masonry, or the men of the cabletow ? In the lights and shadows, in the tales and legends, in the songs and histories of Scotland, as well as of England, where is the mention of Freemasonry prior to the 18th century ? We know of none. * * *

It is too much after this to search Gibbon, Gillies, Ferguson, and Rollin for Freemasonry ; if we did, it would be of no use ; they take no notice of it. * *

Neither poet nor moralist, politician nor controversialist, historian, biographer, antiquary, or novelist of continental Europe, previous to the 18th century, can be named, who mentions such a thing of oaths and degrees, as modern speculative masonry ; or who so much as writes the name 'Freemasonry,' or any of its present modifications, in any language of Europe. We do not pretend to have read all, but we understand enough to challenge the most learned professor of masonic lore, the very sublime, elect, and perfect masons, to show any author with a title page older than one hundred and six years, who mentions or

alludes to the mystery in any part of the earth ; or to produce any medal, or manuscript, or monument, or well authenticated copy of any inscription upon any medal or monument, naming, or having allusion to *Speculative* Masonry, or Freemasonry, of a date earlier than the beginning of the 18th century, in any country on the face of the earth.—*Anti Masonic Review*.



THE PRETENSIONS OF FREEMASONRY TO AN ORIGIN IN THE DAYS OF SOLOMON.

Extract from Letters of Rev. Henry Jones.

At a time like the present, when the institution of Freemasonry is undergoing the faithful scrutiny of the public, it seems to be of very great importance, that the question, so frequently asked, "*What is the origin of the Institution ?*" should receive the answer which it demands, in order that an impartial and correct judgment may be more readily formed. If it originated with the people of God ; and was patronized as a good and useful institution by many of the most eminent characters whose names are recorded in holy writ ; at a time too, when they were enjoying the special guidance and approbation of the Most High ; a favorable judgment must be rendered of it, at least while in its native purity, though now so degenerated and perverted :—But if, on the other hand, this institution originated with men of corrupt principles, who have falsely founded it, on pretended important facts, which never existed ; then of course, considering also, its present deformed character, it must be condemned by the public, as a base and wicked fabrication, an insult upon community, and only worthy to be utterly expunged from all ranks of society. Each of these suppositions, for the origin of the institution, is considered correct, by the opposite parties who feel interested in the subject, and are exhibited by them, respectively, as proof of its merits, or demerits.

It is my design on this occasion to show, that *its own claims to an origin at the building of the temple of Solo-*

mon, among wise and holy men, are unfounded, and that consequently, it must have had its origin since that time, among false and wicked men, so that those wise and holy men had no part nor lot in the matter.

It is well known to all the fraternity who have become somewhat familiar with the lectures of the first three degrees, that they do teach us, that Speculative, or Freemasonry, originated at the building of Solomon's temple, and that a large share of the mysteries of the institution are established on certain events, which are said to have transpired at that time and place. I shall not consider it necessary to repeat over those parts of the lectures to which I allude; but for the benefit of some who may still be unacquainted with the subject, I would concisely bring into view some of the pretensions of masonry, as to its having its origin at the building of the temple with Solomon and others, which I am to endeavor to show, as being false.

Passing by much in the first and second degrees, which teaches the same, I shall confine my remarks to the third degree; and would observe, First, that the lecture of this "sublime" degree, teaches us that Freemasonry was founded at the building of the temple, by these important circumstances, which it professes to record, viz. that there were employed in building it, three Grand Masters; Solomon king of Israel, Hiram king of Tyre, and Hiram "Abiff," as he is designated in masonry, but in the scripture, Hiram the son of a widow, &c. who alone constituted the Master's lodge at that time, and who alone possessed the Master's secrets or word, holding their secret meetings in the sanctum sanctorum, or holy of holies of the temple. They are represented also, in this degree, as having agreed together, never to give the Master's word to any other person, unless they all three were together in doing it; so that, when Hiram "Abiff" is represented in this degree, as being slain, before any of the craftsmen had received this secret word of the Masters', it could not afterwards be given, for want of the three Grand Masters together, and was, in consequence of this, for many years lost, having another word substituted in its stead.

Having brought forward these things as the pretended

matters of fact, on which the institution of Freemasonry professes to be founded; I would observe, that they bring with themselves no proof that they are matters of fact in reality, unless we are bound to consider them so proved by the bare assertion of an individual, who says that he was secretly told so, by a second person in the preceding generation, who in like manner, received his information from a third, and so on through fifty or an hundred generations, to go back to the days of Solomon: But no tribunal has ever been authorised to allow the least credit to a witness like this, on any important question between opposite parties.

