

# THE MASONIC EXAMINER:

A Monthly Medium of Information and Communication for

BRETHREN OF EVERY RITE AND DEGREE, RECOGNISED AND UN-RECOGNISED.

EDITED BY BRO. MATTHEW COOKE, P.M., P.Z., K.M., K.T., XXX<sup>3</sup>, &c.

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No. 5., VOL. I.]

NOVEMBER 1, 1871.

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## HINTS ON MASONIC REFORMS.—No. I.

It may be safely taken for granted that all mere human institutions, however pure and excellent their original principles, are subject, in the course of time, to a gradual incorporation of misconception, a constant accumulation of error, and frequent innovations, all of which tend to obscure, if they do not in the majority of cases actually defeat, the plans and intentions of their founders.

Free-Masonry, notwithstanding all that has been said of it by transcendental writers, cannot lay claim to a Divine origin and, therefore, must share, in common with every other institution, established by finite creatures like ourselves, many grave errors and serious defects which, in some instances, have come to be regarded as part of the original system, although in fact they are but innovations, or omissions, of modern date. To mitigate similar evils in kingdoms, states, and societies, wise monarchs and rulers have recourse to occasional Reforms of a conservative character which, whilst eliminating the most obvious deformities and abuses, yet preserve, intact, the original features of the communities under their rule, thereby shaping their course to the requirements of the age and yet retaining—free from spasmodic change—the bequests handed down to them from the practical wisdom of their ancestors. Where such judicious revisions have been systematically neglected history tells the tale, and records how easily good measures might have been adopted, in early stages of discontent, but have been, over and over again, ignored until, at last, when the power to enforce their reception has vanished, they have been surrendered with large changes and additions, such as were neither demanded nor required; and when this has been done it has always been too late. Unless something similar is in store for Free-Masonry, under the Grand Lodge and Supreme Grand Chapter of England, the signs of the times tell us that a speedy Masonic Reform is imperative in order to discard some of the anomalies and absurdities, now becoming encrusted in our system, or they will eventually be so burthensome and intolerable that Reform will, at length, become an impossibility—change will step in and, with ruthless violence, uproot the whole, making a clean sweep of good and bad together—and the superstructure our forefathers raised will come tumbling about our ears.

“When desperate ills demand a speedy cure,  
Distrust is cowardice, and prudence folly.”

The nineteenth century is growing old—it has more than completed half its allotted span—yet What has Free-Masonry, as practised under the Grand Lodge and Grand Chapter of England, accomplished for itself, or for the benefit of mankind at large, during this eventful period? We are now in the year of grace

1871, more than half-a-century distant from that lodge of reconciliation, in 1813, which so wantonly reversed and destroyed the fundamental principles of the Order: discarded much that was pure and essential; totally ignored the Christian belief—the faith of the country—and substituted for it, and the more ancient usages of Free-Masonry, a mass of objectionable puerility. As a recognised society, known by the name we bear, we have attained more than the patriarchal age of one hundred and fifty years—a century and a half of public existence—and the question must often recur to every thoughtful and earnest brother—In this period of time what progress has Free-Masonry made?

Since the year 1717, it would require a library in itself to chronicle the discoveries and inventions of the profane, in every branch of human thought and science, both for the use and luxury as well as the profit and pleasure of mankind; but in the production of such benefits, derived from the hidden mysteries of nature and science, art or utility, the Free-Mason, as a benefactor to mankind, has little or no inheritance. Instead of being foremost in such inquiries, and leading the master minds of each generation, following in the wake of our glorious brethren of the pre-Reformation era; instead of diffusing the light of knowledge and cultivating the achievements of science—succouring the weak, sympathising with and encouraging the patriotic, and acquiring and dispensing wisdom as it advanced in years—all that Free-Masonry, under the Grand Lodge of England, can boast—in the place of owning it to her shame—is a patched and disastrous Constitution, rendering the position of the lodges, and brethren, holding under it, one of complete isolation.

