

Masonic Reprints.

Reproductions
of
Masonic Manuscripts, Books
and Pamphlets,
WITH NOTES.

By JOHN T. THORP, F.R.Hist.S.,
P.G.D. (Eng.).

V.

"Free Masonry The High-way to Hell." 1768.
"Masonry The Turnpike-Road to Happiness."
1768.



LEICESTER:

PRINTED BY BROS. JOHNSON, WYKES AND PAINE, MARBLE STREET.

1922.

FREE MASONRY

The HIGH-WAY to HELL.

A

S E R M O N:

WHEREIN IS CLEARLY PROVED,

Both from REASON and SCRIPTURE; That
all who profess these MYSTERIES are
in a State of ETERNAL DAMNATION.

MYSTERY, *the whore of Babylon*, &c. Rev. xvii. 5.

*Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and deliver every
man his soul: be not cut off in her iniquity.*
Jer. li. 6.

L O N D O N:

PRINTED in the YEAR M,DCC,LXVIII.

M A S O N R Y

T H E

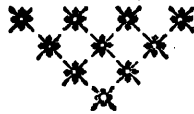
Turnpike - Road

T O

Happinefs in this Life,

A N D

Eternal Happinefs hereafter.



D U B L I N:

Printed by JAMES HOEY, fenior, at the
Mercury in Skinner-Row. M D C C L X V I I I.

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General Foreword.

(1907.)

In the flood of Masonic literature, more or less ephemeral, which appears year by year, one class, and that certainly not the least entertaining and instructive, seems of late to have been entirely absent. These are the Reprints, with notes, of old Masonic manuscripts, books and pamphlets, or portions of such, which are curious, rare or valuable.

This work carried out in so splendid a manner by the "Quatuor Coronati" Lodge, No. 2076 London, in the years 1889 to 1900, has, alas, been discontinued, to the deep regret of all Masonic students.* The unique character of the Reprints already produced, and the excellence of their execution, has laid the Masonic fraternity under a permanent obligation to that well-known and distinguished Lodge, and it is sincerely to be hoped that, ere long, the valuable work may be recommenced, as very much in that direction still remains to be done.

Meanwhile, something on a smaller and less pretentious scale may be undertaken with advantage by the "Lodge of Research," No. 2429 Leicester. It is therefore proposed to issue from time to time, as circumstances will allow, reprints of portions of little known Masonic manuscripts, books and pamphlets, which may be considered of sufficient interest, and are not easily obtainable by the ordinary Masonic reader.

* A further Vol. was published in 1913.

Much of the Masonic literature of the eighteenth century would not prove of sufficient value or interest, much could not be reprinted without incurring the displeasure of the Masonic authorities, but enough remains to form a valuable series, even although it may be necessary in some cases, for obvious reasons, seriously to mutilate the work.

Some of these proposed reprints will be in exact fac-simile, others will be printed *verbatim et literatim*, with the same pagination and with type as nearly matching the originals as can be obtained. Plates of frontispieces or title-pages will be added, in order to make the volumes as valuable and useful as possible, to those who desire to become acquainted with some of the early literature of Freemasonry.

J. T. T.

54 PRINCESS ROAD,
LEICESTER.



Foreword to Vol. V.

BY THE EDITOR.

The volume of Masonic Reprints—No. V of the series—published by the Lodge of Research for the current year, consists of two Masonic pamphlets, which were originally published in the year 1768. Each was furnished with a very striking and unusual title, one being called *Free Masonry The High-way to Hell*, and the other, issued as a reply, entitled *Masonry the Turnpike-Road to Happiness*. Both were published anonymously, the former disguised as a sermon, with a text from the Book of Revelation.

They are exceedingly rare, for which reason they have been selected for reproduction, and not for any inherent value they may have possessed at the time they were originally published, or possess now. Indeed portions of the former are so coarse, that some of the Brethren may be inclined to criticise its reproduction. But when it is remembered that without these, and similar reprints, Masonic students would remain in total ignorance of the infamous manner in which Freemasonry was caricatured and maligned in days gone by, and unaware of the many gross and cowardly attacks made upon the Order by wicked and malicious enemies, then it is hoped the reproduction will be considered as fully justified.*

In perusing these pamphlets it will be well to bear in mind, that the language employed therein was by no means uncommon at the time they

* One of the first Brethren to be relieved out of the Grand Lodge Charity Fund was Henry Prichard, who had been mulcted in damages for assaulting a slanderer of the Craft. (*Masonic Record*, Nov. 1921, p. 484.)

were published. There was then a looseness of expression and a coarseness of simile in quite general use, so that pamphlets written in the style of those now reproduced, would cause no surprise, and call forth no protest even from highly educated people, but would be read by those into whose hands they happened to fall, without any feelings of disgust, which similar language would arouse at the present time.

The middle of the eighteenth century, when these tracts were first printed, was a very critical time for the Masonic Order. The long struggle for supremacy between the *operatives* and *speculatives* was indeed drawing to a close, but the Society had still many enemies in its own ranks as well as outside, who were causing endless trouble and anxiety.

As early as the year 1730 Prichard's "*Masonry Dissected*" brought in reply the famous "*Defence*" attributed to Martin Clare;* in 1738 Pope Clement XII launched his bull "*In Eminentissimis*," threatening to excommunicate any one who became or remained a Freemason; while the mock procession of Scald Miserables in London in 1742 was especially organized in order to bring ridicule upon the Society. In addition to these attacks by acknowledged enemies, some of the members were themselves undermining the Institution in other ways. They were complaining of certain changes that had been made, of the relinquishing of old customs and the unwarranted introduction of new ones. Some were also complaining of the time spent at the social board and the expense thereby incurred, while others demanded increased attention to the pleasures of the banqueting-table, which gave a prominence

* *Vide B. of C. 1738 edit.*

in the Order to those who were wealthy, and relegated to an inferior position others whose income would not permit such extravagance. To increase the difficulties, in the years 1751—1753 a rival body of Freemasons organized itself as a Grand Lodge, with the title of “Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of England according to the Old Constitutions,” and proved a painful thorn in the side of the older body.

After passing through all these troubles and difficulties, and when the prospect of quieter times seemed encouraging, these two pamphlets were printed, the former with an evident desire to injure and discredit the Society, and the latter to heal and restore it in the estimation of the public. They were by no means the only pamphlets written from similar motives. Scores of professed “disclosures” and other diatribes followed one another in quick succession throughout the latter part of the eighteenth century, so that if there had not been considerable vitality in the Order, and a conviction in the minds of its most prominent supporters, that it contained much that was deserving of preservation, it would have been crushed out of existence by the terrific and continued onslaughts of its enemies.

These venomous attacks, with occasional rejoinders and replies, were sometimes issued in series, and form an interesting study for Masonic students, throwing as they do a side-light on the history of Freemasonry in the eighteenth century, which cannot be ignored by any serious historian of the Craft.

The series now under review consists of—

(a.) FREE MASONRY The HIGH-WAY to HELL. A SERMON : WHEREIN IS CLEARLY PROVED, Both from REASON and SCRIPTURE ; That all who profess these MYSTERIES are

in a State of ETERNAL DAMNATION. LONDON: PRINTED in the YEAR M,DCC,LXVIII. pp. 22. 8vo.

(b.) MASONRY THE WAY TO HELL LONDON: Printed for ROBINSON and ROBERTS,* at No. 25, in PATER-NOSTER Row, M,DCC,LXVIII. pp. 39. 8vo.

(Except Title-page and pagination the foregoing are duplicates. It is impossible to decide which was the original, but both were undoubtedly printed in the same year.)

(c.) MASONRY THE WAY TO HELL 2nd Edition published on May 2nd, 1768. Printed for Robinson and Roberts, 25 Paternoster Row, and sold by R. Goadby in Sherborne.†

(d.) MASONRY THE WAY TO HELL LONDON: Printed for ROBINSON and ROBERTS, at No. 25, in PATER-NOSTER-Row. And, DUBLIN: Re-printed by W. G. JONES, and J. MILLIKIN. M,DCCC,LXVIII. pp. 39. 8vo.

Besides these four editions, German and French translations of (b.) were published, the former at Brunswick in 1768, the latter at Frankfort in 1769.

To these attacks the following replies were published, viz. :—

(e.) MASONRY THE Turnpike-Road To Happiness in this Life, AND Eternal Happiness hereafter. DUBLIN: Printed by JAMES HOEY, senior, at the *Mercury* in Skinner-Row. MDCCLXVIII. pp. 32. 8vo.

(f.) MASONRY The Turnpike-Road To Happiness LONDON: Published April 18, 1768. Printed for S. Bladon in Pater-noster Row and sold by R. Goadby in Sherborne.‡

(g.) REMARKS ON A Sermon lately Published; ENTITLED, MASONRY the WAY to HELL. Being a Defence of that Antient and Honourable Order, against the Jesuitical Sophistry and false Calumny of the Author. By JOHN THOMPSON. LONDON: Printed by S. AXTELL and H. HARDY, for T. EVANS, at No. 20, in *Pater-noster Row*. MDCCLXVIII. [Price one Shilling.] pp. 35. 8vo.

* Robinson and Roberts were the Printers of the 2nd Edition of *Solomon in All his Glory* in 1766.

† *Vide* A.Q.C., vol. X., p. 158.

‡ *Ibid.*

(h.) MASONRY VINDICATED. A Sermon, wherein is clearly and demonstratively proved that a Sermon entitled "Masonry the way to Hell" is an entire piece of the utmost weakness and absurdity; at the same time plainly shewing to all mankind, that Masonry if properly applied is of the greatest utility, not only to individuals, but to society, and the public in general; and is impartially recommended to their perusal, as well as to clear up, and obviate all the doubts entertained of those who are not Masons; and to the fair sex in particular. London, printed for J. Hinton. 1768. pp. 35. 8vo.

(i.) An Answer to a certain Pamphlet lately published under the solemn Title of "A Sermon, or Masonry the Way to Hell." By John Jackson. Philanthropos. 1768.

In addition to the foregoing, a German translation of (e.) was published at Frankfort and Leipsig in 1769.

From the foregoing list it is clear that this attack on Freemasonry, and its defence, must have been very widely circulated and extensively read; and yet of the whole series there are probably not more than a dozen copies in existence. It is this rarity, which, as before stated, justifies the two reproductions, for the benefit of Masonic students, inasmuch as the great Masonic libraries in England do not seem to possess copies of either of the pamphlets.

References to some of those included in the series may be found in Oliver's "*Revelations of a Square*," (1855), pp. 116-17; Lyon's "*History of the Lodge of Edinburgh*," (1900), p. 356; Carson's "*Masonic Bibliography*," (1874), pp. 173-74; A.Q.C. X. p. 158; F. Mag., May 1861, p. 391; *Freemason*, 1879, p. 133, 1880, p. 99, and 1921, p. 126; also in the Bibliographies of Kloss and Wolfstieg.

