

# THE CANADIAN CRAFTSMAN,

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## OUR ALPHABET.

The achievement of Freemasonry in inventing an alphabet that is as easy of acquisition by the German as by the Englishman, by the Arab as by the Indian, is one that is worthy of remark. Before the advent of the craft the dream of a universal language was akin in character and issue to the dream of universal dominion, vainly indulged in by so many warlike potentates. The attempt to frame a *tongue* that should be acquired by all men was a failure—a Utopian dream. Many have been the enthusiasts who, all through the centuries, have striven to win the honor of inventing the world's language. Dalgarno, in his "Ars Signorum," Bishop Wilkins, in his "Philosophical Language," and the famous genius, Liebnitz, are among those who aspired thus to master speech. But speech is incapable of such mastery. It would seem that even if all the nations of the earth were combined under one government, the different peoples would each continue to speak their own language. We sometimes flatter ourselves that the English tongue will ultimately be the world's tongue, but this is more than doubtful. It would seem that only Freemasonry can thus make the conquest of the peoples of the world, or rather of those representative men among all peoples who shall be found worthy of initiation into the craft. This uni-

versal language is not a tongue, but a Masonic alphabet, a sign language, exemplifying "a beautiful system of morality, veiled in allegory, and illustrated by symbols."

Freemasons were, in truth, first instructed in the art of framing their universal language by the Grand Architect of the Universe Himself. Divine signs and tokens gave us the hint of Masonic signs and tokens. What said Jehovah? "I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be a token of a covenant between me and the earth." And again: "God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night; and let them be for *signs*." And still again: God said to Moses, "Certainly I will be with thee, and this shall be a *token* unto thee that I have sent thee." So, under the Jewish dispensation, circumcision was a divinely appointed sign. And what is baptism, but (as the catechism of the Episcopal Church asserts) "an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace;" and the visible expression of this truth is the "sign of the cross" made on the forehead of the initiate into the mysteries of the Church's fellowship. The sign language is the esoteric language of Scripture, and of religion, as well as of Freemasonry.

There is something pictorial and indelibly impressive about signs and