Step by step—carefully taken as if there was a subtle purpose concealed in every move—since 1813, the rulers of the craft have deliberately cut off the English brethren from the aspirations and sympathies of the cosmopolitan order; and thus the Grand Lodge of England, professing the widest toleration, has at length become the most intolerant and sectarian of any Grand Lodge in the universe, and, in consequence, now stands alone, undignified, derided, and ridiculed; by the kindreds, peoples, and nations, where Free-Masonry obtains, and who, in the early days of the eighteenth century, turned their eyes to our Grand Lodge as the source and fountain from which all masonic light emanated.

On the continents of Europe, Asia, and America, Free-Masonry is identified with the spirit of the age; human progress is its goal. True to the traditions of the craft in the middle ages, when Free-Masonry was a term unknown, though its rites were practised by thousands of the brightest and best in every land, the Grand Lodges of the world (always excepting the Grand Lodge of England and some few obscure German lodges) recognise their mission. Conservative in their tendencies, they yet keep pace with the age in which we live; and, discarding all pretence to physical, yet propagate, by moral force, a spirit tending to emulate their brethren of old—thousands upon thousands of whom proved their devotion to the order by dying martyrs in its cause—and serving to re-kindle amongst the fraternity a reverence and love for the Christian faith, devotion to their country's cause, and that cosmopolitanism of principle which the Grand Lodge of England, ever since the accession of the

Duke of Sussex to the present hour, has so steadily sought to crush and render nugatory.

In England too, at last, the dry bones of Free-Masonry are shaking together with no uncertain sound. In the metropolis and the provinces there are many utterances, if not loud yet deep, against the present state of things. Masonic discontent is wide and it is no uncommon occurrence to hear strong denunciations of current abuses, especially those connected with a clerk in our employment.

Bro. Dr. A. G. Mackey, in his book on *Masonic Jurisprudence*, sets out by stating that—

“ Sir William Blackstone commences his *Commentaries* on the ‘Laws of England with the succinct definition that ‘law, in its most general and comprehensive sense, signifies a rule of action, whether animate or inanimate, rational or irrational.’ It is in this sense that we speak of the laws of a country as being those rules, whether derived from positive enactment of the legislative authority, or from long established custom, by which the conduct of its citizens is regulated.

“ So too, societies, which are but empires, kingdoms, or republics, in miniature, are also controlled by rules of action which are, to their respective members, as perfect laws as the Statutes of the Realm. Hence Free-Masonry, as the most ancient and universal of all societies, is governed by its laws or rules of action, which either spring out of its organisation, and are based upon its established customs and usages, or are derived from the enactments of its superintending tribunals.”

Accepting the above definition in its widest and best sense, it ought not to be forgotten that there used to be a very common saying, respecting the majority of the clauses of Acts of Parliament, to the effect, that they were frequently so loosely framed that a coach and four might be driven through them without running the risk of coming into collision with their provisions. This, of course, was in the old days of the road; now, however, we travel by steam, and if the original description held good in some cases it may as safely be asserted now, that the most extensive railway train ever set in motion could travel, with a greater share of impunity, through the majority of the written, and customary, laws of Free-Masonry.

At certain stated periods within the lodge, brethren are called upon to assent, and submit, to a number of abstract propositions having the properties of laws, although there are no penalties attached to their infraction, and these admissions may be made either with a full reliance on their being what they are usually termed, or in a non-natural sense.

It ought to be a source of no small gratification to every ardent Free-Mason to believe that there are enrolled in the order thousands of good men and true, who strictly obey the moral law, and are a credit and honour to the craft. But it is no less a fact, to be deplored, that there are quite as many, if not more—some of them holding stations and honourable dignities in the craft—whose moral code appears to be framed so as, specially, to exclude reverence, chastity, and sobriety. However painful such an admission is, yet it is an incontrovertible fact, widely known and, with questionable taste, made a joke by their companions. Favour alone, not worth or real merit, has been the instrument by which their elevation has been gained; and because they are punctual in the discharge of their lodge dues—not a very great example of moral virtue—and always appear as subscribers to everything, in which their charity finds a record in print, they are emphatically pronounced good Masons. No warning, no reproof, is ever administered to them, but they sit in judgment and mete out punishment to small offenders. Notwithstanding the notoriety of such cases, men are required to assert and swallow the good man and true, as well as the strict morality, theories, both of which are bywords and delusions.