The two pamphlets are re-printed *verbatim et literatim*, and show many errors in orthography, due either to the ignorance of the writer or printers,

or to the haste with which the pamphlets were printed, in order to get them quickly into circulation. A few words have, for obvious reasons, been omitted by the editor from each of the re-prints, but any member of the Craft can readily supply them for himself.

Of the reproduced pamphlets the former is re-printed from a copy belonging to Bro. John T. Thorp, and the latter from one in the library at Freemasons' Hall, Leicester.

J. T. T.

Notes on Free Masonry The High-way to Hell.

Although this pamphlet was published in the form of a sermon, with a text as a basis of the discourse, it is very doubtful if it was ever delivered in a place of religious worship. It was probably printed in that form with the object of more readily obtaining publicity, the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries being prolific in sermon-readers. The coarse language used tends to confirm this opinion, for although the habit of loose speaking was common at the time in ordinary conversation, it would surely be moderated to some extent, if and when used in a sacred edifice.

The tract was published anonymously, and no hint as to its authorship has ever been traced, but it is highly probable that its production was an outburst of religious bigotry. The eighteenth century was notorious for the clash of religious opinions, and the warfare of religious sects, producing such a terrible amount of strife and bitterness, that a century and a half has not been able entirely to allay it. The broad religious distinctions of Protestant and Papist divided the British public into two hostile bodies, ever at war, speaking and writing one against the other, to the destruction of all civility, all friendship and all peace of mind.

Early in the century there had been an unsuccessful attempt to enlist the sympathy and assistance of the Society of Freemasons in the Jacobite cause ; later came the futile rebellion of 1745, followed in 1751 by Pope Benedict XIV's

bull "*Providas*," condemning the Craft and all its works. These events doubtless tended to increase the hatred and hostility of the Roman Catholics towards the Masonic Order, which was notoriously Protestant.

I think, therefore, this outburst of vituperation may be attributed to some rabid Papist or Jesuitical priest, who, seeing the rapid growth of Freemasonry,* and the spread of civil and religious liberty, which had always been taught and advocated by the Freemasons, gave vent to his spleen in terms as unmeasured as they were useless.

After a close study of the "sermon," I have come to the conclusion that the anonymous writer was not a regularly initiated member of the Fraternity. The statements he makes about the Order in general, and the grotesque caricatures of portions of the "ceremony of admission" which he quotes, are convincing proofs that he is drawing entirely upon his imagination, or relying upon hearsay. It is quite possible that he had seen one of the so-called "exposures," which were being printed and distributed broadcast about that time, and he may too have received some details, more or less inaccurate, from a renegade member of the Order; and from these sullied sources he has built up a charge which is infamous, unjust and wicked.

With regard to the writer's interpretation of the text from the book of the Revelation, upon which he founds his discourse,—if we are content to accept the age-long interpretation of Babylon as "worldly power showing itself in wicked and cruel forms," then there is certainly nothing whatever in the laws, regulations, principles or

* Between 1767 and 1772 over a hundred new Lodges were added to the register.

practice of Freemasonry, which in the very slightest degree deserves the condemnation which is hurled against it.

Thus, on the usurped authority of this anonymous writer, the public is asked to believe that

"there scarcely is one contemptible fellow in the kingdom who is not a member of these fraternities,"

that their mysteries

"are participated [in] by almost all the meanest, most ignorant, and infamous wretches in the kingdom,"

and that there

"is no set of people in the world more addicted to abominations, and these of the vilest and most enormous nature, than the societies of Free Masons."

Through page after page the vilest and most abominable charges are brought against Freemasonry, all without a particle of evidence in support, and the writer's promise to "clearly prove, both from reason and revelation, that by the title Babylon, is understood Masonry," was not fulfilled, for the sufficient reason that it was impossible of fulfilment.

The violence of the language used would, it is fair to suppose, tend to discredit the statements made, a result which the writer clearly anticipates, for while the Freemasons would know how false they were, readers among the general public would hesitate, and eventually decline to accept his assurance that "the Lodges of Masonry are sinks of all human depravity."

After drawing largely upon his vocabulary of choice epithets, the writer proceeds to the second head proposed, viz., "to take a general view of the subject of Masonry," which he describes as impious, absurd and wicked. He declares that

rather than be "deprived of any opportunity of gormandizing upon the spoils of a newly inveigled brother," they would "sooner sell themselves, both soul and body, to the devil, than relinquish an occasion so extremely favourable to the indulgence of all their carnal, and inordinate lusts and appetites."

He then gives what he calls "a general account of Masonry," referring to "an oath of secrecy, the most execrable and tremendous that ever was invented." He declares that it is taken under compulsion, and therefore not binding. He refers to the reception of "the poor deluded candidate," speaks of a "dark apartment," "a hideous rattling of aprons," "the clashing of swords over his head," "made to travel under the iron vault," "running his head against a naked sword," "striking his feet against obstacles purposely placed in his way," "while . . . the frantic assembly is pouring forth the most alarming exclamations."

Those members of the Order who are familiar, not only with the Masonic ceremony of to-day, but also with that in vogue in the eighteenth century, will not hesitate to declare, that the foregoing details have no foundation whatever in fact, but are a hideous caricature of a beautiful, solemn and sacred rite.

In the next few pages there are many references to peculiarities of the Masonic ritual and observance, which were certainly practised in the eighteenth century, and which the writer had evidently culled from some so-called "disclosure"; but these are so mis-quoted, twisted and misrepresented, that instead of being recognised and acknowledged for what they really are, viz., interesting historical relics of an age long past, they are made to appear so useless and ridiculous, as to provoke either condemnation or a smile.

The Craft is further charged with blasphemy and impiety, and its members with being "professed liars," and the writer solemnly declares as his belief, "that wherever two or three Masons are met together to celebrate their mysteries, there the devil is essentially in the midst of them, to rejoice over them."

He then proceeds to charge the Masons with having "a strong propensity to the unnatural crime of murder," and affirms further that they "indulge in drunkenness," "riot in dissipation and idleness," and suggests that they may even be guilty of many "abominable actions," "works of darkness" and other "most enormous crimes," all performed "under the very pretext of their being the mysteries of Masonry."

With regard to the virtue of charity to which, he says, "they pretend," he gives it as his opinion that inasmuch as the Masons' munificence is restricted to those who are connected with them in wickedness," it is plain their benefactions are so far from being charity, that they are really the wages of iniquity." Now it is freely and frankly admitted by those who belong to the Order, that large sums of money are raised and expended upon charities which are purely Masonic, and Lodge records show that this has been general for at least two centuries. But it is equally true that Masonic charity has never been restricted and confined thereto, but the benevolent instincts of the Brethren, fostered and cultivated in the Lodges, recognise the claims for assistance which come from all sorts and conditions of men and objects, with the result that relief is extended to all who are worthy and deserving, with a generous, if not a lavish hand.

After charging the Masons with a "strong attachment to the diabolical art of necromancy,"

the anonymous writer indulges in sneers at the Masons' professions of equality at their Lodge meetings. He condemns the idea that "the prince and the porter, the lord and the lackey" are all "united by the friendly grip." This he illustrates by the recital of the unhappy career of a mythical person named Sporado, as an instance of how this professed equality fails to bring relief and assistance in times of dire distress and danger. From the details given of Sporado's career of crime, the Freemasons would certainly take no action to relieve him from his just punishment, either in the eighteenth century, or at any other time.

He proceeds next to paint a picture "of the habitation of a Free Mason on the night of his solemn festival." The distinguishing features of the home, he says, are darkness, cold, sorrow, anguish, anxiety, hunger and neglect, a veritable house of woe and mourning. All this is depicted in graphic detail, while, he declares, the husband is "solacing himself in the mansion of riot, in company with the sons of Belial." It is scarcely necessary to add that the picture is as gross a libel on eighteenth century Freemasonry, as it would be on that of the present day.

The third head of the discourse consists of an expostulation with the various classes of men who go to make up the body of Freemasonry. Legislators, magistrates, generals, reverend preachers of the gospel, are all separately exhorted to renounce Freemasonry for ever—the writer being apparently unable to realise that the very fact of these men participating in the work of the Order, was sufficient evidence and proof that there was very much in Freemasonry both estimable and praiseworthy.

In the last part of his subject he proposes "to shew, that all those who adhere to the abominations of Masonry will be damned." Here he reverts to the symbol of Babylon, with which the "sermon" commences, and expects his hearers, or readers, to accept his view and interpretation without question, an expectation which was certainly never realized.

He concludes by entreating all Freemasons to abandon their "infamous society," for by so doing they will "dissolve an institution which is detestable to God, pernicious to society, and disgraceful to yourselves."

All through this abominable "sermon," the writer seems to have forgotten that abuse is no argument, and the historical fact that the Order continued to prosper, and to advance in the estimation of mankind, is convincing proof that the "sermon" was written in vain.

J. T. T.

Notes on Masonry the Turnpike=Road to Happiness.

If the "sermon" in condemnation of Freemasonry is a specimen of unexampled vituperation, it must be acknowledged that the "reply" thereto contains a superabundance of adulation. This is unfortunate, for palpable exaggeration always tends to discredit statements, and Freemasonry possesses so much that is admirable, and has so many excellent characteristics, which are well-known and generally acknowledged, that exaggeration in its praise is quite unnecessary.

Although the writer of this "reply" does not reveal his name, he claims to be a member of the Masonic Craft, and as he says much which confirms the justice of his claim, it may well be accepted without demur.

He naturally deals first, but with commendable brevity, with the interpretation of Babylon as having reference to Masonry, and while he declines to be drawn into any religious discussion, he declares that "the facts upon which this heresy is established are . . . ludicrous, and the idea of its plausibility . . . incompatible with the whole tenour of the Scriptures."

He then proceeds to criticise the general view of Freemasonry as described in the "sermon," and asserts that the whole account of it as there given is false, and goes on to say that the mysteries of Masonry are "absolutely the most important that can be conceived by the human understanding." He takes up quite a natural position in his statement that were Masonry what in the "sermon" it is said to be, no one "who had the

smallest reverence for the dignity of his nature " would have any part in it, whereas the Lodges are " frequented by men of the highest quality in life, and the most eminent for wisdom and learning." This, indeed, is the most general argument in many, if not in all, of the pamphlets issued in defence of Freemasonry throughout the eighteenth century, and the same argument is in common use in the present day ; for as a man is properly judged by the company he keeps, so the status of a Society may be equally well appraised by the stamp of men who compose its membership.

The etymology of M——, given on p. 10 by the writer of this defence, but which is necessarily badly mutilated in reproduction, is only one of the many attempts which have been made from time to time, to explain the meaning of this Hebrew word, and to account for its adoption, but like all the other guesses it cannot be accepted. Indeed, even now, authorities are not agreed upon its origin and meaning, so that this acknowledged conjecture of the writer may be put on one side without compunction.

He then takes up the subject of oaths, about which the writer of the " sermon " had so much to say. He refutes the statement that the Masonic oath is of no binding nature, by shewing how throughout Biblical history an oath, even of an unjustifiable nature, was considered to be binding on the human conscience, and affirms that the arcana of Masonry being " the most admirable, important, and useful precepts, that ever were delivered to mankind, . . . the oath of secrecy administered to Free Masons is at least of equal, if not superior validity, to any other sacramental engagement."

