

be nothing to object to in this, and it is surprising that persons are found holding the belief that there is anything objectionable in Masonry, because its members stand by one another in times of danger, difficulty and adversity.

An institution that has withstood the mutations of time, and flourished amid the shock of nations and the crash of thrones, can need no defence, still it may not be out of place to advert to what the enemy is doing in misrepresenting and traducing an Order which above all others has a history that goes back to past ages. There is no fear of harm resulting from the machinations of those who make it their purpose to decry Masonry, for the progress it has made and continues to make is sufficient proof that it cannot suffer much beyond the annoyance and personal injury members of the Craft occasionally sustain at the hands of ignorant and presumptuous persons in the garb of religion. Masonry has made many a one a good citizen and a better man, for those who strictly follow what it teaches are unquestionably raised above the common level. Its teachings are such that all who give heed and listen attentively to the great moral truths it inculcates must be better and wiser for the instruction they receive. The secrecy of the Order makes it more sought after than it would be, for to know true Masonry is the desire of most men who seek after what is good, and when once they are made acquainted with it, they feel no regret at having penetrated the arcana, and mastered the knowledge for which they thirsted. What can be grander, what can be more ennobling than the knowledge acquired by a constant attendance at a Masonic Lodge? There, nothing but what is good, true and soul-elevating is heard; and to know the beautiful ritual of the Order is the ambition of every Mason who aspires to become thoroughly *au fait*. The only strife tolerated is that of rivalry in the endeavor to master the teachings of the Order, and we can point with just pride to the high attainments of many even in our midst, who, having devoted their energies to Masonic literature and law, now stand in the front ranks of educated Masons. Were Masonry useless and unnecessary, its ranks could not have been graced by the presence of the leading men of all nations, as it has been; for to day it can boast of having within its pale the best and noblest among the master spirits of the age. Both in Europe and America the first men of the day are not ashamed to hail the humblest member of the fraternity as a brother, and royalty itself claims kinship with the peasant who happens to be enrolled under the banner of Freemasonry. Three of the English princes are Masons, and the Earl of Carnarvon, who manages the affairs of the colonies as Colonial Minister, is the Deputy Grand Master of England. Most of the literary men of Great Britain are Masons, and the House of Lords and House of Commons contain many members who are either members of lodges or hold official rank in the Grand Lodges. Surely if there were anything inimical to society in Masonry we should not have the best men of England and America connected with it. The aspersers of the Order have been principally ministers of religion and connected with various denominations, but chiefly with the Church of Rome. As regards Protestant ministers, it is not a little singular that some of the most ardent teachers of Masonry are clergymen of high standing in their respective churches. How strange then, that a Presbyterian minister in Scotland should have undertaken to malign an institution which finds some of its ablest expounders in popular preachers.