Although it is often difficult to prove a negative in such a case as this; I am prepared to prove, unless I greatly mistake, that these masonic pretensions to the origin of the institution at the building of the temple, are false; by showing from scripture history, that Hiram King of Tyre and Hiram "Abiff" never were associated with Solomon as Grand Master in the building of the temple, so that they three, never constituted a Master's lodge there, assembling in the sanctum sanctorum for their secret meetings. Every one must know, who is acquainted with this history, 1 Kings, 2 Chron., that Solomon was Master alone, over all the work of the building, that he was especially endowed with wisdom from above to qualify him to form so great a work, and that the Lord furnished him with particular directions, through the agency of David his father,* which was equal to a pattern of the building, and more than this, Hiram king of Tyre, as it seems from scripture and reason, never left his kingdom to go and dwell at Jerusalem, while the temple was building, as he only bartered with Solomon in a friendly manner, by furnishing timber for the temple, and sending his servants to cut and prepare it, &c. for which Solomon made satisfaction in wheat, barley, wine and oil; with twenty cities. It is evident, also, beyond dispute, that Hiram "Abiff" was not a Grand Master with Solomon in building the temple, and with him constituting a Master's lodge, meeting privately in the sanctum sanctorum, as the third degree represents; because

* 1 Chron. xxviii. 11, 12, 19.

he was employed only as a very skilful workman in metals, and because, he labored *not* on, or about the temple, but exclusively in casting the furniture, &c. for the temple, under the direction of Solomon, "*In the plain of Jordan—in the clay ground between Succoth and Zarthan,*" or "*Zeredathah.*"*

Again, the instructions of the third, or "sublime" degree, give us to understand that Freemasonry originated with wise and good men, under the patronage of God, at the building of the temple, by its establishing the principal part of the mysteries of that degree on the pretended murder of Hiram "Abiff," with the various circumstances in its connexion, while he was in the temple, before it was finished, at a time too, when he was daily employed in planning work for the craft, and overseeing them on the building. All who have taken the third degree, or have examined Morgan's book, may know, that there is a long secret dialogue or tragedy, to be acted out, by the members of the lodge whenever the degree is conferred, in imitation of the whole process, and all the circumstances, of the pretended murder of this Hiram, and that the candidate who takes the degree, must always represent Hiram, and experience a mock murder, two burials, &c.: But of Hiram's being thus murdered in the temple, before its completion, masonry gives us no better evidence than what has been noticed in case of the other pretended facts, on which, not the least dependence can be placed, even if there were nothing to disprove it.

If such a horrible assassination as this is represented to be, of so important a character as Hiram was, had taken place under those circumstances, it is unaccountably strange, that the sacred writer, in recording the remarkable events connected with that great work, should pass over so important an event as this, in utter silence; and strange too, that Josephus, who has given such a particular account of the building, workmen and circumstances of the temple, in his 8th Book, 2d and 3d Chapters, should not intimate a word of any such important transaction.

Although both Josephus and the scripture are entirely

* 1 Kings, vii. 46; and 2 Chron. iv. 17.

silent about any such murder of Hiram in the temple, before its completion ; the scripture on the other side of the question, is not silent, but it speaks out, and gives us to understand that he was *not* thus there murdered.

The first proof to be mentioned from scripture of this fact, is what has already been noticed, viz., that he never wrought as an overseer on the building of the temple, as I think we must conclude, from the consideration, of his being employed by Solomon only as a cunning workman, in casting the metallic vessels, furniture, &c. of the temple, "*in the plain of Jordan,*" at a place, not less than thirty or forty miles from Jerusalem, where the temple was built, as it appears by consulting sacred geography on the subject.

Another scripture testimony which is positive, against the pretended fact of Hiram's being murdered in the temple before its completion, and before he had finished the work which had been assigned him, is that he was *living* when the temple was completed, and that he lived to *finish* all the work, which had lain upon his hands, for the use of the temple. The first passage which declares this, is 1 Kings, 7th Chap. 40th verse, *And Hiram made the lavers and the shovels and the basons ; so Hiram MADE AN END of doing all the work that he made for king Solomon for the house of the Lord.*"

Then, lest this plain text should be perverted, the same Chap. enumerates all the wonderful castings of Hiram, and in the last verse, which is in the same connexion, with Hiram's making an end of all *his* work for king Solomon, it is said, "*So was ENDED all the work, that KING SOLOMON made for the house of the Lord.*" Then according to the sacred writer, the very next thing was, the dedication of the temple by Solomon, as it is particularized in the next Chapter.

To set the fact of Hiram's being alive, at the finishing of the temple, still further beyond all doubt, the same testimony of it, is recorded again, in 2 Chron. 4th Chap. 11th verse, "*And Hiram [or Hiram] made the pots, and the shovels, and the basons. And Hiram FINISHED the work that he was to make for king Solomon, for the house of God :*" So it is said again, in the same connexion of the subject, in the first verse of the next Chap. "*Thus all the work that Solomon made for the house of*

the Lord was FINISHED," &c. immediately upon which, as the history informs us, the people of Israel were assembled for the dedication of the building.

Having shown now, as I would hope, to the satisfaction of all who rely upon scripture testimony, and the exercise of reason, for evidence; that Solomon was *alone*, under God, a 'Grand Master,' or the builder of the temple; that Hiram king of Tyre, never *left his kingdom* to go and dwell at Jerusalem, to be a Grand Master in the building, forming a Master's lodge, &c; that Hiram "Abiff," was *not* a Grand Master at Jerusalem with Solomon in erecting the temple, and that he was *never slain* there before the finishing of his appropriate work, having lived to *make an end* of it, and see the temple completed; What are we to think of the institution of Freemasonry? the lectures of which tell us, that Hiram king of Tyre, and Hiram "Abiff," were Grand Masters with Solomon in building the temple; that they three constituted a Master's lodge assembling in the sanctum sanctorum, &c. and that Hiram "Abiff," was *slain* in the temple before its completion, while busily employed in the great work. And what shall we think of it too, when it professes in its lectures to have its *origin* in connexion with these reputed events, and to be *founded* upon them, while nearly the whole substance of the mysteries of the third degree, is a dialogue, in imitation of Hiram's assassination, &c.? Considering that the first three degrees of Freemasonry which were established, must be the corner stone, or foundation, on which all the latter degrees are built, would it be unreasonable for me now to ask; On what then does the whole superstructure of Freemasonry rest but a base fabrication of wicked men, who in some dark and apostate age of the world, have risen up, united into a secret society, and darkly handed down their inventions, to flatter us to believe that their institution is good as having originated among wise and good men; and being ignorant of the manner in which their false pretensions would be exposed; have told us, that it was established on certain specified facts and events, which, by looking at them carefully, and comparing them with our Bible, we find, never had existence? Was there ever an imposture of such magnitude as this, so generally palmed

