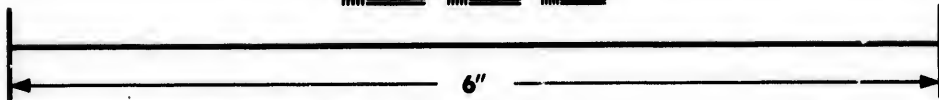
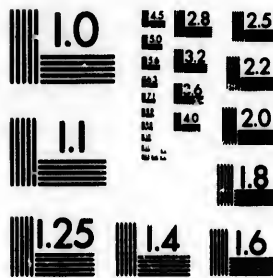


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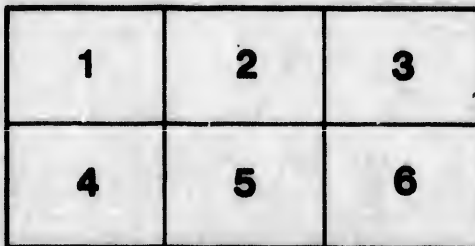
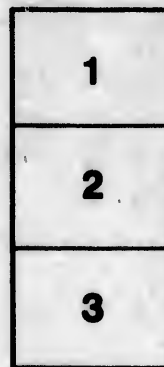
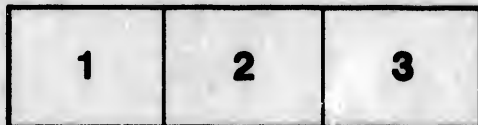
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ON THE

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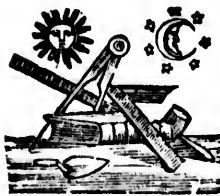
December 27, 1847,

BY

THE REVD. W. M. HERCHMER, M. A.,

QUEEN'S COLLEGE, OXFORD,

Chaplain to St. John's Lodge.



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To exhibit the connexion of Masonry with the religion of Jesus Christ; to remove the prejudices of the uninitiated; to remind the Brethren of their duties, and to promote universal Charity: these are the objects sought after in the publication of this Address, which, if it cannot claim originality, bears testimony to the spirit which animates the Author.

John Creighton, Printer.

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ADDRESS.

“AND THIS COMMANDMENT HAVE WE FROM HIM, THAT HE, WHO LOVETH GOD, LOVE HIS BROTHER ALSO.” (1st JOHN, IV. CAP., 21st VERSE.)

If we would discover the principle, which ruled the heart of Saint John the Evangelist, or ascertain the character which distinguished him, it will not be necessary to call him back to life, and witness with our own eyes his daily conversation and practice.

In his writings, which a merciful Providence has preserved to our time, we can trace the lineaments of his soul as clearly as in a living man we can distinguish the features which mark his countenance. As in a glass face answereth to face, so in the Gospel and Epistles of Saint John are reflected the graces which adorned his life, and the motives which animated his breast. So prominently do they set forth his amiability, gentleness, benevolence and love, that if they were to fall into the hands of one who had not so much as heard of the Evangelist, or of the character which he sustained, he could not but at once exclaim, Truly this must have been a man most engaging and affectionate; one who never harboured an injurious feeling, nor indulged an unkind thought, nor uttered a bitter word!

Among the many other reasons, that might be alleged, why our ancient Order has selected the Evangelist Saint John as one of her Patron Saints, it may with safety be said, that *his character* was an important one; inasmuch as Charity is the chief moving power of Masons.

There is a remarkable tradition concerning the Apostle, which, as it refers to the subject of our address, cannot but be interesting. It is said, that when unable any longer to minister to his Congregation through the infirmities of age, he still persisted in his attendance upon the meetings of his Brethren, though obliged to be carried there; and always proposed the question, "Do you really love one another?" for the purpose of ever reviving it in their memories, and enforcing its practice; and that being asked, why he so constantly repeated the question, he replied: that "the exercise of brotherly love was the only test of love to God." And, methinks, if we had nothing else of his instruction left, but the admonition of my text, the memory of that disciple, whom Jesus loved, ought to be as dear to us as that of a Brother; because it is to our Order the corner stone on which the whole superstructure rests. Hence, my Brethren, I know of no salutation more proper, or more dignified, with which honest and devoted Masons should greet one another on this their universal Festal day, than, Do you really love one another?

