

The Canadian Craftsman.*Port Hope, December 15, 1877.***God in Masonry.**

"Freemasonry is based on the belief in the existence of God and the immortality of the soul," formed, until recently, a part of the Constitution of the Grand Orient of France and no one could, of course, be admitted into the Order in that country who did not profess or believe in these truths. But now that these words have been expunged from the Constitution, a professed infidel may, in France, be made a Mason.

How antagonistic to the first principles of Masonry is the action of the Grand Orient of France may be seen by reference to the Ancient Charges, where it is written: "Article I. Concerning God and Religion. A Mason is obliged, by his tenure, to obey the moral law, and if he rightly understand the art, he will never be a stupid *Atheist* nor an irreligious libertine. He, of all men, should best understand that God seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh at the outward appearance, but God looketh to the heart. A Mason is therefore particularly bound never to act against the dictates of his conscience. Let a man's religion or mode of worship be what it may, he is not excluded from the Order, provided he *believe* in the glorious Architect of heaven and earth, and practice the sacred duties of morality." Belief in God, the Great Architect of the Universe, is, then, the foundation principle of Masonry. And throughout the whole

ritual the same great truth is constantly and prominently presented. The lodge is not duly opened until a blessing from the Great Architect of the Universe is invoked on all our undertakings; nor closed until gratitude is reverently and humbly expressed to Him for favors received, and a prayer for His preservation and protection offered up. The candidate for initiation is required solemnly to affirm that he "believes in the existence of a Supreme Being." On his entrance into the lodge "the blessing of Heaven" is invoked upon him, that he may be "the better able to display the beauties of true godliness" to the honor and glory of His holy name. And the candidate is commended for his trust in God. The furniture of the lodge, in its dumb way, declares the same truth. God's Revealed Word occupies a central position, and above it is suspended a sacred symbol, alluding to God, the G. G. O. T. U.

And so we might go on producing proofs almost *ad infinitum* to show that a belief in the Fatherhood of God, as well as the Brotherhood of Man, is an organic principle in Masonry.

The recent action of the Grand Orient of France has very naturally and very properly caused a sensation amongst Masons throughout the world. Every true and faithful son of Hiram must deplore its results. The Freemasons of France have thereby done violence to Masonic truth, have ignored the "Ancient Charges," have cut themselves off from intercommunion, at all events, with Anglo-Saxon Freemasons, and