upon mankind? And yet, here is the origin of the foundation of Speculative Freemasonry; and here is a portrait of the character of its founders and first principles.



THE ABUSE AND PERVERSION OF THE MASONIC INSTITUTION.

Extract from Rev. M. Thacher's Address before Montgomery Lodge.

The original design* of this institution appears to have been, to cherish the social virtues, enforce the principles of moral rectitude and equity between man and man, and to extend the hand of relief to indigence and distress. Viewed in this light, and so far as it is calculated to answer these designs, it *may*, and *ought*, to be considered no more nor less than a *moral* and charitable institution. So far as any society is combined to promote general interest, merely, it should be regarded merely as an object of *utility*; so far as it enforces moral virtue, or upright external conduct, it may be considered as a *moral* society; and so far as it extends relief to others, it may be considered as an institution of *charity*. We will take, for example, a society for the promotion of useful knowledge

* It is here taken for *granted*, that this *was* the primary intention of the masonic society; because this is what masons have always avowed. Query. Would any class of men have instituted a *secret* society, to act *merely* as a moral and charitable institution? But, suppose the original design of the masonic institution was *merely* what masons have *avowed*; another important question arises, Is it *possible* for a *secret* society to exist, without becoming corrupt, and being turned into an engine of wickedness? Our Saviour declared to the Jewish high priest, "*I spake openly to the world;—and in secret have I said nothing.*" What would now be thought of the *church*, if she should close and "*tyl*e" her doors, impose obligations in secret, and place a perpetual seal upon the lips of her members? Would it any longer be *believed* that her *sole object* is to promote the religion of the gospel? Now if the *church*, which is the purest body on earth, *could not* and *would not* be trusted, as a *secret society*, who can blame conscientious and judicious men, for drawing the conclusion, that *any secret society*, of whatever description, is altogether unnecessary, and cannot exist, without becoming an object of *suspicion*, if not an engine of wickedness.

in the Mechanic Arts. So far as this society tends to facilitate the theory and practice of mechanism, it may be valued for its *utility*. If its members enter into an agreement to shun certain known vices, and to practise certain known virtues, it may be considered as a *moral* society. If they go farther, and engage to appropriate a certain portion of their funds for the relief of indigent widows and orphans, it may then be regarded both as a *moral* and a *charitable* institution.

Considering Freemasonry, therefore, in its original design, as a *moral*, as well as charitable institution, one of the first abuses, of which we are called to take notice, is, THE ADMISSION AND RETENTION OF UNPRINCIPLED MEMBERS.* It is absurd to the last degree, not to say ridiculous, to think of advancing the cause of morality by immoral men. To any man who professes to take the Bible for his guide, to make himself an example to others, and to enforce the first principles of moral virtue, and who still appears to have no regard to his own moral conduct, we may, with propriety, address the language of the great apostle of the Gentiles:—"Thou, therefore, who teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? Thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? Thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege? Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law, dishonorest thou God?" There cannot be a greater perversion of any moral institution, than to admit and retain those members, who counteract by their example what they profess to maintain by precept.

* Freemasons often say, "There are bad men in the *Church*, as well as in our institution." This is true; but the cases are not parallel. All persons, whether in the church or out, have opportunity to *know* on what *principles* members are received; and that these principles do *not justify* the admission and retention of bad men. But this *cannot* be known with respect to any *secret* society. Those, who do not belong to the masonic institution, have no opportunity to judge from *principle*, but merely from the declarations of its members; and nothing but such declarations *can* afford them any evidence, that the *secret principles* of Freemasonry do not justify the admission and retention of just such men. The fact, therefore, that there are bad men in the church of Christ, while it militates nothing against the principles of the Christian religion, *does* and *must*, in regard to masonry, militate against the principles of the institution.