Such is the subject of my address to you; bear with me then, while I seek to unfold its nature, and the duties which it imposes on us, not only in regard to ourselves, but to those also, who, though not initiated into the sacred mysteries of our Craft, are still our Brethren. And what more fitting opportunity could I desire than the present? What better or more profitable theme could I select than Brotherly Love? It might by some be thought more conducive to the spread of our Order, that I should unfold the history of the Institution, and travel back through the long vista of ages, which have passed away since Masonry existed, and thus make it honourable by, and respected for, its antiquity; that I should rehearse the names and acts of the great, the wealthy and the wise, who have adorned its profession, and boldly resisted the attempts that have been made to destroy the noble Temple in which we worship,

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and to carry off the Ark of the Covenant that we revere. But while I venerate their names, glory in their principles, adore their constancy and hold up their virtues for our imitation, still I conceive that I have a greater and nobler duty to perform.

As the home of Masonry is every where : on the barren sands of Arabia, under the burning sun of Africa, and amid the frozen regions of Siberia ; as the Temple in which she worships has not been raised, with its present beautiful proportions, by the individual exertions of any one country ; as its foundations are not laid in any prescribed religious Creed, nor in any set form of political opinions ; so are we instructed that our Charity should know no bounds, save that of Prudence ; and in order to exercise this virtue, both in the character of Masons and in common life, with propriety, and in accordance with good principles, we must forget every obligation but that of affection ; otherwise it were to confound Charity with duty.

The nature of that Charity, which is the chief characteristic of Masonry, is misconceived by those, who, from ignorance and prejudice, speak disparagingly of our Craft ; they entertain the opinion, that we look upon Charity to signify nothing more than giving of alms, and relieving the temporal necessities of the distressed Brethren. We are belied. Our Charity has a power to improve the morals, as well as to support the animal nature. Our Charity lays upon us the obligation of doing all we can for our fellow-creatures, " to love as Brethren, to be pitiful and courteous," not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing, but contrariwise blessing. Our Charity teaches us to protect the good name of our fellow, to bear with his failings, to throw a cloak over his faults, rather than blazen them abroad to a censorious world ; to persuade him to turn from the error of his ways ; to rejoice at the repentance of the wanderer, to kill the fatted calf, to bring forth the best robe,

to make merry and be glad. Our Charity proceeds from love to the great Architect of the Universe, to the fountain of all blessing, who maketh His "sun to rise upon the evil and the good, and sendeth His rain upon the just and the unjust." And wherein does this differ from pure christian Charity? We are enjoined to perform the important duties we owe to God, our neighbor, and ourselves. "To God, by never mentioning his name but with that awe and reverence which are due from the Creature to the Creator; by imploring His aid on all lawful undertakings, and by looking up to Him, for comfort and support, under all trials and troubles. To our neighbour, by acting with him on the square, by rendering him every kind office which justice or mercy may require, by relieving his distresses, soothing his afflictions, and by doing to him as we would be done by; and to ourselves, by such a prudent and well regulated course of discipline, as may best conduce to the preservation of our corporeal and mental qualities, in their fullest energy; thereby enabling us to exert the talents, wherewith God has blessed us, as well to his glory, as to the welfare of our fellows." Such are the injunctions laid on all Masons. Happier far should we be, and more useful in our generation, if we acted up to them.

I know of no portion of the Holy Scriptures which so beautifully and pathetically expresses the principles by which Masons should be guided, as the five first verses of the 15th Psalm. "Lord, who shall dwell in thy Tabernacle, or who shall rest upon thy holy hill? Even he, that leadeth an uncorrupt life, and doeth the thing which is right, and speaketh the truth from his heart. He that used no deceit in his tongue, nor done evil to his neighbour, and hath not slandered his neighbour. He that setteth not by himself, but is lowly in his own eyes; and maketh much of them that fear the Lord. He that sweareth unto his neighbour and disappointeth him not, though it were to his own hindrance." With heartfelt regret we are con-

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strained to acknowledge, that there is too much recklessness in many of the Votaries of our Craft. But this is no more a valid objection against Masonry, than the immorality of Christians would be against Christianity.

Masonry is defined to be "a beautiful system of morality, veiled in allegory, and illustrated by symbols."