The next point dealt with is the charge made against the Masons, that they are woefully

deficient in scientific knowledge. To this the "defender" replies, that "Masonry is the great source to which we are indebted for the invention of the mathematical sciences," "the foundation and corner-stone of all the systems of the Grecian academies," and that the Society of Freemasons is the "most intelligent, learned, and profound society this day in the world, the universities not excepted." In dealing with this subject both writers have erred, inasmuch as they have confounded the *operative* Masons of olden times with their *speculative* descendants of the eighteenth century. Whatever claim may be made for the scientific knowledge of the Masons of mediæval times, for instance, the fact remains, that they built most of our splendid cathedrals, and many other stately and superb edifices, which certainly necessitated an extensive scientific knowledge. But the Freemasonry of the eighteenth century had largely changed its character, and had become a philosophical Society on an operative basis, occupied principally in the cultivation of the moral and social virtues, and in the erection of temples of character in the hearts of men, and for this work scientific knowledge is unnecessary. It is a pity that there has been this confusion, in one case probably from want of knowledge, and in the other case perhaps from want of thought.

The Masonic jargon condemned in the "sermon," and the writer's attempt to expose to ridicule the Masonic use of signs and tokens, is next taken up by the "defender," and dealt with very fully. With much of what he says about the use and usefulness of signs and tokens most Masons will be ready to agree, but in this discussion both writers have again fallen into a similar error to that just complained of. Both fail to recognise and acknowledge that the Freemasonry of their

day was a modern development of a very ancient and wide-spread society of craftsmen. Indeed it is quite possible that neither of them knew anything of the past history of the Fraternity,—certainly not as much as Masonic students know of it to-day—for had they been acquainted with the wonderful manner in which our ancient Brethren, in their journey from East to West through many centuries, had gradually built up the wonderful system of Freemasonry, changing it from time to time, modifying and modernizing its ritual and procedure, but still retaining much that was quaint, curious and significant, then it is fair to assume that both would have recognised in the “jargon,” and in the continued use of signs and tokens, an interesting survival of mediæval customs, the use of which certainly deserved no censure, and therefore would require no defence.

The charge of wickedness is then taken up. That Masons are notorious blasphemers, liars and murderers, or have any special tendency thereto, is most strenuously denied, and the good works, fraternal affection and philanthropy which are prominent in the Masonic creed, are quoted in refutation of the charge. Excess in eating and drinking, to which the Masons are declared to be particularly prone, is also denied, and some of the subjects which occupy their attention at the Lodge meetings, are put forward in contrast. Of the other infamous practices of which Masons are said to be guilty, it is only necessary to declare that the “defender” is fully justified in expressing his righteous indignation at the foul and infamous charges. Indeed, if it were possible to compare the lives and conduct of Masons, with the lives and conduct of those who are not Masons, it would most certainly be found, that the former excelled in the practice of the moral virtues, in uprightness

of conduct, in clean living, in honest dealings, in helpfulness and charity, when compared with the members of any other class, business or profession. It is a pity that after refuting the charge that Masons had "a mystical commerce with the devil himself," the "defender" should have retaliated by asserting, that the accuser "has really that commerce with the great enemy of mankind, which he has endeavoured to fix upon *Free Masons*," "since he has conjured up such a necromantic charge of wickedness, as could be accumulated only from an intimate acquaintance with the manners of the infernal regions." The retaliation was unnecessary, unwise and injudicious.

The "defence" is continued with what the writer describes as a "real portrait of a genuine *Free Mason*." In this very lengthy description, far more lengthy than is necessary or useful, he falls into the grave error of painting a portrait of a perfect, ideal member of the Craft, one who exhibits in perfection the beautiful teaching conveyed in the Masonic ritual and symbolism, and declaring the portrait he has painted to be a striking likeness of the ordinary Freemason of his day. This exaggeration is unfortunate. No Mason can fail to admire the portrait, and to recognise in it the perfection of Masonic teaching, but it is quite certain that no Mason would ever presume to lay claim to a tithe of the beautiful features and characteristics there portrayed, although the "defender" declares, that "the character of all Free Masons is as glorious and amiable" as he has depicted it.

After indulging in flights of fancy as to the probable benefit that would accrue to the world and to society, if everyone became a Freemason,

he proceeds to claim many of the most distinguished sages, heroes and philosophers, whose lives and works have adorned the world in days gone by, as having been, each in his day, a member of the Brotherhood of Masons. Plato, Socrates, Homer, Aristotle, Virgil, Moses, Solomon, St. John, and others, are claimed as members of the Fraternity in olden times, and as a proof of the antiquity and celebrity of the Order. This is another instance of that excess of zeal on the part of the "defender," to which reference has already been made.

In conclusion the "defender" vigorously attacks and denounces the assertion made in the "sermon," that "all those who adhere to the abominations of Masonry will be damned," and indulges in the following extravagant, high-flown eulogium of the Craft——

"Hail, sacred Masonry! great source of human happiness and perfection. Thou art the power of pleasing society. Thou makest us to sit down with kings and princes. Thou exaltest him that is low, and abasest him that is high. O continue to animate us, thy faithful children, with that glorious ambition, which, of old, inspired thy votaries, when they reared thy trophies to the clouds. Thou, peaceful goddess! lived with Astræa in the golden age of mankind. O let not the contempt of the prophane induce thee, likewise, to abandon a world unworthy of thy inestimable mysteries. If we forget thee, O Masonry! let our right hands forget their cunning. If we do not remember thee, let our tongues cleave to the roof of our mouth; if we prefer not Masonry above our chief joy. O thou mysterious divinity of the square and compass! whether thou delightest in the holy lodge of St. John, or that of Kilwinnin by thy peculiar care thou art worshipped

in a thousand temples, the work of thy faithful builders. Thy kingdom extendeth from the orient sun, to where he sets in the immense Atlantic. In the infancy of time thou arose, and coeval with time shalt thou endure. Hail, sacred Masonry ! great source of human happiness and perfection. '

Thus ends this interesting and curious " defence of Freemasonry." It possesses many of the characteristics of the Masonic literature of the eighteenth century. It is an exhibition of unwarranted and unnecessary zeal and enthusiasm for the Craft, which if it did no harm, would probably fail utterly in re-establishing the Masonic Fraternity in the estimation of those, whose minds had been biassed against it, by the charges contained in the notorious " sermon."

J. T. T.

FREE MASONRY

The HIGH-WAY to HELL.

A

SERMON:

WHEREIN IS CLEARLY PROVED,

Both from REASON and SCRIPTURE; That
all who profess these MYSTERIES are
in a State of ETERNAL DAMNATION.

MYSTERY, *the whore of Babylon*, &c. Rev. xvii. 5.

*Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and deliver every
man his soul: be not cut off in her iniquity.*
Jer. li. 6.

L O N D O N:

PRINTED in the YEAR M, DCC, LXVIII.



REVEL. XVII. 5.

*And upon her forehead was a name written,
Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother
of Harlots, and Abominations of the Earth.*

I HAVE been induced to make choice of this text, to rectify the gross misapprehension of commentators in regard to its true interpretation. By protestant divines this portion of sacred writ has generally been applied to the church of ROME; and for no other reason I can think of, than that the city of that name is built upon seven hills, and that it is said of the whore of Babylon, that she sitteth on seven mountains. It is surprising that an analogy so remote, so partial, and so capricious, could ever be made the foundation of an opinion so repugnant to common sense, and withal so ridiculous as scarcely to admit of a serious refutation. With what justice can the church of ROME be called the mother of harlots, when it is well known that, in Popish countries, a great part of the female sex take upon them vows of virginity? As to the application of the text to the Pope of ROME, who is the head of that church, it is still more ridiculous: for, is it possible that an old man

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man should be a whore ? Or, can he be said to sit on seven mountains, when we are certain that he occupies no more space than any ordinary man ? Besides, why should it be imagined that by the city of BABYLON is understood ROME, when they have no more connection with each other than with LONDON or CONSTANTINOPLE ? From the force of these arguments, I think it must be concluded, that something else than the church of ROME, or the Pope, is understood in the words of the text. But before I unfold the explanation, let me observe, that there is not any passage in scripture where the meaning is more clearly expressed, or of which the application intended will appear so obvious and unquestionable, that it is amazing how it has hitherto escaped the notice of commentators.

The words of the text, then, relate entirely to Masonry. If it should be wondered at, that a great part of the sacred writings is employed upon that subject, let it be remembered, that though these pretended mysteries are the most ridiculous nonsense that ever engaged the attention of any rational beings, they are rendered of importance in the eyes of religion, by their malignant influence on the morals of mankind ; and on that account only they can lay claim to the smallest regard. The societies of Free Masons are now so well known, and so notoriously infamous, that it is needless to give any definition of them : for there scarcely is one contemptible fellow in the kingdom who is not a member of these fraternities. I shall, therefore, without any further preamble, enter upon the explanation of the text : In discoursing from which, I propose the following method :

First, I shall clearly prove, both from reason and revelation, that by the title BABYLON, is understood Masonry.

Secondly, I shall take a general view of the subject of Masonry ; expose the impiety and absurdity
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of its mysteries, and the wickedness of those who profess them ; pointing out, at the same time, the malignant influence of this institution on society.

Thirdly, I shall expostulate a little with some of those who adhere to the abominations of Masonry : And,

Fourthly, Shew that all they who adhere to them will be damned.

In the first place then, I shall prove that by the term BABYLON, is understood Masonry. The truth of this proposition is evident from the beginning of the text, where it is said, *And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY*. It is certain that nothing can more properly be called Mystery, than the *arcana* I have mentioned : Though, at the same time, they are the most ridiculous absurdities that ever were imposed upon mankind ; for they are maintained to be unfearchable, and are always communicated under the sanction of an oath. But the woman upon whom the inscription was written is called BABYLON. It is generally allowed that the city BABYLON stood in the same plains where the famous tower of BABEL was built ; and what could be a more natural appellation for Masonry than a name which will perpetuate the audacious insolence of the trade of builders ? She is called BABYLON the Great, not only from the vast height to which that tower was carried before its destruction, but likewise in allusion to the amazing number of persons who have been initiated in these mysteries ; many of whom, to the disgrace of their dignity, were such as, in the estimation of the world, had been reckoned great, as Princes, Lords, &c. In conformity to this observation, we are told in the same chapter, that “ the kings of the earth had committed abomination with her.”

She is called *the mother of Harlots* ; a name which is to be interpreted in a figurative sense, alluding, without doubt, to the vices and infamy of these societies.