It cannot be denied however, nor ought it to be concealed, if it could be, that the masonic fraternity have knowingly admitted, and willingly harbored in their community, *just such members*. Such an abuse as this, has, in many places, rendered the institution an anomaly and a caricature. There is no part of masonry more public, than that masons *profess* to take the BIBLE as their guide in moral conduct. This they have openly avowed, and *reiterated*, time out of mind. What a burlesque, then, must it be upon every principle of moral virtue, to see men, and even those who stand high on the rolls of our Lodges, Chapters, and Encampments, conducting like libertines! When one of the primary precepts of DIVINE TRUTH requires us to deal *justly*, love *mercy*, and walk *humbly* with our God; what an incongruity for those, who profess to be guided by this "great light," to set at defiance every principle of honor, honesty, and compassion, and act as if there were no God to call them to account! When the Bible enjoins that "golden rule," that summary of the law and the prophets, "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them;" how inconsistent for those, who profess to receive its precepts as the rule of their faith and practice, to discover that sordid selfishness, in their intercourse with their fellow men, which characterizes not a few of the masonic fraternity! But these are facts, which candor cannot conceal, and which it would be impious to deny. How many, who have voluntarily bound themselves to the "mystic order," and who are owned and acknowledged as "free and accepted masons," are daily sending up oaths and curses "into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth," in direct violation of that peremptory command, "*Swear not at all!*" How many there are, also, of the same class of men, who are among the first in profanation of holy time, in direct defiance of that perpetual precept of the divine law, "*Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy!*" It would, likewise, be the grossest self-adulation to evade, and the grossest imposition upon others to dispute, the affecting truth, that the Holy Bible has sometimes been borne in public by the hand already palsied with intemperance, and its sacred truths pronounced by the tongue already stiffened with the poisoned

chalice. If masons are disposed to shut their eyes upon such an abuse of a *professed* moral institution, it is not strange that others should be disposed to write upon the walls, and pillars, and furniture of their "temple,"—"MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN."

Another abuse of Freemasonry, which grows directly out of the evil to which we have just attended, is, A PERVERSION OF THE INSTITUTION FROM ITS PRIMITIVE DESIGN. When corrupt men are admitted and retained in any society, especially in such numbers as to gain the ascendancy, it is strange indeed if the original object of such community is pursued for any length of time, and still more strange if the institution is not rendered an engine of wickedness. What object can it be for *immoral men* to promote morality? Or who can depend upon those, who are given to licentiousness, to relieve the distresses of the widow and orphan? They who pamper their own lusts, and are determined to pursue a course of sensual gratification, will generally make every thing bend, so far as possible, to facilitate the execution of their own selfish designs. This will account for many lodges, in different parts of our country, becoming nurseries of conviviality, and even of intemperance; instead of asylums for the poor, the needy, and the afflicted. It has been said, with sarcastic severity, but with too much truth, that "Freemasons boast of their moral and *charitable* institution; but they expend more in pageantry and feasting, at one of their anniversary celebrations, than in all their acts of munificence during the year." Now it is easy to see, that any thing like this, is a perversion of the original design of the masonic association. We have seen that this design was, to foster the principles of moral virtue, and afford relief to the indigent. Every thing, therefore, which tends to counteract this grand and primary object, must necessarily tend to sap the whole foundation. It must, too, be the grossest violation of every principle of the masonic institution, to make it an instrument of political intrigue, or of sectarian influence. It is impossible that this should be done, without removing the "ancient landmarks," and disregarding the strongest obligation of every member of the society. But, that such an unhallowed influence as this, has, from time to time, been

exerted, in various branches of the masonic community, its history fully demonstrates; and, although many such charges against the institution in our own country I must think are altogether without foundation; yet we ought not, by any means, to consider ourselves beyond the reach of corruption. The example of the Illuminees, who crept into the lodges of Europe, and converted masonry into an engine, which overturned the religion and government of a whole nation, should surely prove a most solemn admonition to all the members of the fraternity in this infant Republic. A republican government, of all others, affords the fairest opportunity for demagogues and men of corrupt minds, to execute their base designs. It would not be strange, therefore, if such men, who had connected themselves with the masonic institution, should make every possible attempt, by intrigue and deep laid plots, to rob this people of their dearest rights, which our fathers purchased with their blood.

In pursuing the chain of evils, by which the masonic institution has been made a subject of abuse, it is not out of place to take notice of FALSE PRETENSIONS. It is notorious to every judicious and candid member of the institution, that Freemasonry has often been made to rear false beacons, and to hold out false colors. Many have seemed to suppose, because they are not allowed to tell what masonry is, so far as its "*mysteries*" are concerned that they are authorized, and even *obliged*, to represent it as being *what it is not*. In order to gratify the curious, and raise their highest expectations, they have represented the peculiarities of the institution to be something, which would strike the peculiar fancies of individuals, or gratify their ruling passions: and so have induced persons to become members from mercenary motives, which has often been the occasion of the greatest degree of disappointment and disgust. Some for example, conversing with an avaricious man, have led him to believe that masonry affords peculiar facilities for the acquisition of wealth. In conversing with an ambitious man, they have represented the institution as pointing out a very safe and easy road to honor and promotion. Men of studious habits have been led to believe, by similar false representations, that

it was one grand and principal object of masonry, to lay open the profoundest mysteries of science and the arts, in the most direct, easy and lucid manner. In like manner have been treated men of different professions. The attorney has been presented with the highest encouragement of aid in the mazes of the law; and the divine* has been told that masonry throws light upon different incidents recorded in the Bible, and teaches to explain different passages of scripture, which, otherwise, must forever remain in obscurity. Now, to pursue such a course as this, with those who are ignorant of the mysteries of masonry, is not only to act a dishonest part, but must be productive of the most serious and lasting evils. It is easy to see, that when any person is initiated to the order with high expectation of some peculiar advantage, which has been held out to him by *false* and delusive representations, he must not only be disappointed, but disgusted. If so, his disappointment and disgust may not only lead him to overlook any real merit in the institution, though of a very different kind from what he expected, but will probably drive him to abandon the institution altogether. It ought ever, therefore, to be a maxim with all masons, whenever they say any thing respecting their institution, to "speak the words of truth and soberness." If they cannot converse with others, without making false impressions, and false representations, let them keep silence. It may be presumed, that there is not one mason in ten, if there is one in a hundred, who has not been in some degree disappointed and disgusted in consequence of false expectations, raised by the disingenuous allurements of imprudent members.

