

The Canadian Craftsman.

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The Craft in Danger.

"The Craft in danger," is rather a startling heading, but nevertheless a very appropriate one for the subject of this article.

It is probably not generally known to our readers that a proposition was brought forward at the Annual Assembly of the Grand Orient of France, held at Paris in September of last year, to expunge from the Constitution the words, "Freemasonry is based on the Existence of God and the Immortality of the Soul." The proposition was carried by a large majority, and was to come up for discussion, preparatory to final adoption, at the annual meeting held last month.

Now a belief in the existence of God is one of the universal and abiding landmarks of Freemasonry—the very foundation truth of our Order—and the abolishing of such a test is a departure from its original plan. Should the Atheists in the Grand Orient of France—who thus live without God, and denying, as they do, the Immortality of the Soul, die without hope—persist in their unmasonic resolution, and eventually succeed in carrying it, it will, as a consequence, cease to be a true Grand Lodge of Freemasons; it will forfeit all international Masonic rights, and must be cut off from, and disowned by, "all the genuine sons of Hiram in the Universe of Masonry."

This proposition, calculated, as it is, to undermine the very foundation of the Masonic edifice, has been very warmly discussed during the past twelve months, in the French Masonic journals, and the editor of the *Chaine D'Union*, Bro. Hubert, has appealed most earnestly to the fidelity and good sense of our French brethren to throw out the impious proposition of the godless members of the Grand Orient,

and maintain intact, and unchanged, the existing Constitution. Its adoption will be the death warrant of Freemasonry in France.

But the "Craft is in danger," on this side of the Atlantic; and the same spirit of infidelity which would lead French Masons to strike out from their Constitution, a belief in the existence of God, and the Immortality of the Soul, is doing its work amongst our brethren in the United States. From the excerpts of the July number of the *Masonic Jewel*, we learn that the Grand Master of Delaware, in reviewing the action of the Grand Master of Texas, who, we assert, rightly suspended from office a Master who denied the Divine authenticity of the Bible, says: "This may be Masonry, but we were not so taught. The authenticity of the Bible is a matter not yet fully established by divines, and we think it a little out of place for a Grand Master to undertake to settle so grave a point in theology by his simple dictum. We think his action was wrong, and a violation of the landmarks, or rather an accumulation, and one not strictly Masonic. Masonry wisely requires and demands of all who seek to enter her portals, a firm belief in the existence of God, the great I Am, the Architect of the Universe—nothing more, nothing less. This was the law before books, and is the law now. Whoever receives less or requires more, does injustice to Masonry. Masonry is universal—it knows no creed, no sect. It embraces with equal warmth and affection the Christian, the Jew, and Mohammedan. To know the rule of the Grand Master of Texas, we would at once destroy its universality, its history, its beauty, its usefulness. Masonry knows no fanaticism, no bigotry, no sectarianism. Masonry may safely be defined to be Masonry."

And in the same number of the *Jewel* we find some more Masonic heresy, the utterances of Bro. Christopher Diehl, the excellent Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of Utah. What