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Nothing can be more applicable to Mafonary, by which are underftood all free Mafons, than the denomination of harlots : for as women of that character affect to infpire men with the warmeft ideas of pleasure, untill they allure them into their banefull embarces, fo the Free Mafons, or Male Harlots, (as they may be emphatically called) practife upon others their deceitful arts, to inveigle them to be initiated in their myfteries. When we confider the clofenefs of this comparifon in every point, we cannot enough admire the propriety of the metaphor which the apoftle has here made ufe of. For, to carry the refemblance one ftep further, what can more ftroingly denote the vilenefs and inanity of thefe contemptible myfteries, which are participated by almoft all the meaneft, moft ignorant, and infamous wretches in the kingdom, than to find them likened to the enjoyment of a common prostitute ?

The epithet of *the mother of Harlots*, is alfo wonderfully applicable to the fubject : for it is ufual with the fools of Mafonry, to pay a particular regard to one certain place where they celebrate their orgies, in refpect of which they look upon all others of the fame fort as inferior and dependent, and for that reafon call it the Mother-Lodge. Befides, Mafonry, fupporting a conftant fucceffion of members, who in their own ftile are called brethren, may claim the denomination of a parent.

It is added, *and abominations of the earth*. By the word abominations is intended every fpecies of wickednefs, and whatever is contrary to the dictates of reafon and religion : Now it is certain, that there is no fet of people in the world more addicted to abominations, and thefe of the vileft and moft enormous nature, than the focieties of Free Mafons : but of this I fhall have occafion to fpeak afterwards. At prefent let us only trace the conformity of the application in one circumftance more. It is faid in verfe third of the chapter from which I have taken my text, that
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the woman (BABYLON) has seven heads ; and in verse the ninth, *the seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth*. This description alludes plainly to the seven steps which these impostors chalk upon the floor of the Lodge at the reception of a brother, and on which they make him tread, persuading him in the mean time that he is ascending into the temple of Solomon. Or, it may likewise refer to the number of the constituent members of a perfect Lodge, which are always seven *viz.* the master, two wardens, two fellow-crafts, and two apprentices.

Having thus explained the sense of the text in as few words as possible, I think it must appear evident to every unprejudiced person, that by the term BABYLON, nothing else is intended than Masonry. I come now to the second head proposed, which was, to take a general view of the subject of Masonry ; expose the impiety and absurdity of its mysteries, and the wickedness of those who profess them ; pointing out at the same time the malignant influence of this institution on society. I am well aware of the great disadvantages under which I must labour in treating a subject of this kind. My veracity may be questioned even among the disinterested part of mankind ; for it will scarcely be credited, that any human creatures could employ themselves in such ridiculous mysteries : and to this opinion only it is owing that the nature of Masonry is still generally regarded as secret, though in reality it has been often and ingenuously exposed to the world. But whatever reception my present undertaking may meet with from readers of sense and candour, I may expect that it will be most virulently calumniated by all those who are inclined to support the reputation of Masonry : For should the reality of such facts as I shall mention be acknowledged by them, they would be for ever deprived of any opportunity of gormandizing upon the spoils of a new inveigled brother ; and they will sooner sell themselves, both soul and body, to the devil, than relinquish

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relinquish an occasion so extremely favourable to the indulgence of all their carnal, and inordinate lusts and appetites. On this account however much these people may deny the real conviction they feel, I shall draw this advantage from their diffimulation, that their strongest opposition, or affected contempt, will equally be regarded by others as corroborating proofs of my veracity.

In hopes therefore, that my attempt may be productive of some advantage to the public, I shall here give such a general account of Masonry as is consistent with the nature of this discourse. But I must premise, that as Free Masons are sworn not to reveal their secrets, neither by writing, engraving, carving, or any other method whatever, and it is by means of oral tradition only, that even the initiated are taught them, there is considerable diversity both in the words and ceremonies made use of in different countries. The practice of a regular Lodge in FRANCE is somewhat different from that in ENGLAND, as some customs of both these are from the practice of the Lodges in SCOTLAND. Besides these capricious variations, a total change of some things has been universally adopted. Of this we have an instance in the Master's word, which originally was no less than the name of the G———* J———;* but in process of time was changed into M———*, a word signifying stink or putrefaction.

The only important, though not the first step in celebrating the mysteries of Masonry, is an open violation of the great commandment, *Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain*: For an oath of secrecy, the most execrable and tremendous that ever was invented, is administered in the course of their ceremonies. The form of this oath is various; but, in general, they swear not to reveal the secrets of Masonry directly or indirectly, denouncing upon themselves the most horrid imprecations if they break
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* Three words are purposely omitted.—ED.

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this engagement. As the very existence of Masonry depends greatly upon the degree of regard which is paid to this impious oath, it may be worth while to enquire a little into its validity, and examine how far it is intitled in a religious or moral light to the force of obligation. It is universally allowed necessary to the obligation of an oath, that it be voluntary, and not taken through compulsion. The force of every sacramental engagement is founded upon freedom of action : For an oath is no more than solemn renunciation of the liberty of acting contrary to any stipulated compact. This liberty, therefore, must have remained entire at the time when the engagement was entered into. If it did not, but was overawed by violence or superior power, the assent so procured is void, and of no obligation. Let us now take a view of the reception of a Free Mason Apprentice, and enquire whether or not he can be considered as a free agent at the time when the oath is administered to him.

The poor deluded candidate is conducted into a dark apartment, where, in order to excite the more terrible apprehensions, his eyes are blindfolded with a handkerchief. From this purgatory he is led into the assembly of Masons, which ceremony is performed in some Lodges with a halter put round his neck. A dread and protentious silence is held for some time, till of a sudden his ears are assailed either with a hideous rattling of aprons, or the clashing of swords over his head ; or perhaps he is accosted in such terms as these : *Rash profane ! dare you tread this ground ? Tremble, profane, at what this temerity of yours may cost you !* It may be that he is then made to travel under the iron vault, as they call it, frequently running his head against a naked sword, which is held by some worshipful brother, or striking his feet against obstacles purposely placed in his way ; while at every step he makes, the frantic assembly is pouring forth the most alarming exclamations. This un-

accountable

accountable prelude being acted, the culprit is placed in the posture for receiving the oath ; when it is reasonable to suppose that he is in such a situation, both of body and mind, as scarcely to know what he is doing. And in fact, that in many people there is a violent perturbation of the animal œconomy, is evident from the sudden and involuntarily discharges which frequently happen at this time. It is the practice in many of these purlieus of Masonry, to receive the oath blindfolded ; and left the poor candidat's resolution should be staggered at the tremendous imprecations to be pronounced, sharp pointed weapons are presented to his breast. In others the oath is taken with the eyes open ; but if the handkerchief is removed, it is only to present to the sight a scene of yet greater horror. The amazed victim beholds now on his right and left a crowd of fanatic wretches with naked swords in their hands, presenting the points towards him with menacing looks, and the venerable master holding up a large mallet, as if ready to sacrifice him. In this crisis the oath is administered.

I shall appeal to any reasonable person, whether an oath imposed in these circumstances, where a man is surrounded with such objects as naturally awake the strongest apprehensions of danger, and his life is apparently threatened, can be reckoned a free and voluntary engagement. On the contrary, is it not in the highest degree compulsive ? It can never be urged that the oath is voluntary, because at the beginning of the ceremonies, when the candidate was asked whether he was willing to submit to it, he replied in the affirmative. He received not the smallest suggestion of the terrifying scene which would accompany the administration of it. If these impostors should alledge in their own defence, that this formidable tumult and apparatus was no more than a farce, they must grant, by a parity of reason, that the oath is the same, or incur the sacrilegious guilt of mixing things profane with those which are most sacred and inviolable.

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In fhort, whether we confider this ftrange affaire in the light, either of a ferious or ludicrous tranfaction, the adminiftration of the oath is equally impious, and the notion of its validity muft be fpurned at, and exploded, by every friend of reafon and religion. The purpofes for which this oath is prostituted afford likewise the ftrongeft arguments againft its obligation ; for the intention of it here is not like that in all other cafes, to confirm fome important truth, to maintain juftice, or to fecure the public tranquility : But it is to keep fecret certain words and ceremonies, which confcioufnefs of their futility, and the fhame of acknowledging a difappointment, afford fufficient inducement to conceal, and which, fo far from being of advantage, are abfolutely of the greateft detirment to the intereft and happinefs of fociety, as fhall afterwards be made to appear. A regard, therefore, to fuch an oath, is not only weak, but criminal ; for while we conceal an infamous artifice which was impofed upon ourfelves, and we know to be currently practifed, we are actually guilty of impofing that artifice upon others. Let it not be imagined from what is here faid, that I mean in the leaft to invalidate the obligation of oaths in general : On the contrary, I affirm, that of all human regards, there is nothing more facred and inviolable. Even the heathens were fo fenfible of the moral obligation of oaths, that they fabled the gods themfelves to be reftained by them : And certainly the infringement of them when properly taken, can never be countenanced upon the principles of our holy religion : But what impious, what horrible doctrines might not be derived from that religion, fhould we allow it to be rendered fubfervient to the purpofes of iniquity and impofture ? Can a more audacious infult be offered to the Majefty of Almighty God, than to call him folemnly to witnefs the moft ridiculous words and ceremonies, and the extinction of that divine light of reafon, which was given us for the direction of our conduct ? And fhall

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shall the mere outward form of a constrained oath, wherein every requisite circumstance of an obligatory engagement is wanting, and every other attending it, is founded upon the most flagrant impiety, can such a form, I say, be ever regarded as a ratification of religious and inviolable authority? Adieu religion! Adieu morality! Farewel, ye deceitful phantoms! and all distinction of right and wrong, if ye assert the validity of a sanction which violence constrained you to yield.

I thought it necessary to insert the more upon this subject, as there is ground to imagine, that the secrecy of many who have been initiated in these ridiculous mysteries, has been greatly owing to a mistaken opinion of the obligation of an impious and sacrilegious oath.

After the solemn administration of the oath we have mentioned, who would not conclude that the secrets about to be communicated were of the greatest and most extensive influence on human felicity? But hear, O heaven! and give ear, O earth! these important mysteries, these inestimable *arcana*, which the name of the Most High God was prostituted to conceal, are no more than B——.* Hail sacred and ineffable mysteries! worthy to be concealed in eternal oblivion.

Was ever any farce so ridiculous? Let us imagine we behold a number of men assembled in all the dignity of the Roman senate; around their necks hang the rule, the compass, the plumb-line, and various ensigns of Masonry: Upon the floor before them are drawn some figures in chalk. Every thing is conducted with an air of solemnity and importance, as if they were ready to carry into execution the proposition of Archimedes, of moving the world out of its place, or rectifying some fault of the creation. During this scene a person is introduced, who is desirous of being initiated in their important mysteries; in order to which he must be stripped of all metal. It is
abominable,

* One word purposely omitted here.—ED.