In connexion with the last mentioned abuse of the masonic institution, we may add, **BOASTING OF ITS GREAT**

* The writer here speaks from *experience*. He was repeatedly told, *perhaps* sincerely, that the masonic society was not only a scientific institution, but that there were many incidents and passages revealed in the Bible, which could be explained only by masonic light. This representation he has since found to be altogether *false*. Masonry, indeed, alludes to *scripture*; but I have nowhere found, after the most diligent research, that scripture alludes to *masonry*; unless (which is very probable) the sacred writers allude to it *prophetically*, in describing the scenes of the latter days.

ANTIQUITY AND PRETENDED PATRONS.* It seems to be a natural and rather curious trait in the human character, to value some things merely because they are *old*, and others merely because they are *new*. It is always impolitic, however, to claim, for any institution, greater antiquity, than can be fairly made to appear by conclusive evidence, in view of the public. To prize any thing, either because of its real or pretended antiquity, when others are able to see neither internal nor external evidence of the fact, is rather to turn the subject into ridicule, and detract from its real merit, than to sanction its utility by proper means, and give demonstration of its excellence. When masons, therefore, have boasted that their institution is as old as the creation, and that all the renowned men of antiquity have been its patrons, they have betrayed a want of confidence in what *ought* to constitute its real worth, and which cannot in anywise depend upon its being either old or young. It matters not to me, whether the institution was founded by Solomon, or by John the Baptist, or, what is more probable, by certain mechanics in the sixteenth century; I consider the main question to be, Whether the institution is good or bad; and whether it has maintained or departed from its original design? I can, however, with what little know-

* "Enthusiastic friends of our institution have done it much injury, and covered it with much ridicule, by stretching its origin beyond the bounds of credibility. Some have given it an antediluvian origin, while others have even represented it as coeval with creation; some have traced it to the Egyptian priests, and others have discovered its vestiges in the mystical societies of Greece and Rome. The erection of Solomon's temple, the retreats of the Druids, and the crusades to the holy land, have been at different times specified as the sources of its existence. The order, harmony, and wonders of creation, the principles of mathematical science, and the productions of architectural skill, have been confounded with Freemasonry. Whenever a great philosopher has enlightened the ancient world, he has been resolved by a species of moral metempsychosis, or intellectual chemistry, into a Freemason; and in all the secret institutions of antiquity, the footsteps of Lodges have been traced by the eye of credulity. Archimides, Pythagoras, Euclid, and Vetruvius, were in all probability not Freemasons; and the love of order, the cultivation of science, the embellishments of taste, and the sublime and beautiful works of art, have certainly existed in ancient, as they now do in modern times, without the agency of Freemasonry."—*Extract from the Masonic Address of Dewitt Clinton, delivered Sept. 29, 1825.*

notice on this occasion, is, the inclination of some to MOULD IT INTO A SYSTEM OF RELIGION. All that can be said of masonry, and all that *ought* to be said of it, in its best and primitive state, is, that it was designed for a *moral* and *charitable* institution. Thus far it may go, and no farther. To run it into a system of religion, is an outrage upon the gospel of Christ. A man may as well be a Mahomedan, or a heathen, as adopt any thing for a system of religion, which does not recognize the atonement of Christ. This is the foundation of the Christian's faith, the Christian's hope, and the Christian's salvation. For, "there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we can be saved, but by Jesus Christ." Freemasons may be assured, therefore, that they cannot do their institution a greater injury, nor more effectually disgust and wound the feelings of a Christian community, than to frame it into a *system of religion*. There is not a *Christian* on earth but must reject and abandon masonry, so far as it sets itself up as a system of religion, upon which its votaries may be induced to build their hopes of forgiveness and acceptance with God. For, there is not a Christian on earth, but must build his hopes of salvation entirely upon the atonement of the blessed Redeemer. It would be just as consistent to erect the constitution of an agricultural society into a system of religion, as to erect the institution of masonry into a system of religion. I should consider it just as proper to give this sentiment, "*Religion and agriculture* :—what God hath joined together, let not man put asunder ;" as to give the sentiment which was given at a recent anniversary, "*Religion and masonry* :—what God hath joined together, let not man put asunder."*

Here then lies the true secret of that opposition to Freemasonry, which is expressed by some of our most serious and conscientious men in society. They have considered masons as erecting a system of religion, in distinction from, and in opposition to, the religion of the gospel. It must be confessed, also, that they have had their reasons for so thinking. They have heard the re-

* Given by Rev. George Taft, Rector of St. Paul's Church, Pawtucket, R. I.—Ed.