Because it is a system, which is the guardian of every virtue, and is calculated to enlarge the mind and improve the heart; because its precepts, if rightly observed, prepare us to live well, and teach us how to die; I yield my feeble efforts to extend its light: because all its leading doctrines are drawn from the Bible, which is acknowledged to contain all things necessary to salvation, because, by her emblems, Masonry seeks to illustrate and enforce its cheering truths; tells man of his exalted origin, his present degraded and helpless condition, his ignorance, blindness and bondage; because she bids him look up to heaven, whence cometh aid, I give her my countenance and support. How the charge, brought against our Order, of being the encourager of Infidelity, can be sustained, is to me inexplicable; or how any of the initiated can hold views subversive of revelation, or practice vices destructive of peace and happiness, both social and civil, is beyond my comprehension. For at every step we take we are reminded of our duty to God, and of the efficacious intercession of our adorable Redeemer; we are taught the necessity of a pure heart, as the work of the renewing spirit, and as the condition upon which alone eternal life can be secured: wherever we turn our eyes we behold the fundamental truths of the Gospel strikingly represented by various significant emblems: we are directed to the Star which led the wise men to Bethlehem, proclaiming to mankind the nativity of the Son of God, and here conducting our spiritual progress to the author of Redemption. The uncertainty of life, with its chequered scenes, is ever before us—

we are reminded that there is no escape from the piercing arrows of death ; that *to-day* the sun of prosperity and joy may shine upon our persons and families, health and strength may invigorate our frame, and we only feel the sorrow of another's woe ; but *to-morrow*, nay, perhaps, before this day closes its light, some friendly heart may sigh over our breathless corpse, Alas ! my Brother. The coffin lies before us, the skull and bones are presented to our view, and though the solemn thought of death without revelation, is dark and gloomy, yet the Christian is suddenly revived by the evergreen and ever-living sprig of faith, in the merits of the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, which strengthens him with confidence to look forward to a blessed immortality. The precepts of industry and fidelity to God and man, the virtues of *Fortitude, Temperance, Justice* and *Prudence*, are constantly inculcated. Now what is there in all this, calculated in the remotest degree, to encourage infidel opinions, or profligate immorality ; rather is there not in it every thing to recommend it to a Christian's notice ? Masonry has been well described as the Handmaid of the Gospel ; in espousing it there is of necessity no compromise of principle, no temptation to neglect Christian duty.

The ends designed by Human Society are the glory of God, and the well-being of man ; as Unity is designed to promote these objects it must be good ; and whatever tends to bring about that blessing surely ought to be supported, not reprobated. Now Masonry, in order that her Sons may be stimulated to a life of virtuous purity, teaches them to love as brethren, to dwell together in Unity. This is an Eternal rule of right, an express requirement of the Divine Law ; it is an injunction founded on the fitness of things, and is such as every one would desire others to observe in relation to himself. It inculcates agreement, good order, friendship and happiness. It forbids scandal, backbiting and evil speaking ; all jealousies in families, division and

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wrath among men. It teaches man to be content with the lot assigned him by Providence, to give every man his due, tribute to whom tribute, custom to whom custom. The poor, by the observance of this Law, envy not the rich ; and the rich neither scorn nor oppress the poor. Oh ! how many of the troubles and vexations of life would be unknown, if this precept were only obeyed !

To bring about such an observance is one, among the many important objects, which our Order has in view. In this respect it is a handmaid to Christianity. Within the Lodge is assembled a family animated by one desire, and influenced by one motive, *Brotherly Love* : no angry passions are allowed to rise ; no violent discussions to provoke dissension ; no political sentiments to disturb unanimity. What Christianity is designed to effect universally, Masonry, which has caught its spirit, effects partially ; for her Motto too is, "Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good will towards men."

Is it asked, what good has Masonry done ? If we answered that it has promoted pure friendship, encouraged the virtues which adorn life, and disarmed prejudice of its poison, this would be saying much ; but we shall answer the question with greater satisfaction by asking another ; What evil can grow out of a Society, whose avowed object and aim is the amelioration of human misery and wretchedness ; whose distinguishing doctrines are *Faith in God*, *Hope in immortality*, and *Charity to all mankind* ? We have no right to expect, my Brethren, that our ancient Order will escape the reproaches and evil insinuations of those, who understand neither the principle on which it is based, nor the end it seeks to attain. Even the benign Gospel of Jesus Christ, which offers to man such peace as passes his understanding, has been maligned with bitterness, and persecuted with rage. But notwithstanding every combination against it, it stands firm as a rock of