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abominable, and the root of all evil. Should even the vestment which covers his nakedness be fastened with a nail, the accursed thing must be extracted ; himself must be blindfolded, and every method of terror made use of to inspire him with awe. To secure him sufficiently to themselves, he is then bound by an oath of secrecy. The solemn scene is now over and while the poor novice is gaping with astonishment and impatience to receive the mighty secret, he is informed it is to make a sign with the hand, or pronounce the word B——.* He is then saluted by the worshipful brethren, and congratulated on the prodigious advancement he has made in the mysteries of Masonry. It would be endless, as well as foreign to my purpose, to recount the various absurdities in conversation and behaviour which are solemnly practised in these societies. To point the fingers to the throat ; to form a rule or angle with the knife and fork, and such unmanly tricks, are extremely important actions in the eyes of these harlequins. Should we take a view of them in respect of scientific accomplishments, we shall find them most deplorably ignorant. They tell us that a Lodge has three doors, one to the east, another to the west, and a third to the south, but none to the north. For what reason ? Because, say they, the sun never shines on that quarter. They know not that beyond the Tropic of CAPRICORN, the sun shines from the north as much as it shines from the south on this side the Tropic of CANCER. Another instance of their ignorance is still more remarkable, as it relates to one of the most simple facts in mensuration. They say that the circumference of the pillars of the temple were twelve cubits, and their thickness four fingers, by which they would make the circumference of a circle to be a hundred times greater than its diameter ; though it is well known that the proportion is no more than nearly three to one.

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* One word purposely omitted here.—ED.

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How intelligible their conversation is, we may judge by an example from their Catechism.

Q. If you were in danger, what would you do ?

A. I would put my hand upon my head, and cry out, The widows children are mine.

This is the consequence of the confusion of languages which was brought upon the world at the destruction of BABEL, and still subsists in these societies. The apprentice knows not the jargon of the fellow-craft, nor the fellow-craft that of the master. Hence arises a necessity for various signs and tokens, to make their meaning known to each other : But so few are the ideas they have to communicate, that this mute intercourse is seldom ; Or, never employed but to discover a Free Mason. And what is a Free Mason ? If we take the account of him from their own Catechism, he answers to the following description. He is an animal which comes from the valley of JEHOSEPHAT : He lives generally to the same age with men ; but never will allow that he is older than five years and an half. The foundation of his Lodge reaches from the surface to the center of the earth : He keeps the key of it under the root of his tongue ; and his heart may be opened with a key of ivory. He is always to be found betwixt the rule and the compass. When he opens his mouth, it is generally in some absurdity ; and he seems to be so sensible of his incapacity for conversation, that he endeavours to make his meaning understood by various odd gestures. He is ever a-gripping to distinguish his own species.

Such are the words and ceremonies, the tenets and practices of Masonry ; a mass of absurdity and extravagance, which all the legends in the universe cannot equal, and so flagrant an imposition, that a council learned in the law, would make it out to be clearly comprehended under the act relative to procuring money, by fraudulent and false pretences. We suppress brothels, we prohibit by penal laws the religious

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religious convention of heretics, while in reality, there are no places where impiety and enthusiasm are so effectually propagated, as in the holy Lodge of St. John, and no set of people so deserving of prosecution, as they who not only pervert the doctrines of revelation, but extinguish reason itself. The Lodges of Masonry are finks of all human depravity : And and as our Blessed LORD told his disciples, that *wherever two or three of them are met together in his name, there he was in the midst of them to bless them* ; so it may be said in contradistinction, that wherever two or three Masons are met together to celebrate their mysteries, there the devil is essentially in the midst of them, to rejoice over them. This will appear incontestible from the account I am now to exhibit of the wickedness of these men.

That they are familiar with blasphemy and impiety in the repeated administration of the most execrable and tremendous oath, I have shown above : That they are professed liars is evident from their very Catechism ; for at the admission of a Free Mason Apprentice, when the question is put, *whence came you ?* He must answer, forsooth, *from the Lodge of St. John*. What faith is to be placed in the veracity of a people who make a practice of lying in such frivolous matters ? It is likewise a maxim among them, that if one is asked by a brother, *how old are you ?* he shall answer, *five years and an half* ; though he be conscious that he is really turned of fifty, or perhaps in his grand climacteric. And yet they dare to establish this absurdity upon an impious allusion to the words of our Blessed SAVIOUR, Mat. xviii. 3. *Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven* ; Or, as they mean, into the Lodge. It is certain, however, that they have a just enough pretension to the title of children, in a metaphorical sense ; for their questions and answers, their signs and tokens, are a collection of the most foolish and nonsensical

fical puerilities that ever entered into the head of a bedlamite, and so rediculoufly childifh, that a boy of five years old would deferve flagellation for repeating them. Among the Catalogue of their vices we may likewise reckon a ftrong propenfity to the unnatural crime of murder ; for every perfon who is initiated in their myfteries is bound by the moft horrid oath, to fubmit to have his heart taken out, if he divulge their fecrets. By thefe means they hope to fecure to themfelves either the clofe enjoyment of an affociate, or the blood of the delinquent. Nay, fo far has the thrift of human blood been indulged among them, even from their own tradition, that, at building the temple of Solomon, the fellow-craft imbrued their rebellious hands in that of their mafter Adoniram, or Hiram (as fome of them call him), not on account of betraying their fecrets, but becaufe he would not betray them for their profit. Let us examine their conduct in other particulars : Do they propagate either fobriety or induftry ? Do they cherifh among their members the natural affection and attention to the welfare of their refpective families ? Inftead of fobriety, do they not indulge in drunkennefs ? Inftead of induftry, riot in diffipation and idlenefs ? Inftead of love for their wives and children, do they not give too much ground to admit the fufpicion which is entertained of them by many women ? Would not good men think it their duty to avoide all appearance of evil ? And, to fay the truth, what abominable actions may not be fupposed to be committed amongft them, when their paffions are inflamed with drink, and their hearts burn with enthufiaftic affection to each other ? Then is the feafon of every evil concupifcence. Add to this, that their affemblies are held at fuch hours as are moft fuitable to the works of darknefs ; and that the moft enormous crimes may be perpetrated by them with impunity, under the inviolable fecrecy they enjoin, nay, under the very pretext of their being the myfteries

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teries of Mafonry. “ Wo unto you, Mafons, “ hypocrites ! It fhall be more tolerable for Tyre and “ Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you. Wo “ unto them that feek deep to hid their council from “ the Lord, and their works are in the dark, and “ they fay, who feeth us ? and who knoweth us ? ”

To this terrible charge may be added a ftrong attachment to the diabolical art of necromancy, which is apparent from their extraordinary veneration for three, five, and feven, the cabaliftic or Babylonian numbers.

To compensate for all thefe enormities, they affect to perfuade us of their charity. We are told indeed that charity hides a multitude of fins : But let us examine upon what foundation they pretend to this virtue. If, fay they, a member of their fociety fhould be reduced to indigence, they contribute to maintain him. I fhall not difpute the truth of fome fuch facts ; for it is well known that in feveral intitutions among us, which are founded intirely upon charity, the contributions are very inconfiderable, till the members hearts are fufficiently warmed by eating a hearty dinner : And as Mafons have more frequent meetings than other focieties, and are generally addicted to drinking and gormandizing, it would be ftrange if an oftentatious act of falfe charity did not fometimes break forth amongft them. But is it charity to confine our munificence to thofe only who are connected with us in wickednefs ? To withhold the fufenance of life from an indigent perfon of good character, in order to beftow it upon one of the moft worthlefs of mankind ? Does not real charity comprehend within its regard every object of compaffion, of whatever different clafs or denomination ? It is plain their benefactions are fo far from being charity, that they are really the wages of iniquity.

Upon the whole, it appears evident from the hiftory of Free Mafons, from their vices and follies, from their rioting and exceffes, from their open contempt

tempt, or secret profanation of religion, and from the abuse of reason, on the total prostration of which all their mysteries are founded, that they are both the most weak and most wicked of mankind, and (as I formerly said) that the character of being the *mother of abominations* is in all respects most applicable to Masonry.

If Masons could justly lay claim to any species of virtue, humility would seem that to which they had the most plausible pretensions; for they profess at their meetings to acknowledge no distinction of character. The prince and the porter, the lord and the lackey, are all upon equality: all are united by the friendly grip. But whatever humility might be inferred from this condescension of the most conspicuous members, the true motive to their conduct is a propensity to low and illiberal gratifications; or pride itself, that very passion of which they would seem destitute, preposterous and disguised pride! May be the source of their conduct. For they who are not qualified to distinguish themselves in legislative or judicial assemblies, may have their vanity in being regarded as some what eminent among low mechanics.

But while the conduct of one part of the fraternity proceeds from sordid pleasure, mean pride, or false humility, that of the other is certainly misguided by a pernicious and delusive ambition; which leads me to consider the malignant influence of this institution on society. People of the lower classes in life are charmed with the flattering idea of being called the brethren of men of rank and fortune. Sometimes, indeed, interest is more their motive than vanity, and they are desirous of cultivating acquaintance with their superiors, from the advantages in point of business which they think may accrue from it; but whatever familiarities are indulged at their nocturnal meetings, I believe it is pretty certain, that for one tradesman who has reaped any advantage from an acquaintance contracted in the Lodge, with a person

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of rank and fortune, a thousand have ruined themselves by the extravagant courses into which they have run to obtain it. Say, ye deluded mortals ! will any of your noble brethren visit you in the time of your sickness ? will they relieve you out of prison ? will they promote you to any post of profit which they have at disposal ? Such were the visionary expectations of Sporado, an unfortunate convict, who, after a long but fruitless acquaintance with many of the nobility, ended his days at Tyburn, a victim to Masonry, and a warning to all who profess it.

Sporado was a lamp lighter in the parish of St. Giles : About the age of thirty he entered into the society of Free Masons, by whom (as he used afterwards to boast) he was received with greater marks of friendship than ever he had met with from any other people in his life. From the time he was initiated, he diligently attended all the meetings of his brethren, and was soon reckoned the best Mason in the Lodge. On this account it was common for every brother of distinction to place himself near Sporado, whom they all caressed in the warmest manner. Now would he teach them to point their fingers to their throats : Now he would review the discipline of bending the arm ; Then he would instruct them when to say M——*, while betwixt every subject they united in a friendly grip. So hearty and unreserved were the squeezes which passed on these occasions, that Sporado began to entertain no small hopes of being soon rendered independent, through the interest of his noble brethren. In the mean time, however, the profit which he drew from his business being insufficient to support the expence of such frequent meetings, he resolved to betake himself to house-breaking. For three years he continued his depredations in that capacity, from the connivance of some watchmen, who were brother Masons, and pimps : But being at length apprehended, he was capitally convicted. During the whole time of his imprisonment, he remained

* One word is here purposely omitted.—ED.

mained confident of procuring a pardon, asserted impudently that the Sovereign was his brother, and therefore, that an order for his execution would never be signed by his Majesty. However, by the persuasion of some of the fraternity, who had come to condole with him, he employed a person to write in his name (being unable himself) to a noble Lord at Court, on whose interest he much depended, to make application in his behalf ; adjuring his Lordship, by the tender relation of brotherhood in which they were connected, and the many cordial declarations of friendship which had passed between them in the Lodge. In vain was all sollicitation. The voice of justice cried aloud for the life of the delinquent. On the fatal day he was drawn to the place of execution, where he solemnly renounced the abominations of Masonry, and sincerely regretted that ever he had cultivated any acquaintance with the nobility, who deserted him in the misfortunes in which he had been involved, from the foolish desire of maintaining his connections with them.