peated declaration, "Every true mason is a Christian ; and every Christian is a mason at heart." They have heard it said, in substance, that 'religion is masonry, and that masonry is religion.' They have seen, in Charts and Monitors, prayers and other forms of religious service, in which neither the name, nor the atonement of Christ, is recognized. They have heard the burial service, as now used, which virtually pronounces the deceased in heaven, let his moral character have been what it might. They have seen "the sprig of evergreen," an emblem of the immortality of the soul, cast into the grave by the professed Deist, and even by those who profess to believe that man dies like the beast. They have seen the Bible carried in solemn procession, by the same persons ; and, considering their avowed principles and general conduct, have drawn the very natural inference, "*This is solemn mockery.*" Now it must be admitted, that, when serious and thinking men judge of masonry by what they see in these authorized and sanctioned publications, and by the conduct of many masons, who are known to be hostile to the religion of Christ and his apostles, it is not strange that they should fear a general combination to mould the masonic institution into a religious system, opposed to the first principles of the oracles of God. That this *has* been the design of some leading masons, who have stood high as members of the fraternity, I have not the least reason to doubt. It may be presumed, however, that this is not the design of the majority of the "craft," and that they have received the forms, to which I have alluded, without due consideration. But, so far as any have intended, that masonry shall answer as a substitute for religion, it ought to be considered as the grossest abuse and perversion of its original design ; and should, in every laudable way, be reprobated by those who have pledged themselves to preserve "the ancient land-marks of the order."

CIVIL, SOCIAL, AND POLITICAL INFLUENCE OF MASONRY.

Extract from Charles P. Sumner's Letter to the Suffolk Committee.

MASONIC engagements, whether they are called oaths, obligations or promises, ought never to be made. They are not sanctioned by law, and are not obligatory. They make it a masonic crime to divulge that which the good of the community requires should not be concealed. The manner in which they are administered, and the matter of them, can hardly fail to excite disrespect for the institution, in the mind of the person initiated; but their effect is neutralized by some charge, or address, which is immediately made by the master, inculcating charity, benevolence and candor towards the whole family of mankind, and a cheerful obedience to the laws and magistrates of the country in which we live. Masonic obligations have no dignity when compared with precepts like these.

It has been said that Washington in his early life was a mason; but he never went further than the third degree: I believe that in his time, higher degrees were not conferred. It is not possible, by reading any book, to know what were the precise terms of Washington's masonic obligations: but any body may know that he never agreed to kill or be killed for all the masonry in the world. It is easy to divine the motives which probably induced *him* to become a mason. The Old Charge used in his day, when speaking of Civil Magistracy says, "a mason is a peaceable subject to the civil rulers, wherever he resides or works; and is never to be concerned in plots, and conspiracies against the peace and welfare of the nation; nor behave himself undutifully to inferior magistrates." * * * "If a brother should be a rebel against the States, he is not to be countenanced in his rebellion, however he may be pitied as an unhappy man." * * * The books abound with precepts of loyalty and benevolence. It was sentiments like these which induced Washington to become a mason; and a respect for these sentiments would have induced him to withdraw his esteem for the association, had he lived until the autumn of 1826, and

heard of that outrage which evinces that masonry, probably in some of its high and recently invented degrees, can inspire some of its votaries with the grossest misconception of their duty to the magistracy and laws of their country :—I say in some of its *high* degrees, for I am convinced that neither of the three lower degrees irresistibly require that the receiver of them should become the perpetrator of a crime upon himself or upon any one else. I say this from impressions received between twenty and thirty years ago.

It is probable that Morgan has been murdered. If there is any thing in masonic ties that could have induced masons to do this, they ought to disregard such ties as a lion would disregard a net of cobweb. It will be disgraceful to the institution, if its members do not all do their utmost to bring all the abductors of Morgan to *legal light* and legal punishment. In no better method can they manifest the loyalty and benevolence which they *yet* continue to declare to be their characteristics.

In our government “the whole people covenants with each citizen and each citizen with the whole people that all shall be governed by certain laws for the common good.” Whoever violates those laws cannot be a good citizen—and can he be a good mason ?

A masonic obligation, if it requires any breach of the law, is what no man has a right to impose, *even on a willing receiver*. It is not binding on any one who may be so indiscreet as to take it. It cannot come to good. As it is imposed in some lodges it is illegal and wicked ; and in lodges, where it is the least reprehensible, it goes to swell the amount of those idle words which we must one day regret.

The influence of masonry is not favorable to domestic happiness. It impairs a man’s fondness for the pleasures, which, if he does his duty, he may justly expect to find *at home*. I once had occasion to see a man after ten o’clock in the evening. I called at his house ; upon knocking at the door, I heard the words—*walk in*, uttered by a faint voice. I entered the room which served its tenants for a parlor and a kitchen. It was enlightened by a glimmering lamp. His wife was sitting in a rocking chair drawn to the hearth, on which was a small fire

scarcely visible. One child was in her arms, and another in a cradle, within her reach, which she occasionally rocked. I asked her if I might at that late hour be permitted to see her husband. She replied, with a pale and melancholy look, "Sir, my husband has yet not returned from the Lodge." She then in a sitting posture, bent forward over her child, and with a shawl that hung loosely over her shoulders she absorbed a starting tear. At that very moment her husband was probably in the Lodge joining his voice in the words of a favorite masonic song—

"We are true and sincere

"And just to the fair."

I withdrew from this mason's house with pity for his young wife and infant children, and with lessened respect for an institution which could thus withhold a husband and a father from the first of social duties.