adamant ; yes, the vengeance denounced against it, the violence that has descended upon it, has left just as great an impression as the sea on an iron-bound coast, lashed into fury by the tempest, but retiring unrevenged. When we shall have passed off this busy scene, it will be handed down to the generations that succeed us, pure and unchanged, amid the revolutions of time ; Empires have been dissolved, Kingdoms have been annihilated, Monarchs dethroned, while Masonry stands erect and uninjured ; notwithstanding the desolations which have brought sorrow and decay on the earth. Babylon, the mighty city, has fallen, Imperial Rome has been shorn of her glory, Carthage has sunk into oblivion ; while, go where you please, visit every tribe, of every hue, of every tongue, you will find the Brother, whose foot will be swift to your relief, whose ear will be opened to your cry, whose hands will be uplifted to protect you. And why is this ? Because Masonry speaks the language of kindness to all the initiated, regarding all as mutually engaged in promoting each other's welfare ; yes, the secret of her permanency is this : while other institutions have depended upon their own supposed excellence, she has based her system on God's unchanging Word. And considering the universality of her language, the ready access she has to every nation on earth, the reception she meets with in the bosom of all grades of Society, methinks our Order might be made a most effective instrument in the hands of Christian men for the evangelizing of the world. The Prince on his throne, the peasant in his cottage, could be approached with confidence ; and a listening ear to the invitations of the Gospel, be gained by those who seek to spread the glad tidings of Salvation. Thus Masonry is a passport to every land, an introduction to every Society. The Traveller finds a home in every clime. The Soldier goes forth to battle, and whilst the sword is uplifted to strike the fatal blow, a recognizance is made, and life is spared. The Sailor cast upon the strand needs but make the sign, and

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comfort and safety are his ; and the Missionary laboring in foreign lands, thwarted, opposed and rejected, may, on joining our holy brotherhood, find a hearing.

But love as Brethren. Although the admonition of the Evangelist embraces all mankind, being the children of one Father, our Father in heaven ; still it is my duty to remind you that this chain ought to surround and unite, more perfectly and indissolubly, the inner circle formed by the Masonic Order. Permit me then to point out the way by which the tie that binds us in friendship may become more lasting, and by which the fruits of our love may be more bountiful and blessed.

It is in vain for us to talk of Love to our Brethren, unless we can prove that we are at peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ ; unless we love God, the author and giver of all good things. We may give our goods to feed the poor, we may even make great sacrifices to supply their need ; we may give our bodies to be burned ; and yet after all lack Charity, the very bond of peace and all virtues. Love to God is the test of love to man. Our benevolence may command attention and call forth the admiration of our fellows, but in the sight of God it will be denounced as hypocritical and worthless, unless it proceed from a principle of obedience to His commandments. Christian Love, which is alone acceptable, is proved solely by the fruits of righteousness. Let me beseech you then, rest not satisfied with the ceremonies of your Order, nor yet with the speculations of Philosophy ; but, with care and diligence, cultivate those graces and virtues so beautifully typified by our significant emblems. The Bible, that never is closed in the Lodge, proclaims the glorious truths that are worthy our belief and practice, points out the way to eternal life, and fits us for the glorious inheritance of the Saints in life. Let us search those Scriptures.

The Motto, that we should wear, not only on our foreheads, but on the side posts and lintels of our doors, should ever be "Holiness to the Lord ;" then should our enemies

be put to silence, and the object of our Order be fully answered. We should love God, and by consequence love our Brethren.

What God joins together, man wishes to sever ; he is ready to pour balm into the afflicted breast, to relieve the destitute, to supply the cruse of oil, and the barrel with meal ; and is apt to build upon these Charities as furnishing a foundation strong enough to resist the rising billows. But such a foundation is built on sand—it is delusive and soul destroying—as frail a support as the staff of Egypt to the Israelites ; if we, Brethren, are desirous of passing through the valley of the shadow of death without fear, our Corner Stone must rest on a firmer basis ; and other foundation can no man lay than is laid, Christ Jesus : “ in Him as lively stones we are built up a spiritual house an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God.”

True Love is inseparable from Godliness. If we then would advance the interests of our Order, accomplish the object it is designed to promote, we shall strive to adorn the doctrine of God in all things ; and with hearts filled with love to the supreme Architect of the Universe, our stream of Charity to our fellow-creatures will flow with so strong a current, that others seeing our consistency will be led to enrol their names in the Masonic Registry.

Let us walk worthy of our high calling, be diligent in our good cause, never relax our efforts until all within the circle of our influence shall have felt the benefit of our labour ; until the needy shall have been relieved, the unhappy comforted, the vicious reclaimed, and the ignorant informed.

And may the blessing of the God of Love rest on you during your pilgrimage, and after your sojourn here is ended, may you be admitted into that heavenly Temple above, where Faith is swallowed up of sight, *hope* ends in fruition, and Charity blossoms for evermore !