Ye partizans of Masonry, behold in this example the result of all your pursuits ! Behold the great advantages ; behold the faithful friendship ye expect ! Yet still, intoxicated with the gay delusion, ye dress, ye feast, ye drink, while your miserable wives and children are starved to support your extravagance. Let us now take a view of the habitation of a Free Mason on the night of his solemn festival. Alas ! No festival is there. How desolat ! No candle to give light ! No fire to bestow its comforting warmth in the rigour of the season ! There sits the once beloved wife of his bosom all bathed in tears. A thousand anxious thoughts perplex her mind, concerning the nature, concerning the consequence of that infernal secret, which seems to involve in its fascinating mysteries the fate of all she holds dear. Her feeble arms, exhausted with fasting, scarce able to support the tender infant which hangs at her breast :

Her

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Her children implore her for the sustenance of nature, which she knows not how to procure. While your husband, O afflicted mother ! Is now solacing himself in the mansion of riot, in company with the sons of Belial, and triumphing in the honour of calling a lord his brother, you are lamenting your helpless little children in the house of mourning. Scene of horror ! Yet these are the works of men who wear the rule and compass, as emblems of circumspection and prudence in their conduct.

Having thus briefly pointed out the unparalleled futility of Masonry, and its malignant influence on society, I now come to the third head proposed, namely, to expostulate a little with some of those who adhere to the abominations of it.

Ye legislators, who sit in the great council of the nation, and whose ruling passion ought to be, to promote the good and happiness of the public, what is your motive to encourage a society whose foundation is in deceit, and whose intemperance is supported upon the ruin of a thousand indigent families ? If ye are not capable of rendering service to your country by political abilities, pray act not so inconsistent with your duty, as to give sanction to dissipation and drunkenness. Is it not utterly repugnant to all the maxims of good policy, to countenance the meetings of such a numerous association of men, who, from the privacy of their transactions, and the attachment they profess to each other, ought to be regarded with a jealous attention by the guardians of public liberty ? Or what confidence is to be placed in the loyalty of enthusiasts, who represent their venerable master by the same symbol with Almighty God ? Is it to this honour ye aspire ? Go, then, with your great ambition, and preside in the lodges of Masonry ; but know, when your applauses resound, they proclaim that folly is of all denominations !

Ye worshipfull magistrates, who preside over the peace and morals of the community, what apology
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can ye plead for entering into these assemblies? I can ascribe your conduct to no other principle than the scandalous love of feasting, for which ye are almost all so remarkable. How unlike the magistrates whose virtuous example gave force to the sumptuary laws of the temperate Spartans! When shall the time come, that an English alderman, like a Roman citizen, shall be contented with his frugal meals of turnips, ready to sacrifice his life for the good of his country, not the interest of his country, to his belly!

Ye generals of armies, shall the manly soul of the soldier submit to a discipline too mean even for the diversion of children? Ye who have trodden the glorious fields of war, what pleasure can ye enjoy in stepping over the lines of chalk which are drawn upon the floor of the lodge? Do ye indulge the fancy that ye are then forcing the trenches of an enemy? Or, when they tell you ye are mounting into the temple of Solomon, do ye triumph in the imagination of having bravely stormed a fortress? Peace to the temple of Solomon! But be yours the temple of fame, the Lodge of illustrious heroes. Far other achievements must entitle you to that society. Never were the branches of *acacia* wreathed with the laurel crown.

Ye reverend preachers of the gospel, ye too must have your commerce with the mystical whore of *BABYLON*! Are ye not sensible of what dishonour ye reflect upon religion and the sacerdotal character, by entering these infamous assemblies? The ceremonies of bending the knee at the altar of Masonry, and pulling off your shoe, because the floor of the lodge, forsooth, is holy; these ceremonies, are they not a profanation of the passages of scripture to which they are acknowledged to allude; and shall ye give your sanction to such abominations? Ye panders of voluptuousness! renounce them for ever; or confess that ye hunger and thirst after the elements of this world more than after righteousness.

I come

I come now to the last part of my subject, which is to shew, that all those who adhere to the abominations of Masonry will be damned.

This is so certain, that no human catastrophe is more frequently mentioned in scripture, than the final destruction of BABYLON. In short, it is the burden of a great part of the prophets; and to render the meaning of these threats as evident as possible to our apprehensions, it is remarkable, that they are always spoken of in a style peculiar to the subject of Masonry. This in Isaiah, xxviii. 17, "Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet:" And the accomplishment of its ruin is mentioned in the same strain by the prophet Jeremiah: "How is the hammer of the whole earth cut asunder, and broken! How is BABYLON become a desolation among the nations!" Jer. l. 23 and in Revel. xviii. 2. "BABYLON the Great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird." And in the end of the same chapter from which I have taken my text, it is declared that she "shall be burned with fire." This doctrine of eternal damnation is conformable to the whole tenor of the word of God; for we are told, that "the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain; and that the sinner who repenteth not, shall perish."

I have now finished the subject proposed: I have proved beyond all question, that by the Whore of BABYLON the abominations of Masonry are understood: That from the nature of the horrible oath made use of by Free Masons, and the circumstances in which it is administered, it is impious, sacrilegious, and invalid; and that, so far from its being intitled to the least observance, it is the duty of every man, as a christian, and member of society, to disclaim and renounce its obligation. I have endeavoured to expose a little the futility and absurdity of the ridiculous

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culous mysteries of Masonry, and the wickedness of those who profess them ; have shewn the horrible consequences of which they are productive to society, and, *lastly*, the tremendous and eternal punishment, in which those who adhere to them will be involved. It now remains that I should address myself to all who are guilty of these abominations. But by what compellation shall I do it ? Shall I call them friends, who are, in reality, the greatest enemies of public happiness ? Shall I call them brethren ? I abhor it : For what relation have the children of God with the sons of Belial ? Shall I call them men ? It would disgrace the dignity of human nature : Besides, by their own accounts they are no more than five years and an half old : Such little children, however, of whom is not " the kingdom of heaven." Listen then, O Free Masons ! (For by that opprobrious name only shall I call you), " ye have hewed you out " cisterns, yea, broken cisterns, which can hold no " water." I adjure you in the name of the Lord God to consider your ways. Abandon your infamous society. Renounce the impious oath by which ye have sworn to conceal your abominations. Be not any longer the wicked instruments of bringing upon children yet unborn the horrors of temporal, and upon their deluded fathers, eternal misery. If ye would shew yourselves to be actuated by true brotherly affection, exhort one another to this undertaking. It is a sacrifice ye owe to yourselves, your salvation, and to mankind ; and by performing it ye will dissolve an institution which is detestable to God, pernicious to society, and disgraceful to yourselves.

FINIS.

M A S O N R Y
T H E
Turnpike-Road
T O
Happinefs in this Life,
A N D
Eternal Happinefs hereafter.



D U B L I N :

Printed by JAMES HOEY, fenior, at the
Mercury, in Skinner-Row. M DCC LXVIII.



MASONRY
THE
Turnpike Road to Happiness.

A Most outrageous attempt to blacken the character of Free Masons, having lately been made in a pamphlet intituled, MASONRY THE WAY TO HELL, I think it a duty incumbent upon me, as a member of their respectable society, to engage in the refutation of so injurious a libel ; and though I have been more accustomed

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ed to handle the trowel than the pen, I shall not hesitate to risk my literary reputation, in defence of what is infinitely more valuable to every man, and a Mason in particular, the rectitude of our moral conduct. As justice, and not vanity, is the sole motive to this undertaking, I hope for the indulgence of the Public ; and provided I can wipe off from the acacia the aspersions which have been so maliciously thrown upon it, I neither envy nor emulate the candidates for the laurel crown.

It ought to excite the most melancholy apprehensions in every sincere friend of the Protestant church, to behold the meaning of the sacred scriptures so audaciously perverted, that those passages of them, which have been unanimously interpreted by all orthodox divines, as typical of the Romish superstition, should, by the most flagrant misapplication, be construed into an allusion to the society of Free Masons. It is not, indeed, to be wondered at, that an institution which is absolutely the great bulwark both of the Lutheran and Calvinistic doctrines, should be calumniated by the inveterate enemies of the reformed religion. But let us despise all their popish anathemas, resting
 satisfied

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satisfied in the full assurance, that, when the pride of papal grandeur shall no more be remembered, and the towering pile of St. PETER's itself, shall lie low as the once glorious Roman capitol, the holy lodge of St. John, with its foundation upon a rock, shall remain the admiration of endless ages, which neither the torrent of prejudice, nor the tempest of passion, though foaming and bellowing with their utmost rage, shall ever be able to overthrow.

It might be expected that I would begin with refuting the damnable opinion, that, by the Whore of Babylon, mentioned in the Revelations, the mysteries of masonry are understood. But the facts upon which this heresy is established are so ludicrous, and the idea of its plausibility so incompatible with the whole tenour of the Scriptures, that it could have been invented only for the diabolical purpose of giving a specious colouring to the doctrine which was to be derived from it. On this account, I shall not enter upon the dissection of it; but proceed to the second head of the Sermon, where it is said, "I shall take a general view of the subject of Masonry, and expose the impiety and absurdity of its mysteries."

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As it is impossible for me, consistently with my solemn obligations, to give that convincing evidence which may be desired of the falshood of the whole account of Masonry, as here represented, I must in this part of my refutation appeal to the candour of the Public ; at the same time affirming the mysteries of Masonry to be so far from the nature of futility, that, (as is well known to every brother) they are absolutely the most important that can be conceived by the human understanding. And, indeed, were they not of inestimable value, can it be supposed that the lodges would be frequented by men of the highest quality in life, and the most eminent for wisdom and learning ? or would any person, who had the smallest reverence for the dignity of his nature, so debase himself, as to descend into such puerile and ridiculous ceremonies, as the rites of Masonry are affirmed by this writer to consist of ? I shall produce only one passage from his own narration, to convict him of falshood. In page 12,* he says, " The poor deluded candidate is conducted into a dark apartment, where, in order to excite the more terrible apprehensions, his eyes are blindfolded with a handkerchief."

Where

* The pages quoted in this tract refer to the pagination of Robinson and Roberts' edition.—ED.

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Where would be the necessity of blindfolding in a dark apartment ? but it is to be expected that the Public will not be influenced by the authority of an anonymous sermonizer, whose evidence, were he actually as knowing in the mysteries he attempts to depreciate, as he is entirely ignorant, ought to have no weight with the rational part of mankind ; since, even granting the truth of his having been initiated, he has forfeited all title to credit, by a flagitious violation of an engagement, which has been regarded with the most religious observance from the earliest ages of the world.

