

which rests on two strong pillars—namely the right relation of man to his fellow-man, and the relation of both to the great Architect of the Universe. (Applause.) We rigidly prohibit politics in every shape from entering our lodges, and this ancient landmark of the order can never be dispensed with. I am not betraying any secret to the outside world when I say that every newly initiated candidate is pledged in the following language, which is, I apprehend, a sufficient answer to the first charge, namely, that "Freemasonry is dangerous to the state":—"As a citizen of the world I am next to enjoin you to be exemplary in the discharge of your civil duties, by never proposing or at all countenancing any act that may have a tendency to subvert the peace and good order of society; by paying due obedience to the laws of any state, which may for a time become the place of your residence or afford you its protection; and above all, by never losing sight of the allegiance due to the sovereign of your native land, ever remembering that nature has implanted in your breast a sacred and indissoluble attachment to that country from which you derived your birth and infant nurture." I will only add that I challenge the production, from any source, political or ecclesiastical, of a clearer, more comprehensive, or more philosophic definition of the duties and obligation of citizenship than that contained in the above Masonic charge. In other words it is

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of the masonic compass marking our civil obligations, and directing all honest Masons "to render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's." (Applause.)

But on the second proposition we have been no less virulently assailed, and that, too, by men who ought to know better. We are credited with having made Voltaire an infidel, and are held responsible for the horrors of the French Revolution. Our religious views, so far as we can be said to have religious views at all, are thus deduced by our opponents, who say that "we hold that all creeds are equally true, and therefore they must be all equally false. * * * Religion is superstition. There is no God. Nature is God and reason is Nature's only priest. Men are the divine and equal children of Nature. All means are good to destroy superstition." In a word, "the ultimate purpose of the masonic sect is the utter overthrow of that whole religious and political order of the world which the christian teacher has produced, and the substitution of a new state of things in accordance with their ideas, of which the foundations and laws shall be drawn from mere naturalism." Now, I pause to say that if men honestly believe we have such objects in view, it is not surprising that they should look upon us with suspicion and cast out our names as evil; nay, I will say more, that the best interests of society are served by a rigid and uncompromising resistance to every form of association having an irreligious or communistic basis, and this view the Grand Lodge of Quebec has adopted as a fundamental element of its progressive life by refusing in the most formal and distinct manner to hold communication with the Grand Orient of France, because of its action in eliminating an article of masonic faith without which no man can honestly retain his position in the craft. Let us examine for a moment the opinions put forth in the ancient charges on the all-important topics of "God and Religion." A Mason is obliged by his tenure