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THE SIGNIFICANCE OF MASONIC LIGHT.

We have perused with peculiar pleasure a little *brochure* containing a lecture on this subject, which was delivered in the Gladsmuir Lodge, No. 1385, High Barnet, recently, by Bro. the Rev. Charles W. Butler, F.R.H.S., Chaplain to the Robin Hood Lodge, 1498, and which has been published at the request of many brethren. The sentiments contained in this well-considered address are of so refining and elevating a character that it is only common justice that they should be as widely diffused as possible, for the benefit of the brethren at large; and in making copious extracts from the text before us we feel assured that our aim will be rightly understood and appreciated, namely, to prevent such gems of Masonic light from being hidden under the bushel of only a restricted circulation. After referring to the undoubted fact that Religion and Freemasonry were wedded from the first, having an identical aim, though differing in their nature and method, he points out that Freemasonry is content to take position as handmaid to Religion, commending to its members the practice of pure morality, the cultivation of every moral and social virtue, and enforcing the claims which religion and humanity make on their zeal and service. It is, perhaps, no marvel that the position of Freemasonry has been mis-

understood; that it has been represented as assuming to be identical with religion; and still more preposterous, that it aims at superseding religion altogether! Refuting this absurdity, Bro. Butler pithily sets forth that:—"What it actually claims is, simply to be a system of morality inculcated on scientific principles, and embodied in a series of symbols, alike pleasing to the eye and impressive on the mind and memory. Its utility lies partly in its impressive rituals, partly in the broad principle of philanthropy and virtue on which it is based, partly in its catholicity and total freedom from political or ecclesiastical controversy, and partly in the 'Mystic tie' by which a bond of unity is established among brethren in all parts of the world." As the youngest tyro in the Masonic art well knows, Light takes the first and highest place amongst the symbols through which instruction is imparted to Freemasons. Up to a certain point in his earliest introduction to Freemasonry, the candidate might retire from the Lodge without the faintest conception of its form, its arrangement, its symbolic beauty. The moment comes when, having gone too far to recede, he confesses the predominant wish of his heart, and a blessing, of which he has suffered temporary deprivation, is restored to him. With the earliest flash of light that