

## FREEMASONRY.

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Hail, matchless tie, that so unites the hearts  
of fellow men,  
That nought but crime can e'er dissolve their  
unity again!  
Whether from Europe's proud domain, or Asia's  
ancient plain,  
Or Africa's burning soil, or young America's  
Wild scenes,  
From East to West, from North to South, the  
still unsullied robe  
Of true Masonic Charity, infolds the mystic  
Globe!

Its luminous display of truth, antiquity of  
fame,  
And sacred preservation of the *three-one spoken*  
name,\*  
The friendly hand the prudent lip, the well-  
instructed ear,  
The holy memories enshrined within the heart  
sincere,  
Are binding as the eternal hills, that earth-  
quakes cannot tear  
From their antique foundations, for the arm of  
GOD is there.

Freemasonry, the pow'r of old, ordain'd by  
highest Heav'n  
To keep the sacred Rolls, that are for man's  
instruction giv'n,  
Ev'n when a Deluge drown'd the world,† and  
when in after days,  
All other pow'rs would have consigned them  
to the pagon blaze,—  
Freemasonry thou archetype of every truth-  
ful creed,  
I love thee—O I love the more, the more I feel  
my need.

The uninitiated ask whence sprung the match-  
less tie,—  
With awe profound we point them to the  
Heav'n of Heav'ns and say  
The Architect supreme, by whose behest the  
world awoke  
From chaos—even He who thus omnipotently  
spoke  
"Let there be light!" and there was fight!—  
from the great source we spring—  
Our glorious Grand Master is the universal  
KING.

\*The Incommunicable name of GOD has  
been preserved in its three-fold sense, by a  
certain Order of Freemasonry.

†Vide the Pillars.

‡This religion is of the highest antiquity.  
Would that all its professed disciples practical-  
ly observed its precepts! Then every man  
would do to his neighbor as he would be done  
by.

The Transition Period in Ma-  
sonry.

Any one who will give a searching  
glance into the history of Freemasonry,  
for the past four or five centuries, will be  
thoroughly satisfied that there has been  
a very remarkable transformation in the  
religious character of the institution. As  
the transition rocks mark in geology the  
period that intervened between the unin-  
habited and the habited globe, so the  
transition stage in Masonry may be a  
term used to mark the gradual change  
which took place, about the beginning of  
the eighteenth century, in the religion of  
the institution, from the sectarian char-  
acter of the earlier period to the cosmopol-  
itan spirit of the later.

While Freemasonry was predominant-  
ly operative in its organization, and was  
represented by the guilds and building  
corporations of the Middle Ages, it was  
exclusively Christian in its religious char-  
acter. The Old Records of both the  
English and German Masons—those in-  
valuable guide-posts which so faithfully  
direct us in our backward journeying  
into the past—conclusively show this  
character. The constitutions and charges  
begin, for the most part, with a solemn  
invocation to the Holy and Blessed Tri-  
nity. Thus, the "Orders and Constitu-  
tions" contained in the Harleian MS.,  
the date of which is supposed to be about  
the beginning of the seventeenth century,  
begin with these words:

"The might of the Father of heaven,  
with the wisdom of the glorious Sone,  
through the goodness of the Holy Ghost,  
that be three persons in one God, be with  
us in our beginning, and give us grace  
so to govern us in our lyveing, that we  
may come to His blisse that never shall  
have ending."

And in the still older manuscript pub-  
lished by Mr. Halliwell, the date of which  
he supposes to be not later than the lat-  
ter part of the fourteenth century, there  
are continual allusions to Christian usage.  
The craftsman is directed how to conduct  
himself in church, and at the celebration  
of the mass, and it ends with a prayer for  
Christ's grace.

The same spirit prevailed among the  
German Operative Masons of the Middle  
Ages. The Constitutions of Strasburg,  
whose date is 1459, begin with an invo-  
cation of the Trinity, and also of the Vir-  
gin Mary, and of the four crowned Mar-  
tyrs.

But it would be useless to multiply  
citations. All through these old Con-  
stitutions this sectarian feature is found,  
which indicates, beyond the power of de-  
nial, that these guild or operative Ma-  
sons were exclusively Christian associa-  
tions.

