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"AD MAJOREM DEI GLORIAM."

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WHAT IS FREEMASONRY?

An Able Exposition by One Who Seems to Know

Of the Inside Doings of a Godless Combination.

To the Editor of the NORTHWEST REVIEW.

Sir,—Will you kindly give some space in the NORTHWEST REVIEW to the poor English of a born son of La Belle France, now thirty-three years a British subject by his own free will; he owns he did not speak much French nor English but Chinook, etc., for nearly thirty years. They say he has got too much of the old Frankish blood; let this be as it may, he will be satisfied if it explains why he tells you frankly, in your own sanctum, that he found fault with you on the 14th of November last. You then seemed to him somewhat unfair to the French Grand Orient, and to mislead on the English. Atheism, plianism or Luciferianism may be evils which carry with themselves their antidotes, but still they do a great deal of harm by fostering godless public institutions, godless schools, socialism, etc. Well, will you say why does this correspondent come up with his complaint so late after the 14th November. No doubt, Mr. Editor, it is rather late; but don't you know that editors and clergymen are too often overburdened and overworked, we will not say and badly paid. We will only say that in such a matter there was no necessity to hurry to take up the cudgel. He also alleges the excuse, that his first writings were intended for the secular press, for the simple reason that the little remnant of politesse Française he had left, made him object to tackling you in your own sanctum; but now he feels obliged to throw overboard this particle of French feeling. Kindly listen to his excuse. He took time to consult men wiser than himself, on the secular press. Although all editors fight hard with the pen for their grand freedom of the press, he nevertheless came to the conclusion that the secular is not as free as the religious press, which does not clamour so high and is satisfied with a reasonable freedom. How few secular newspapers dare to print anything against the family of the triangle. Verily there are a few exceptions, but the number of them are so small in the Northwest, that it seemed unfair to our old Frank to ask them to publish his poor literature in presence of so many foes; he scruples less to ask it from a member of his own family, because it numbers between 200 and 300 millions of Catholics. Any how, a Catholic paper cannot hide its colors, the feud between the two families, the one standing on Saint Peter's Rock and the other on the triangle of the great Architect of the Universe, is of too long standing and too well known for a Catholic to hide his color; the one is as much obliged to make public his profession of faith as the other to keep it secret, (see Catholic catechism and Masonic ritual). Every body knows that Catholicism and Freemasonry never agreed and can never agree. Look at the Pope and the Bishops who govern the Catholic church and the Catholic diocese, how they keep warning the Catholic family against the triangle and its allies, the Odd Fellows and sundry other secret societies without any distinction of country whether in France, England or elsewhere. Although it is well known that no civil government is so well informed on the doings of the secret brotherhoods, as the Catholic church authorities, many even amongst Catholics, think that Catholics, whether priests or learned laymen, cannot know anything of the secrets of Freemasonry and its allies. These good folks ignore how often the secrets leak out of the lodges, temples and convents even of Masonry and why should not a priest have, as well as any one else, the right to pick up these secrets? Your correspondent found out as early as 1854, similar secrets. By mere chance he found in a large edition of Voltaire which he was consulting for references, all the secret papers of an important Freemason. This forgetful gentleman was then the printer to the Catholic bishop and the Napoleonic prefect of Ajaccio, in Corsica. In the same way he has also had at hand the ritual a Masonic dignitary used for establishing lodges of the in a British colony. With these and similar keys, during forty years, he has occasionally had a fair insight into the temples and convents of the great architect of the universe, to the amazement of some Masons of his acquaintance or his friends. Please, do not be scandalized, your correspondent can be a friend with anybody he thinks fit in purely secular matters, and he respects their honesty and good faith in religious matters, but he would never, to save his life, join them in their religious worship. He frankly acknowledges that he found many more sincere good men of that sort amongst the English than amongst the French or Italian Masons, for the reason he will give farther on. Let us remark that for forty years he has been very fond of books, periodicals, monthlies, weeklies, dailies, giving information on the secret societies; he must own that his old Frankish blood took pleasure in unravelling the hidden threads of the triangle family, an old enemy of his own, for centuries. Revenons a nos moutons, and Mr. Editor, kindly excuse the digression. The Northwest Review sees an abyss of difference between the

