

by the Divine precepts it contains, to regulate his actions. God's sacred name he is taught never to mention but with awe and reverence; on all his lawful undertakings he is reminded to implore the aid of the all wise Creator and to look up to Him on every emergency for comfort, aid and support. And so by imprinting on our minds and enforcing on the every day actions of men the first principles of religion, may not Freemasonry humbly strive to be accounted, "its lowly handmaid." Am I not justified, therefore, in saying that the requirements of our religion and the foregoing tenets of Freemasonry are in a great measure identical, and so our entry into the Order helps us to recollect and consider first, our duty to God as our chief aim, then to our neighbor, and lastly to ourselves. It is our privilege to make known that there is nothing in our ceremonies incompatible with the profession of our christian belief. By fulfilling the behests of Freemasonry we are but carrying out the great principles of christianity so well expressed by the Apostle "that pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction and to keep himself unspotted from the world."

The language of Freemasonry is admittedly an universal one, our ceremonies and symbols are understood in every quarter of the globe, and in these outward Masonic marks we as Christians see a reference to the Saviour of mankind, while the Brethren of a different faith, beyond the universal meaning, claim a further application consistent with their religious views.

Let me ask, if anything existed in our Order detrimental to the Christian religion, would we number as we do amongst Freemasons, who are as sand by the seashore, so many hundreds of ministers of His word, from the lowliest labourer in God's vineyard to the highest dignitary of the Church Militant here on earth. All these are instructing us in the blessed truths and keeping us steadfast.

No true Mason will ever set up the exercises of our Order in the place of religious duties, but rather would he the more eagerly seek to follow the guidance of his spiritual pastors and teachers.

I take this opportunity publicly to acknowledge the liberality