Now, compare the manuscript Con-  
stitutions and Charges, whose dates are an-  
terior to the eighteenth century, with the  
first charges which were published  
after what is called the revival of 1717,  
namely, those approved by the Grand  
Lodges and printed in 1723 in the first  
edition of the constitutions of Anderson,  
and the change to which we have allud-  
ed, as the transition from exclusive Chris-  
tianity to universal toleration will be  
evident. The words of the Charge,  
which are inserted for the convenience of  
those to whom a copy of these old Char-  
ges may not be readily accessible, are as  
follows:

"A Mason is obliged, by his tenure, to  
obey the moral law; and if he rightly  
understands the art, he will never be a  
stupid atheist, nor an irreligious libertine.  
But though in ancient times Masons were  
charged in every country to be of the re-  
ligion of that country or nation, what-  
ever it was, yet 'tis now thought more  
expedient only to oblige that religion in  
which all men agree, leaving their par-  
ticular opinions to themselves; that is,  
to be good men and true men of honor  
and honesty, by whatever denominations  
or persuasions they may be distinguish-  
ed; whereby Masonry becomes the cen-  
tre of union, and the means of concilia-  
ting true friendship among persons that  
must have remained at a perpetual dis-  
tance."

Now, it is evident that, before this  
charge could have been prepared in the  
form in which it is presented, a very  
great change must have taken place in  
the religious tendencies of the institution.  
In 1550, and onwards, almost to the end  
of the seventeenth century, we find the  
Christian spirit set forth in allusions to  
the church and its ceremonies, and invo-  
cations to the Trinity, and references to  
saints. In 1717 there is a revival or re-  
organization of the Order, and the first  
Charge, published six years after that  
event boldly proclaims the emancipation  
of Masons from all sectarianism, and  
while it refers to the former existence of  
a Christian element, it also declares that  
henceforth they were required to profess  
"that religion in which all men agree."  
It was the change from Christianity to  
Theism—from exclusiveness to tolera-  
tion.

Now, what were the influences that  
were at work to produce this important  
change? What could have so powerfully  
acted on the character of the institu-

tion, as to take it completely out of the  
ecclesiastical dependence in which it was  
first hegotten, and in which, for so many  
centuries, it had continued, and to bring  
it into distinct antagonism to all secta-  
rianism?

Findel has, in his "History of Freema-  
sonry," given much consideration to this  
subject; but I do not think that his read-  
ers will be ready, without at least some  
protestation, to submit to the correctness  
of all his reasoning. He attributes the  
change, in the first place, to the influence  
upon the public mind of the liberal senti-  
ments of the philosophers of the seven-  
teenth century, and so far he is undoubt-  
edly right; for the labors of such men as  
Bacon and Locke were calculated to give  
a more elevated and popular tone to the  
popular thought. But I think he com-  
mits a great error when he says, that "the  
last, and at the same time most decisive  
agent in accomplishing the transforma-  
tion of Masonry was the intellectual  
movement known under the name of  
English Deism."

The Deists of the seventeenth and  
eighteenth centuries, although it is ad-  
mitted that they enrolled many men of  
learning in their number, were never  
popular as a religious sect, and could  
never have exerted anything but a  
damaging tendency, so far as popularity  
was concerned, on the organization of  
any association. Their rejection of the  
Christian scheme, as well as all other  
revealed religion, gave great offense to  
the religious part of the community, and  
placed them in antagonism to the general  
sentiment of the people.

The revival of 1717, which gives us  
the first record of the transition, whether  
it was an entirely new organization, as is  
contended by the opponents of what is  
called "the 1617 theory," or simply a  
reorganization of a modified plan, was  
inaugurated by such men as Desaguliers  
and Anderson, both clergymen and doc-  
tors of divinity. It is absurd to suppose  
that they would be found as co-operators  
in any scheme controlled and influenced  
by the Freethinkers, to whom they were  
professionally opposed.

Indeed the use of the phrase "irreli-  
gious libertine" in the Charge of 1723,  
in juxtaposition with "Atheist," it is  
more than probable, was intended in that  
place to refer to the school of Deists, who  
were often called "Freethinkers," and  
quite as often "irreligious libertines."  
The libertinism alluded to was not  
licentiousness of conduct, but licentious-  
ness of belief.