Masonry alienates the minds of some men from the common pursuits of life, and inclines its votaries to things, immoderate, incredible, and out of their reach. It styles itself but another name for Charity, but it is not modest like Charity; it vaunteth itself and is puffed up. In the subordinate lodges it delights itself in those songs which are denominated masonic, the burden of which is, that masons are the greatest and the best of men, companions of princes wherever they go; that they built all the superb temples and palaces in the world; that they are eminently benevolent, and the special favorites of the fair. It flaunts in the robes and titles that might become the high stations of piety or power in the Court of an eastern prince.

In a country, like ours, where all men stand upon a *level*, and where the fields of usefulness and honor are open to all, it cannot be consistent with the *wisdom* of a well regulated mind to cultivate those flowers that yield no fruit; or to decorate one's self with the ornaments that serve to make the wearer of them no more respectable than he would be in the plain garments suited to his daily calling.

If a mason would qualify himself to become a master of a lodge, he must load his memory with a mass of matter for which the understanding has but small affinity.

If young men would quit those scenes of almost profitless amusement and attend with equal assiduity the lectures on operative masonry and architecture; on chemistry, astronomy, botany, anatomy, mineralogy, agriculture or mechanics, which might at a small expense be heard in every city, and in some villages; they would find more satisfaction to their own inquisitive minds and lose none of that respectable standing in the community which they now enjoy. If some young lawyers would give that portion of their time to legal and historical studies, which some few of them throw away in investigating the self-asserted antiquity and universality of Freemasonry, they would find themselves in higher request in their profession, masters of the Civil Law, the Admiralty Law, and Law of Nations; and possibly their chance would be fair as diplomatists, to represent their country in the presence of Kings.

Masonry is said to be a sort of accomplishment suitable for a traveller; but a knowledge of the language of the country he visits, and of the business he goes to transact, will set him above the necessity of any aid or pleasure to be derived from masonic knowledge or masonic acquaintances; and as to those who are content to remain in their own country, if a man will mind his own affairs, and abstain from those habits of *moderate drinking*, at which the genius of masonry takes no offence, he will seldom need any of the pecuniary aid that the funds of masonry can bestow.

I have never considered masonry as having any distinct political influence in this Commonwealth. There are some who seem to think differently; and it is with grief that I have seen in print any insinuation that the administration of justice is under masonic influence. I am convinced that this is unmerited here. My observation does not permit me to believe that such influence has extended to any department of government. Let masonry be gently divested of its borrowed plumes, but not loaded with that which it does not deserve to bear.

Every man who is a mason will be frank enough to confess it, and until the question is proposed to him it cannot be right that he should be charged with masonry by those who consider it a cause of reproach. Such a

charge made against any public functionary, may do harm to the Commonwealth rather than to masonry.

I have recently seen a paragraph which is said to have been printed in an oration delivered by Mr. Brainard, a distinguished mason, at New London in Connecticut, on the 24th June, 1825. It is in these words:—

“What is masonry now? it is powerful: it comprises men of rank, wealth, office, and talent, in power and out of power, and that in almost every place where power is of any importance; and it comprises among other classes of the community, to the lowest, in large numbers, active men united together and capable of being directed by the efforts of others, so as to have the force of concert throughout the civilized world. They are distributed too with the means of knowing one another, and the means of keeping secret, and the means of co-operating in the desk, in the legislative hall, on the bench, in every gathering of business, in every party of pleasure, in every enterprize of government, in every domestic circle, in peace and in war, among enemies and friends, in one place as well as another. So powerful indeed is it at this time, that it fears nothing from violence either public or private; for it has every means to learn it in season, to counteract, defeat, and punish it.”

Having seen masonry only in its three incipient steps, and but little or nothing of it for many years past, I am not able to attribute to it any such mighty sagacity and power as the author of that oration so boldly arrogates for it. Every one however will judge of this, as his own knowledge and good sense shall dictate. If he has given a true description of masonry, it ought to be dreaded as a pestilence that walketh in darkness. We have no Police vigilant and strong enough to cope with it. It can, if it pleases, throw a flood of light upon the last miserable scene of Morgan's life. If any part of this mystery of iniquity is to remain undeveloped, it must be because masonic obligations, have an influence more powerful than those of justice. If what Mr. Brainard has said be not true, he has done wrong to the cause he advocates, and must in the opinion of its friends deserve some punishment, perhaps almost as severe as that which awaits a man in England who is an utterer of *false news*, or

false and pretended prophecies, calculated to give unfounded alarm to the people.*

The abduction of Morgan, which followed soon after the publication of that remarkable paragraph, has excited perhaps a just belief that the existence of masonry is incompatible with the personal security of those who reveal its mysteries. However well or ill founded this belief may be, I hope no cause for it will long exist; but that the subordinate Lodges will upon due consideration, surrender their charters to the Grand Lodge, and close this great concern, which some pretend has been going on, (quietly till now,) ever since the days of Adam. Masonry will thus subside and come to a peaceful and honorable death. In no better way can masons display the respect and benevolence which they feel for their uninitiated brethren of the human family, than by voluntarily walking with them on the common level of citizenship.



MASONRY PRODUCTIVE OF NO PERMANENT MORAL GOOD.

Extracted from writings of Rev. John G. Stearns.†

IF masonry be what it professes, its direct tendency must be to nourish the piety of the heart and the graces of the divine Spirit. Does it have such a tendency? Are those Christians who devote themselves to masonry, and have made the greatest advances, and even searched all its mysteries, any more wise, godly, and useful, than many others who have no knowledge of masonry? I will leave facts to speak for themselves, and my readers to judge for themselves, and I presume they will agree, that

* 4 Vol. Blackstone's Commentaries, p. 149.