atheism of the French grand orient and God or Gods of the English. Now, your correspondent sees no such abyss; the English on the temples differ—in the English there is no essential difference for anyone who is initiated into the true meaning of the Masonic symbols and signs; etc. The Review is not satisfied with the official rejection of the French atheism of the Paris Grand Orient by the English Masons; it wants these English gentlemen, who for centuries have had the same ancestors in the triangle family as the French Masons, to repudiate even the old family name. Brothers may vary, but will not disown and discard their family name when they differ only by their ensigns, dresses and manners. Evidently the Review asks too much of the English triangle when it asks them to throw up the family name. No doubt the national characters of the French and English, the religious, political, social and other institutions under which they live, the customs and manners, necessarily brings more or less circumstantial differences in the manners and appearances of the Masonic doings and workings in each country, but the same nature, the same essential features, and the same ultimate results are to be found in the Masonry of England, France, Germany, Italy, and every other country. Let us look at the reasons and causes of the accidental differences between the French and English branches of universal Freemasonry.

The furia Francese, as expressed by the Italians, is as well known as the fog and coolness of Albion. The British may admit the same principles as their neighbors across the channel, but are they not slower to sacrifice practical, common sense to logic, as was the case with Stuart Mill, in spite of his logical turn of mind! On the contrary, the too lively French soon sacrifice practical common sense to logic, and, unnumbered of the results, will run to the logical consequences of the same principles if they are once admitted by them. Hence, even the flow-tide of Masonry is towards godless institutions, such as godless schools, or atheism in public life and affairs, leaving religion to private individuals who wish for it, you can see the full tide of godless government, godless presidents, godless ministers, godless schools on the French side long before you notice the same godless atheistic tide almost imperceptibly moving towards the English shore. But whether slow or fast, nothing can stop the tide from reaching its natural height. After these preliminaries, let us look at the French Grand Orient rushing headlong to put up a godless or atheistic, but logical ensign on its Masonic temples and lodges. We will start ab ovo. B. Mace is a great partisan of Masonic education. Your readers may form an idea of this French gentleman by comparing B. Mace to B. Goggin, whose zeal for promoting Masonry and education is well known in Manitoba and our Northwest; but remember, one is of the English type and the other of the French each with his private and individual peculiarities, such as private religious, or irreligious, dispositions. Our French B. Mace is founder of the Ligue d'enseignement, having for its object the banishing of every religious teaching from the schools. To do it, he first banished the word "God" from the Grand Orient. This is how it happened: In 1865, in Metz (then French, now German) with only the lodges of the East of France he started a movement to take out from the Grand Orient's constitution, "God and the immortality of the soul," which were written in it only in 1854, to suit the necessities of the times and quiet the too scrupulous. What was done in 1854, why could it not be undone in 1877 by the same Grand Orient, to suit other circumstances and conveniences? B. Mace and his party relied on the force of logic, which carries the day so often amongst the French, while the practical common sense of the Anglo-Saxons will be slow to follow in such a matter. They relied also on what they maintained was the true masonic tradition and they were right. In 1876 this party was strong enough to introduce its atheistic resolutions in the very convent of the Grand Orient in Paris. B. Mace, the orator of Masonic opportunism, tried to moderate the tide by warning the brothers that a great perturbation in the lodges would be the result; according to Le Français (30 Mars, 1878) B. Mace said: "Nothing excites the minds of men as those 'sterile' discussions which succeed each other for the last two thousand years 'without any result.' * * * * * You might let me do the work and wait 'for the pot far off day when Freemasonry will be in a position, without 'fear of being disorganized, to suppress 'the dogmatic declaration of God and 'the immortality of the soul' contrary to 'the logical minds of the friends of freedom of conscience.'"

The atheistic resolution was carried in spite of the opposition of the Masonic-opportunists who found themselves in the minority, the Juria Francese, the logic and the true tradition won the day, the year after. In the convent held in Paris in 1877, by a large majority of votes; the words: "God, Immortality of the soul;" were obliterated out from the temples, lodges and convents of the Grand Orient. Many French Masons who still believe in the existence of the personal God of the Catholics or of the Protestants, of the Jews, even of the Rationalists and Deists, felt a sincere regret and experienced a kind of horror at the logical consequences of principles—the import of which they never suspected before. Let us remark here that Catholic Freemasons, being excommunicated from their church, give up, at least exteriorly, the christianity in which they were reared, while Protestants, whether laymen, ministers or even Anglican High Church Bishops, can join Freemasonry and remain in good standing in their respective churches. This is the reason why you

