

[Oct.,

1878.]

SUPREME COUNCIL.

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the 13th September, 1877, altered that Article, and now declares the Principles of Masonry to be "absolute liberty of conscience and human solidarity."

This change seems to us of great importance. For as the Grand Orient does not now declare that a belief in God or in a future life is a recognized principle of Freemasonry, but has deliberately announced its absolute indifference to all opinions, it follows that it does not now hold the profession of Atheism or Materialism would disqualify any person from becoming a Freemason. But we hold and have ever held it to be an essential, universal and unalterable Principle of Freemasonry, that every one initiated therein must profess his faith in Almighty God, and believe in a future existence and the moral responsibility of man.

Whatever was the intention of the alteration above mentioned, the result may be, and is likely to be, that persons who do not believe in God or in a future life will become Masons; and an original Rule of our Fraternity, which we are bounden in duty as well as inclination to observe and uphold, may thus be rendered of none effect.

Having seriously considered these matters at a Session of our Supreme Council, holden on the 21st day of January, 1878, we have, however reluctantly, resolved as follows:

*First.*—That this Supreme Council doth from henceforth suspend and cease to hold Masonic communication with the Grand Orient of France.

*Secondly.*—That all Masonic Bodies subordinate to our jurisdiction be, and they are hereby admonished, until further order of this Council, not to hold Masonic communication with the Grand Orient of France or any person of its jurisdiction.

*Thirdly.*—That copies of these Resolutions be sent to the several Representatives of this Council, that they may communicate the same to the Powers near which they are accredited: and that copies thereof be also sent to the several Masonic Bodies of our Obedience.

Wherefore we have sent to you this letter, hereby enjoining the Bodies of our Obedience that the same be read aloud in each such Body at its meeting next after the receipt hereof.

And so we bid you farewell. May our Father in Heaven have you in His holy keeping.

Given under my hand and the Seal of our Supreme Council, at Dublin, in Ireland, this 26th day of January, 1878, V. E., in the 51st year of our Council.

J. F. TOWNSHEND, 33°,

*S. G. Commander.*

Circular of the Supreme Council of England and Wales regarding the Supreme Council of Egypt, with copy of cor-