In page 10, we find our learned preacher is not more acquainted with the mysteries of Hebrew than Masonry. Speaking of a certain word, he says, " In process of time, it was changed into M——,* a word signifying stink or putrefaction." Had he consulted a dictionary, he would have found, that M——* signifies not stink or putrefaction, but a *separation of the flesh from the bone*. I acknowledge, however, it may be allowed to acquire a stink or putrefaction, by passing through such polluted lips.

But I am inclined to think, that the etymology

* Many words are purposely omitted for obvious reasons.—ED.

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logy of M——* is very different from what is determined by either of these interpretations. We find from Genesis, chap. iv, that *Cain builded a city, and called the name of the city after his Son Enoch*. Enoch, therefore, being the name of the most ancient city which is to be found upon record, and probably likewise of the first grand master, it was natural enough for succeeding Masons to adopt that appellation, in memorial of the antiquity of their order; and the word M——*, which signifies a son, in the Celtic, or Erse, was prefixed to Enoch, to denote a true Mason, who might, in a metaphorical sense, be called the son of Enoch. I suppose, therefore, the word was originally M——*; but, in order the better to articulate the second syllable, the letter B was inserted, and the word became M——*, which afterwards, by oral corruption, was changed into M——*. In this plausible conjecture, I flatter myself I shall be supported by the judicious Dr. Parsons, who has lately proved, to a demonstration, that the Celtic, or Erse language, was that which was spoken before the flood.

The first article of accusation produced
against

* Some words purposely omitted.—ED.

[II]

againſt Maſonry is, that it is founded upon an open violation of the great commandment, *Thou ſhalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain*. The injuſtice of this charge can only be known perfectly to Free Maſons themſelves, who are convinced of the importance of their myſteries. But ſhould the arcana of Maſonry be actually as trivial and ridiculous as this author pretends, ought the ſolemn oath of ſecrecy, under which they are communicated, to be reputed of no validity? Many inſtances may be cited from ſacred writ, to prove the indifpenſible obligation annexed even to oaths of the moſt unjuſtifiable nature. When Jeptha, the Gileadite, had made a conditional vow, that whatſoever came forth of the doors of his houſe to meet him, when he returned in peace from the children of Ammon, ſhould be offered up as a burnt-offering unto the Lord; and the innocent victim proved to be his own beloved daughter, an only child, who came forth with timbrels and dances, to congratulate her father on the victory he had acquired over his enemies; what was the conduct of the unhappy parent; *He rent his cloaths*, and ſaid, in all the bitterneſs of remorſe and forrow, *I have opened my*

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my mouth unto the Lord, and I cannot go back. This was a dilemma the most cruel and insupportable that ever assailed human resolution; yet, such was the determined piety of the distracted father, and such the heroic acquiescence of the devoted daughter, that she was resolutely offered up as a sacrifice, in compliance to the rigorous demand of an oath, in itself, the most precipitate, in its consequences, the most distressful, and in its obligation, the most doubtful and dispensible that is to be found in the annals of human kind. Another memorable instance to the same purpose, we meet with in the first book of Samuel; where Saul, in a fit of rashness, pronounced, that the man should be cursed, who eat any food until the evening. It happened that his son Jonathan, who was absent in pursuit of the enemy, had tasted a little honey; and, notwithstanding he was ignorant of the decree which had been passed, was heir-apparent to the kingdom, and the darling of Israel, what was the determination of the father, in regard to the innocent infringement of his arbitrary and unwarrantable oath? *God do so, and more alſo,* said he, *for thou shalt surely die, Jonathan:* and had not the people resolutely

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refolutely interposed in his protection, he would actually have fallen a sacrifice to the force of an engagement, from which, even in the embarrassed conscience of the criminal and reluctant parent, the temerity which produced it, was not thought sufficient to absolve. Let me mention, likewise, the case of Herod the tetrarch, recorded in the evangelist Matthew, when on his birth-day, the daughter of Herodias had danced before him, and he promised, with an oath, to give her whatsoever she would ask, she demanded the head of John the Baptist. The humane, though despotic governor was struck with sorrow and compassion at the request ; yet, for *his oath's sake*, he sent and beheaded the prophet.

To these instances of the acknowledged inviolable restriction of oaths, even of an unjustifiable nature, and the two first of which, are drawn from the history of a people, the most enlightened in respect of religious obligations, the authority of the most celebrated moralists might be added ; were it not superfluous to corroborate an opinion, which has been universally maintained in every age and nation, as the great basis of faith, and judi-
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al procedure among mankind. But as the chief argument alledged by this rhapsodist againft the moral obligation of the oath referred to, is the futility of the myfteries communicated under its fancion ; I affirm again, that the arcana of Maſonry are the moft admirable, important, and uſeful precepts, that ever were delivered to mankind ; and on that account, the oath of ſecrecy adminiſtered to Free Maſons is at leaſt of equal, if not ſuperior validity, to any other ſacramental engagement.

The next topic that the preacher inſifts upon, is our deficiency in ſcientifical accompliſhments. The injuſtice of this imputation will appear more clearly in the ſequel ; where I ſhall have occaſion to ſhew, that Maſonry is ſo inſeparable from ſpeculative learning, that it is really the foundation and corner-ſtone of all the ſyſtems of the Grecian academies. At preſent, let me only obſerve, that Maſonry is the great ſource to which we are indebted for the invention of the mathematical ſciences. Are not architecture and geometry the production of the ſquare and compaſs ? were not aſtronomy and navigation attained by the knowledge of lines and angles ? nay, even the hieroglyphical learning

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ing of the ancient Egyptians is still preserved in the lodges of Masonry. From the force of all these considerations, I shall leave the unprejudiced to determine, with what justice this indecent zealot has inveighed against the accomplishments of Free Masons ; and had ever the veil of ignorance been removed from his own profane eyes, he must have acknowledged them to be the most intelligent, learned, and profound society this day in the world, the universities not excepted.

In regard to the opprobrious epithet of *jargon*, with which he impertinently stigmatizes our language ; I answer, that, had it not been for Masons, the world would never have known either Greek, Latin, French, Italian, or any other tongue than the original. The language of Masonry, like its rites and ceremonies, is admirably mystical, and can never be comprehended by those whose minds have not been enlightened by the torch of truth, and on whom the sun of justice never beamed with a blazing effulgence. But it is not surprising, that our language should be utterly unintelligible to a person, whom I have convicted of the grossest ignorance in the interpretation of M—.*
The

* One word purposely omitted.—ED.

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The attempt he has likewise made to expose to ridicule the use of signs and tokens, affords another convincing proof of his extraordinary ignorance and folly. I appeal to all the world whether signs and tokens are not, in many cases, a more safe, useful, and significant method of communicating ideas, than oral pronunciation can be ; and that an accurate observation of signs and tokens afford often the most certain intelligence, I think none will be so bold as to deny. By the help of signs and tokens, we can maintain a private intercourse in the midst of the fullest assembly. By signs and tokens, we may judge of the understanding of a person of the greatest taciturnity. By signs and tokens, we can discover the genuine purpose of a word or action, which otherwise would be uncertain or ambiguous. By signs and tokens, we can penetrate into the inmost recesses of the heart, and trace the motives of the profoundest politician through all the mazes of duplicity. Do not many of the most admirable arts depend intirely upon the observation of signs and tokens ? such as astrology, chiromancy, and the knowledge of physiognomy. Let me add, that Diagnostics, the foundation of all physical learning, are nothing else than

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a large collection of useful signs and tokens. By signs and tokens, we may likewise investigate the most secret operations of nature, through the whole inanimate creation. In short, signs and tokens have almost all the advantages of oral pronunciation, without its inconveniencies or defects. And it is uncertain what great achievements our ancestors would have resumed by means of this useful science, at the destruction of Babel, had it not been determined by that Providence who over-rules all events, for the general good of mankind, that the blessings of Masonry should be spread over the face of the whole earth, by the dispersion of those who professed it.

Having thus far asserted the propriety of signs and tokens, I shall appeal to my adversary's own conscience, whether I have advanced one argument which is not literally just. If he shall still insist on the futility of such advantageous resources, I shall look upon his obstinacy as a certain *sign* and *token*, that his understanding is enveloped in a cloud of *impene-trable* stupidity.

I come now to the consideration of the several articles of that enormous charge of wickedness, with which we are so injuriously loaded

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loaded by this malevolent and abusive writer.

The first article, concerning blasphemy and impiety in the administration of an unwarrantable oath, I have sufficiently obviated above.

The second, is that of LYING; in proof of which, he adduces such monstrous and incredible *falsehoods*, as rather excite astonishment than require refutation. Is it probable that any man, who was endowed with common sense, and whose mind was not utterly corrupted with the basest dissimulation, should, if asked by a brother, from whence he came, reply, *from the lodge of St. John*? or, if enquired of his age, would answer, he was *five years and a half*?

In regard to the horrid crime of murder, we are so totally innocent, as a society, that I question whether, from the days of *Cain* to the present time, one instance can be produced, (that of Adoniram excepted) where a Free Mason ever imbrued his hands in the blood of any of his fellow-creatures, much less of a brother. And, indeed, how can it be, that a people, so remarkable for philanthropy and fraternal

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fraternal affection, should be addicted to the perpetration of a crime, that is repugnant to all the sentiments of humanity?

The next article is the charge of *drunkeness*; which is so notoriously false, that it is an established law in every lodge, that no Mason shall exceed a certain quantity of liquor, which is likewise fixed at a standard much within the bounds of moderation. The pleasures of the flowing bowl are the most inconsiderable gratification indulged in the society of Masons, whose refined tastes direct them to nobler enjoyments; to the social repast of the soul, the contemplation of wisdom, and the animating precepts of virtue. These generally constitute the subjects of their rational and instructive conversation; and if ever they unbend their minds in the gaieties of more frivolous entertainment, their innocent mirth is regulated with such decency and order, as are scarcely to be equalled in assemblies the most elegant and polite. *There are to be no disputes—no swearing—no indecent talk or double entendres.*

In many lodges, the following Latin verses are hung up as a table of commandments, which may be regarded as an abstract of the
most

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most important precepts of philosophy ; and prove, as I formerly remarked, that Masonry is really the foundation and corner-stone of all the systems of the most celebrated academies of ancient Greece.

*Fide Deo, diffide tibi, fac propria, castas
Funde preces, paucos utere, magna fuge.
Multa audi, dic pauca, tace abdita disce minori
Parcere, majori cedere, ferre parem.
Tolle moras, minare nihil, contemne superbos,
Fer mala, disce Deo vivere, disce mori.*

Translation.

Thyself distrust, thy hope in God repose ;
To heaven and earth a spotless soul disclose.
In pleasures, abstinent, moderate in desire,
Let cautious wisdom all thy speech inspire.
Meek, to superiors, to inferiors, mild,
In every social virtue, undefil'd ;
Reign'd, yet active, great in mind, not high,
Learn that prime lesson, " how to live and die."