find in the English masonry many practical religious Protestants, and in the French no practical religious Catholics; why also the religious Masons are comparatively speaking, much more numerous than the godless and atheistic, amongst the English, whilst the reverse is the rule amongst the French, who as soon they enter the Masonic order must leave their church and the practices of the religion instilled into them in their youth, especially by their mothers. Hence in English countries it is more difficult to atheists or godless Masons to have a majority than amongst the French: indeed the proportion of Englishmen who are Freemasons is much larger than of Frenchmen; but very large in the proportion of practical religious Protestants who are under the influence of Masonry, while the proportion of Catholics is very small, almost nil. No wonder it is expected that eventually the Masonic order will absorb the Protestant sects, but not the Catholic church. Moreover Protestantism is an amalgamation of all the most opposite christian sects, born from private judgment working on revelation, just in the same style as English Masonry is an amalgamation of all the christian sects especially the Protestant, and this, with a good addition of all the Jews, Mahomedans, Deists, Rationalists, Pantheists, etc., and even respectable pagans and fetichers with their religious tenets, dogmas, beliefs and unbeliefs. No respectable individual, (respectable according to English style) who can pay the Masonic fees, is excluded from its lodges, temples or convents. It has always been and still is a puzzle to your correspondent to explain how those Anglicans, especially of the High Church, who would not join the dissenters in their religious christian worship, can consistently enter the Masonic temple with all kinds of dissenting christians, dissenting anti-christians, dissenting infidels, Jews, Mahomedans, pagans and fetichers, and join them in the Masonic worship. Those reverend gentlemen use in one temple the rites, ceremonies, symbols, rituals of the Anglican Church, as by law established, with the baptismal font, and sometimes the chalice, the confessional, the tabernacle, the episcopal crozier and miter; the same reverend gentlemen in another temple will use without scruples the triangle, the towel and other paraphernalia of the Masonic worship and what is more serious, they will use zealously the ritual, and perform piously and devoutly the ceremonies of Masonry. Now either all this has a religious meaning or it has not? If there is no Masonic religion can they tell what is the meaning of having a ritual and rites which necessarily suppose some kind of a religion. If all this has no more to do with religion than any other society for the promotion of fine arts or any other purely secular pursuit and interest, why condemn more severely the French Grand Orient than any other purely secular society for placing "God and the immortality of the soul" in its constitution in 1854 and effecting the same in 1877?

How many English secular societies are there which have not God and the immortality of the soul in their constitution? The solemn protest of the English Freemasonry against the atheistic or godless French Grand Orient goes to show that Masonry has more to do with religion, God and the immortality of the soul than the reverend gentleman are aware of; as it could be proved by the very ritual, the oath, the symbols and the ceremonies of Masonic order, etc. "The Latonia" (revue maconique) T. II. p. 134, struck a true note when it wrote: "In a religious point of view, Protestantism is only half of Freemasonry. It considers the essence of religion as a divine revelation, and permits reason only the vain work of giving a form to an object which is not of its dominion; on the contrary in Masonry reason has not only to supply the form but also the substance of religion. Hence forward Protestantism must either go back to Catholicism, or stop half way, or keep progressing until it reaches the Masonic religion. Indeed reason cannot but for a time be satisfied with the right of giving a reasonable form to what is intended to be above human intelligence. But soon reason comes to a distinct knowledge of itself, and sees clearly the impossibility of the alliance (of half revelation and half reason). These considerations explain the events actually taking place in Protestantism. The mystical and allegorical history of Christianity, the mystico ideal interpretation of the Christian dogmas, the supreme endeavors lately made to maintain this kind of Christianity in the Protestant church have completely expelled all revelation from the domain of reason. By these negotiations undertaken for obtaining peace reason has convinced itself of its triumph; it has stated the radical antipathy between its doctrine and the teachings of the Protestant church; or that there is no medium between unbelief and belief, between Catholic or atheist."

In the Memphis lodge, of London, England, B. Golpin said, pertinently: "When Masonry grants admittance into its temples to a Jew, to a Mahomedan, to a Catholic, to a Protestant it is on condition that he will eventually become a new man, abjure his past errors, free himself of the superstitions and prejudices which cradled his youth, otherwise what business has he to join our Masonic meetings?" I would ask the same question with a special interest, from the Anglican bishops and clergymen who have joined Freemasonry. I suppose they fancy they will control such a powerful body, the secrets of which they know only very partially; they are the last to whom the anti-Christian members of the brotherhood would trust their designs and secrets. The way these good natured, reverend gentlemen control their convocations and congregations would make anybody fear they are rather controlled than controlling

amongst the worshipful masters, and are rather worshipping than worshipful. It is a wonder, Mr. Editor, that you only noticed it so lately; your correspondent has noticed it long ago. For instance, in Kamloops, B. C., where the late Anglican Bishop of New Westminster (God have mercy on his soul) had a Mason of some degree, with a Jewish name, blessing (heaven forgive me) I ought rather to have said cursing, the foundation stone of the Anglican church in Kamloops!