† Mr. Stearns's Volume, entitled "An Inquiry into the Nature and Tendency of Speculative Freemasonry," is one of the ablest productions which has appeared on the subject. Its service to the cause of Anti-masonry, has probably been greater than that of any work of the kind. Five editions have already been published.—ED.

such Christians often appear to possess the least of the humble spirit of the Saviour.

If it be the tendency of masonry to gratify and comfort the pious heart, and promote its spiritual growth, why do so many godly members of the fraternity forsake it and proclaim its leanness? The reason Mr. Bradley gives is, other important callings occupy their attention and render it inconsistent for them to attend the meetings of the lodges. This may be true in some cases, but not in all; nor does it answer the objection he has anticipated. The objection is, "Why do many good men who once attended the lodges, now neglect them?" Many good men do forsake the lodges, not, however, because of other pressing calls, but because masonry does not satisfy them. There are many devout, praying, living Christians, ornaments to the cause, and lights in the world, who have utterly abandoned the pursuits of masonry, and on their death beds, have refused its funeral honors. Mr. B.* must have known this. Why has he passed it in silence?

If masonry possesses those excellences which masonic writers ascribe to it, why do not those men, when they forsake masonic lodges, forsake the church, the bible, and the cause of Christ? Why do they forsake masonry for Christianity? If they forsook Christianity too, the thing could be reconciled. But that they should still manifest a more devout attachment to it, and an increasing relish for its requirements, while they lose their relish for masonry—and view it as wanting the one thing needful—as possessing nothing which nourishes the piety of the heart, and as inconsistent with the Christian profession; are things altogether unaccountable on any other ground, than that masonry is not of God, nor what it pretends to be. This objection can never be raised against Christianity. It never has been said, and never can be said, in truth, that good men utterly forsake it for something else, and remain good men, and even better than they were before.

The man who forsakes Christianity, forsakes God, his duty, and the path to heaven, or any thing else which

* Mr. B., since the publication of his work, has renounced masonry.—Ed.

rendered them more useful in the world. For men to forsake masonry because they are disgusted with it, and find something more excellent in the Bible, is very different from what it is to forsake it because they are crowded with other important callings. The latter may sometimes be the case, the former is often the case; and is an open avowal of the emptiness of masonry, and of its utter insufficiency to satisfy a pious mind.

What support does masonry afford the people of God? They are favored with divine support, but whence is it derived? "I will pray the Father," said Jesus, "and he shall give you another comforter, that he may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth." This Spirit is the only source of consolation to the afflicted people of God. Take this away and there is nothing to sustain them in the trials of life. Will any person say that this Spirit, the comforter of saints, belongs to masonry? What a poor system of religion is that which has in it no Holy Spirit! What is there here to encourage and support the children of the Saviour, as they pass through great tribulation to the kingdom?

Masonry may afford momentary consolation to a pharisee, or hypocrite, who builds his hope on his own righteousness; but the man who rests his hopes on the merits of Christ crucified, thirsts for something to sustain his heart, far superior to a comfortless system, in which there is no Holy Ghost. If there be something in masonry which God has designed as a peculiar support for his people, masons will be found guilty for locking it up as a secret. Why may not all classes, and both sexes, be admitted to it on God's terms, "without money and without price?" The fact is, there is nothing in masonry which a suffering or a dying man needs; he may endure afflictions, live to the glory of his Maker, and die in complete triumph, without the aid, and without the hopes of masonry.

When a man is called to die, it is the most awful, the most important period of his existence! Then he needs consolation; then he needs something to sustain his sinking spirit, and to scatter light on his dark path. What will become of a poor deluded creature, when called to die with no better hope than that which is inspired by a

makes application to masons, tells them he is a mason and entitled to their charity, had he no token to give by which they should recognize him, they might be deceived and betrayed, and bestow their charity on one for whom it was not designed. This shows that masonry is a system of supreme selfishness, and its pretended benevolence the bare love of party.

FREEMASONRY A SYSTEM FRAUGHT WITH DECEPTION AND DETRIMENTAL TO HUMAN HAPPINESS.

Extract from Letters of Rev. Joshua Bradley, a Seceding Mason.

THIS will appear, without any veil to cover its enormity of crime, if you will condescend to examine critically the constitution, by-laws, amendments, resolutions, and transactions of the fraternity, since it was established in America. Let antecedent ages roll, burdened with all kinds of traditions, idolatry and superstition, from which speculative masonic writers and the devotees of the craft have picked here and there an atom, which being melted in their flaming imaginations, and brought forth among stonecutters; they have clothed it, and denominated this mere creature of fancy, SPECULATIVE FREEMASONRY. Under this name, many of the fraternity in Europe have conjured up more than 50 degrees, and conferred titles upon certain members, taken from all the crowned heads amidst the vast kingdom that have flourished around the globe since Japheth dwelt in the tents of Shem. Restless as the ocean and proud as Lucifer, they have multiplied degrees and flattered their brethren to obtain them. When they had taken three degrees they were greeted as having obtained great information in masonry, and were told that "the ancient landmarks of the order were intrusted to their care." They are now called *Master Masons*. When individuals have passed the Arch, and obtained the knowledge of a certain mysterious hug, and have been intrusted how to open and close a chapter,