The transition of universal toleration  
was not completed at once. Dr. Oliver  
tells us that the Common Prayer Book of  
the Established Church formerly consti-  
tuted a part of the furniture of the  
Lodge and in the first system of lectures,  
the Grand Architect of the Universe was  
explained as meaning Jesus Christ, "him  
that was taken to the topmost pinnacle  
of the Temple." All the symbols at that  
early period were of a Christian origin,  
and even the *edification of a temple*, the  
great and peculiar symbol of the Order,  
may be traced to a Pauline metaphor.

The fact is, that the transition of Ma-  
sonry from an operative to a speculative  
association, caused it to pass from the  
control of ignorant workmen into that  
of educated philosophers. These latter  
were in the midst of the revolution of  
public sentiment, and were themselves  
the movers in the intellectual and moral  
progress of the age. Freemasonry, pat-  
ronized by them, felt the effect of this  
progress. To this alone are we to at-  
tribute the tolerance and cosmopolitan  
spirit which has distinguished it ever  
since the revival of 1717, and which was  
first developed in the liberal character of

the Charge adopted in 1721.

This progressive advancement is still  
going on. Every now and then there is  
a battle between the liberal and intoler-  
ant, but the former always wins.

Christian symbols will always remain  
in the Lodge, because these symbols were  
invented or adopted at a time when Ma-  
sonry was entirely Christian; but their  
interpretation will never be offensive,  
because the spirit of toleration will al-  
ways control our teachings. The Jew,  
the Mussulman, the Brahmin, the Budd-  
hist, the Parsee, may all kneel with the  
Christian around the altar of Masonry,  
because the universal Father is there  
worshipped as the Grand Architect, and  
each may bring and lay between its  
horns whatsoever he deems the true tres-  
tle-board of the Grand Architect—the  
book in which he has inscribed his plans  
for the building of man's spiritual tem-  
ple—whether that trestle-board be the  
Pentateuch, the Koran, the Dammada,  
the Zendavesta, or the Gospels, for they  
all speak of God and the immortal life,  
and these alone constitute the points of a  
Mason's creed.—*Mackey's National Freemason.*

## The Secret of Success.

No man now standing on an eminence  
of influence and power, and doing a great  
work, has arrived at his position by going  
up in an elevator. He took the stairway  
step by step. He climbed the rocks, oft-  
en with bleeding hands. He prepared  
himself by the work he is now doing. He  
never accomplished an inch of his eleva-  
tion by standing at the foot of the stair-  
way with his mouth open and longing.  
There is no "royal road" to anything  
good—not even to wealth. It goes as it  
comes. There is no element of perman-  
ence in it. The man who reaches his  
money in an elevator does not know how  
to enjoy it; so it is not wealth to him.  
To get a high position without climbing  
to it; to win wealth without earning it,  
to do fine work without the discipline  
necessary to its performance, to be fam-  
ous, or useful, or ornamental, without pre-  
liminary cost, seems to be the universal  
desire of the young. The children would  
begin where their fathers left off.

What exactly is the secret of true suc-  
cess in life? It is to do without flinching,  
and with utter faithfulness the duty that  
stands next to one. When a man has  
mastered the duties around him he is  
ready for those of a higher grade, and he  
naturally takes one step upward. When  
he has mastered the duties of the new  
grade, he goes on climbing. There are  
no surprises to the man who arrives at  
eminence legitimately. It is as entirely  
natural that he should be there, as at the  
foot of the stairs. There are heights  
above him, and he remains humble and  
simple.

Preachments are of little avail, per-  
haps, but when one comes in contact  
with so many men and women who put  
yearning for earning, and longing for la-  
boring, he is tempted to say to them:  
"Stop looking up and look around you!"  
Do the work that first comes to your  
hand, and do it well. Take no upward  
step until you come to it naturally, and  
have won the power to hold it. The top  
in this little world is not so very high,  
and patient climbing will bring you to it.

A gentleman handed up a \$10 bill to  
one of the Boston coaches from which one  
fare, five cents, was to be taken. "Look  
a here," said the driver, down through  
the hole, "which one of these horses do  
you want to buy with this \$10?" "Well,"  
coolly replied the gentleman, "I thought  
I might get both of them for that."