As must be well known that after the Convent of Paris, in 1877, had obliterated the words, "God, immortality of the soul," the English Freemasonry obliterated the name of the French Grand Orient; but no doubt English Masons still acknowledge individual French brothers with the grip, the triangle and towel, unless the French were altogether excommunicated from universal Freemasonry, an excommunication unheard of. Practical common sense would not allow English gentlemen to refuse to the French brothers a grip they extend to brother Bad-lints and Fetichers. It was enough to refuse to B. Golpin and his associates the success granted to B. Mace and his party by the French. We fancy English respectability is satisfied with having the word God still written on its frontispiece, and blame the French Orient for effacing it. This English Puritanism was intended only for the uninitiated. The French logic and honor being somewhat vexed at the English Puritanical condemnation, ask what do the English mean by the word God? Some mean the God of the Protestants, true or one in person, incarnate or not incarnate, etc. Some mean the God of the Jews, of the Mahomedans; some the God of the Rationalists, who never made any revelation, save by the voice of conscience; some the God of the Deists, who does not trouble himself about the doings of men; some the God of the Pantheists, who is everything, even dust and smoke; some the God of the Spiritualists, who is any kind of spirit; some the God of Materialists, who is no spirit at all; besides all these, and many other gods, the worshippers of the sun, of the fire and of all kind of fetichers, whether African, Asiatic or Australian—all the worshippers of any kind of god, even of a Luciferian god, are all admitted in the English brotherhood, with all their gods; provided they be to the eyes of the English Freemasons respectable men, and provided if Pagans they be princes, or clergymen, richmen, or learned men, or influential men. The English Freemasonry proclaimed solemnly its disapproval of the French Grand Orient's action when it struck out from its constitution the word God, but by keeping the name of God on the frontispiece of its temple, it admitted the hundreds of gods worshipped in the British empire, and ever out of it. The only God it cannot include is the God worshipped by us Catholics; no true Catholic can be a Freemason. Catholicism and Freemasonry cannot go together to the Masonic temple. This is a consolation for a true Catholic, when he hears the blasphemy of a French Mason saying it is better to have no god on the Masonic frontispiece than to have a pandemonium of gods, as the English Masons admit, by having the word God on the ensigns of their convents, temples or lodges, while inside they have the essence of all we have. Everything is of the same nature and with the same ultimate results. The differences are only accidental, circumstantial, local, as it has always been the case in Freemasonry for centuries before and after 1877. The variety of rituals, the variety of oaths, the variety of rites and ceremonies, the variety of symbols is no greater nor more essential, nor more important after 1877 than before that time; indeed the convents of the French Grand Orient in 1877 only obliterated what the convent of 1854 had written for the first time. There is no essential difference between the English and French Masonry after 1877, as there was none before 1854. No doubt Masonry is a progressive order—in England, in France and everywhere. It progresses on the same principles, by the same causes, towards the same end. The progress may be quicker or slower, and shaded more or less, according to the circumstances of place, nationality, time, revolution, etc., but the root, the trunk and fruits are one and the same in England as in France; the difference between the two is more in the appearance than in the reality.

We hear just now the rumor of an entente cordiale between England, Russia and France; could not the English branch of the family avail itself of the occasion to make amende honorable to the French branch? They would have only to assure the French confederates, contrary to the advice of the Review, that the dear old family name of Freemasons will not be changed, so long as the Masonic blood and life run in the French and English veins. Is it not well known that blood is thicker than water? Even than Anglican, Presbyterian, Wesleyan and all other Protestant water? The Catholics alone, resting on St. Peter's Rock, claim to have a blood of their own, and to form a family of their own. Their Holy Father Leo the XIII stands like a giant in the Vatican, near St. Peter's, the greatest of all temples on earth; while in the Borghese Palace stands like a pigmy, the Circumcised! Grand Patriarch of the "Triangles!" Instead of changing the English family name, to change their family name, can you not, Mr. Editor, press the entente cordiale? Surely the French will be polite enough to say nothing about the word God preserved on the English frontispiece! They know it means nothing but what suits an initiated in the true symbolism. They will even overlook the extraordinary sprinkling with Bible extracts in the Masonic Eog-