Such is the practice of the lodges, which are called *sinks of all human depravity.*

The

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The crime hinted at in the subsequent part of the charge, is of so detestable a nature, that I forbear to name it. I shall only affirm that the societies of *Free Masons* are remarkable for their continence ; and if any suspicion, so derogatory from their virtue, was really ever suggested by any woman, it ought to be imputed intirely to a vindictive intention of defaming a set of men, whom all the arts of female allurements could never induce to a deviation from the paths of chastity and virtue. And is there the smallest degree of probability, that they who exclude all women from their societies, professedly on account of avoiding every temptation even to one of the least criminal gratifications of sense, should actually be addicted to a trespass of the highest and blackest enormity ? The author of this infamous libel, however, not satisfied with urging the probability of such guilt, by the strongest insinuations, has rose to the unparalleled audacity of accusing us of a mystical commerce with the devil himself. I shall leave the world to judge, whether the imputation of a knowledge so supernatural, as that of necromancy, is in the least consistent with the deplorable state of ignorance

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rance, in which the societies of *Free Majons* are said, in another passage, to be involved.

Upon the whole articles of this enormous charge, I think it is evident, that, though this virulent writer is totally ignorant of the divine mysteries, and unexceptionable morals of *Majons*, he is amazingly learned in the *diabolical art of defamation* : and that he himself has really that commerce with the great enemy of mankind, which he has endeavoured to fix upon *Free Majons*, appears highly probable ; since he has conjured up such a necromantic charge of wickedness, as could be accumulated only from an intimate acquaintance with the manners of the infernal regions.

Having thus clearly refuted every article of accusation, it is but justice to ourselves, to exhibit here the real portrait of a genuine *Free Majon*, in order to invalidate more effectually the injurious misrepresentations drawn of him.

The qualifications necessarily inherent in every *Free Majon*, are such as constitute the most glorious character that can adorn mortality. In regard to the objects of his meditation, he is ever contemplating the precepts of religion
and

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and philosophy. His moral conduct is correspondent to the most exalted sentiments of virtue. By the aid of the torch of truth, which enlightens his steps, he is prudent in all his actions, temperate in all his pleasures ; his fidelity is inviolable, and his justice incorruptible. He admires virtue in his brethren, believes them his equals because they are men, shares their pains, participates their ills, lends a beneficent hand in time of want, concealing no impostures in the intricate mazes of a false heart, speaking ingenuously, and acting with candour, goodness, and affability seated on his brow ; despising all affected disdain, the offspring of pride, that would mark out distinctions amongst mankind ; ready to forgive injuries, without offending any ; cherishing goodness, and detesting nought but vice ; simple in manners, easy in his behaviour, affable in society, a faithful subject, a constant friend ; knowing how to temper the austerity of wisdom with chaste voluptuousness ; his heart being ever open to taste innocent and allowable pleasures with his brethren.

Since, then, the character of all Free Masons is so glorious and amiable, with what shadow

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shadow of probability can it be alledged, that the institution of Masonry has a malignant influence on society? But the baneful and pestilential breath of this irreverent author, like the deadly vapours of Cocytus; spreads darkness and destruction wherever it reaches; extinguishing the lustre of all human excellency, and converting every radiant virtue, into the most opposite and odious vice. What breast but must swell with indignation, to behold the benefactions of a charity the most extensive and disinterested, construed into the *wages of iniquity*? Such a wicked misrepresentation affords the strongest evidence, that this malicious incendiary is himself intirely destitute of that virtue, whose tendency is to inculcate a favourable interpretation even of the most equivocal actions of others; and that all his principles and allegations, are a transcript of his own diabolical imagination, where impiety falsehood, murder, and every species of enormity is engendered; while he exults in the hellish triumph of ascribing their production to a society the most virtuous and religious that ever existed.

To confirm the extraordinary charity practised

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tified by *Free Maçons*, we need only have recourse to the fundamental laws of their constitution ; by which, it is expressly enacted, that, *if it be known that any brother is in want, he shall be assisted, without making application to prevent his being put to shame.* And in so remarkable a manner, is this benevolent disposition cultivated among us, that it is the continual business of every Free Mason, to enquire solicitously into the circumstances of all his brethren, in order to prevent their exigence. The consequence of which laudable practice is, as I will venture to affirm, that, among all *Free Maçons* this day in the universe, not one is to be found living in an involuntary state of poverty ; and were it possible to induce all men to be initiated in the mysteries of *Masonry*, I am certain it would prove the means of extending the bounds of human happiness. For then, we would renovate the golden age ; every thing would be in common ; all litigation would entirely cease ; the rumours of war no more be heard ; and we would embrace, in a diffusive affection, the universal fraternity of mankind. But I cannot better demonstrate the advantages resulting from our institution
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to society, than by shewing the estimation in which it was held by the most celebrated sages of former times, who seem to have warped its maxims with all their works, both of a political and moral kind.

If we look into the writings of the ancient philosophers, we shall find them every where inculcating those very precepts which are particularly maintained by Free Masons, as the standards of moral practice. How frequently do they insist upon that admirable sentence, *know thyself*, which is the very foundation of our technical philosophy? That Plato was really a *Free Mason*, seems evident from his *Republic*, where he dwells with peculiar pleasure on the social and brotherly equality of rank maintained in the lodges. The oration of Isocrates bears such authentic marks of his brotherhood, that it may be considered as a paraphrase on the verses above quoted. And there is equal reason to conclude from the obvious tenor of their principles, that the whole tribe of the ancient sages were universally *Free Masons*. We may likewise reckon among our number, the most distinguished heroes of antiquity. I am fully of opinion, that both

Achilles

Achilles and *Patroclus*, so much celebrated by *Homer*, were Brother-Masons ; for we cannot otherwise account, in a satisfactory manner, for the extraordinary mutual affection which distinguished these illustrious chiefs. Besides, it can never be imagined, that Chiron who was preceptor to Achilles, and certainly conversant in all the learning and mysteries of the Grecian lodges, would fail to initiate his pupil in so important and useful a science as *Masonry*. For the same reason, Alexander the Great, was undoubtedly initiated by Aristotle. That *Homer* was a zealous member of our fraternity, is not to be questioned, when we know that he went a visitor to the Etrurians, a people famous, at that time, for their knowledge in signs and tokens, and who appear to have been universally brother-Masons. The Romans were no less remarkable for their veneration of Masonry than the Greeks ; and it is probable, they derived their knowledge of it from their great progenitor, Æneas, concerning whom, that he was a Free Mason, we have the authority of Virgil, who appears by the same testimony to have been a Mason himself.

Hic

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Hic pacem mutuo damus accipimufq ; viciffim.

In what terms of refpect does the great Cicero mention the Eleufynian rites, which I am fully perfuaded were no other than the myfteries of Mafonry ; He affirms that they impreffed in the mind the moft indelible fentiments of virtue.

If we carry our refearches into the facred fcriptures, we fhall there likewise meet with circumftances evidencing the antiquity of Mafonry. That Mofes was a Free Mafon, appears to me unqueftionable ; for we are exprefly told, that he was inftructed in all the learning of the Egyptians : and Mafonry being fo valuable a part of knowledge, and fo intimately connected with philofophy, it is not to be fupposed that he was ignorant of its myfteries, more efpecially as our fcience was in thofe days fo fuccefsfully cultivated in Egypt ; of the truth of which, the pyramids remain incontestable monuments. It is alfo certain that Solomon was a Mafon, for *nothing was hid from him* ; and I imagine he alludes to our myfteries, when he frequently declaims on the qualifications of fecrecy and difcretion. That St. John was actually a Free Mafon, is evinced, not only from the unqueftionable

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unquestionable evidence of tradition, but the spirit and purpose of his whole epistles. Is not he constantly exhorting us to brotherly love and affection ? And here let me observe that the certainty of St. John's being a Free Mason, refutes intirely the misapplication, so injuriously insisted upon, of the allusion of the Whore of Babylon to Masonry. Would ever that apostle, to whom the visions were revealed, conceal from his beloved brethren a truth of such infinite importance to their eternal salvation ? or would he have patronized a society which he knew to be obnoxious to the divine master whom he served ? Such an affirmation would, if possible, more shock human reason, than all the falsehoods and absurdities alledged against the mysteries of Masonry.

Descending into more modern times, I might enumerate among our members, the Knights Hospitallers of Jerusalem, and all the illustrious lords who distinguished themselves in the Crusades : but it is unnecessary to insist any farther upon the antiquity, or celebrity of an order which had, confessedly, its origin in the first ages of the world, and has ever inculcated both by precept and example, the practice of philosophy and religion. philosophy

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I now come to the laſt part of this extraordinary ſermon, where it is ſaid, that “ all thoſe who adhere to the abominations of Maſonry will be damned.” This tremendous propoſition was to have been clearly proved both from reaſon and ſcripture, but ſuch is the falſhood of the aſſertion, and the weakneſs of the cauſe to be defended, that not the ſmalleſt ſhadow of reaſon is diſcoverable ; and with regard to the authority of the ſcripture, the texts produced are of ſo general interpretation, ſo inconcluſive, and inapplicable to the ſubject, that they afford the moſt convincing teſtimony of the abſurdity of the doctrine which they have been ſo egregiouſly perverted to ſupport.

From the whole tenor of the diſcourſe I have been refuting, I can look upon it in no other light, than as a malicious attempt to deſtroy the tranquility of our minds, ſubvert the principles of brotherly concord, and aboliſh the moſt glorious inſtitution that ever was invented by human wiſdom. But *marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you. We know that we have paſſed from death to life, becauſe we love the brethren. He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occaſion of ſtumbling in him;* which affords us the glorious proſpect, that Maſonry,

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sonry, so far from being the Way to Hell is actually, THE TURNPIKE ROAD TO HAPPINESS IN THIS LIFE, AND ETERNAL HAPPINESS HEREAFTER.

Let us, then, join unanimously in defence of our sacred mysteries; and calling all the Muses to our aid, their laurels entwined with acacia, let us with a noble enthusiasm, raise a hymn to the glory of Masonry; while we indulge the ardent fancy that our illustrious brethren of old, poets, heroes and philosophers accord to the immortal choir.

“ Hail, sacred Masonry! great source of human happiness and perfection. Thou art the power of pleasing society. Thou makest us to fit down with kings and princes. Thou exaltest him that is low, and abasest him that is high. O continue to animate us, thy faithful children, with that glorious ambition, which, of old, inspired thy votaries, when they reared thy trophies to the clouds. Thou, peaceful goddess! lived with Astraea in the golden age of mankind. O let not the contempt of the prophane induce thee, likewise, to abandon a world unworthy of thy inestimable mysteries. If we forget thee, O Masonry! let our right hands

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hands forget their cunning. If we do not remember thee, let our tongues cleave to the roof of our mouth ; if we prefer not Masonry above our chief joy. O thou mysterious divinity of the square and compass ! whether thou delightest in the holy lodge of St. John, or that of Kilwinnin by thy peculiar care thou art worshipped in a thousand temples, the work of thy faithful builders. Thy kingdom extendeth from the orient sun, to where he sets in the immense Atlantic. In the infancy of time thou arose, and coeval with time shalt thou endure. Hail, sacred Masonry ! great source of human happiness and perfection.

FINIS.