“ It is only in the company of the good that the real enjoyment is to be found; any other society is hollow and heartless. You may be excited by the play of wit, by the collision of ambitious spirits, and by the brilliant exhibition of self-confident power;

“ but the satisfaction ends with the scene. Far unlike this is the quiet confiding intercourse of sincere minds and friendly hearts, knowing, loving, and esteeming, each other.”

“ Men are machines, with all their boasted freedom,  
Their movements turn upon some favourite passion;  
Let art but find the latent foible out,  
We touch the spring, and wind them at our pleasure.”

## REVIEW.

*Mackey's National Freemason*. No. 1. October, 1871. McGill and Witherow, publishers, Washington, United States.

THE name and fame of Brother Mackey is, most deservedly, held in high estimation by brothers and fellows, wherever “dispersed over the face of earth and water,” and the number before us is calculated to popularise Dr. Mackey's name and add materially to his fame.

The new-comer is presented to us in the shape of “A Monthly Magazine, devoted to the Science, Philosophy, History, Symbolism, and Jurisprudence of Masonry; Edited by Albert G. Mackey, M.D.,” and no masonic student can fail to welcome it, in the old craft expressive style, Brother Mackey's *National Freemason*, “we greet you well.”

That our readers may gather somewhat of the intentions of Bro. Mackey in this publication we quote from his Salutory Address:—“We cannot refrain from expressing the gratification we experience at the prospect of a renewal of literary intercourse with our brethren,—an intercourse which, in by-gone years, was so pleasant to ourselves, and, we would fain hope, not wholly uninteresting to our readers.” This truth is evident; for every Masonic student will be pleased to welcome Bro. Mackey again in a field where his former efforts were so productive of sound, wholesome, and scholarly inquiry.

Bro. Mackey hopes “If the work is well conducted, and gives the satisfaction which every honest editor strives to bestow, his readers will be apt to exclaim, in the language of the old masonic formula, on the issue of every number, ‘Happy to meet, sorry to part, and happy to meet again’”; a wish we reciprocate with the utmost warmth to Bro. Mackey's *National Freemason*.

Bro. Mackey irresistibly combats the fears of some old fogies who dread the light of the printing press on Masonic affairs. He shows how untenable their position is, but recognises the desirability of “Abstaining, with due caution, from any unnecessary reference to that which it is forbidden to communicate, leaving the ritual and the aphoreta or esoteric doctrines under the veil which the obligations of Masonry have thrown around them.”

He concludes in the following playful manner:—“The Editor, —not now making his ‘first appearance on the boards,’ but rather, like an old actor, who has long since lost his ‘stage fright,’—comes before the public with but little timidity, but rather with the confidence that he is among old friends, who will give him in this undertaking, as they have done in the long past of his Masonic life, their unalterable kindness and continued good will.” To all of which we, of the MASONIC EXAMINER, sitting in the pit, respond with hearty clapping of hands and stentorian shouts of Bravo!

Bro. Mackey's prologue ended, the curtain is raised, and the *dramatis personæ* appear, in the following articles. “Parliamentary Law, as Applied to the Government of Masonic Bodies,” by the Editor. “The Stonemasons of the Middle Ages, the Precursors of the Freemasons,” by the Editor. “Templarism: Its Duty and its Sphere,” by Bro. Albert Pike. “Henry Cornelius Agrippa,” by the Editor. “Proselytism in Masonry,” by the Editor. “Is Ignorance a Crime in Masonry?” by Dr. J. E. Mason. “Baculus: The Staff of the Grand Master of the Templars,” by the Editor. “The Mason's Holy House,” by Bro. Albert Pike. “Old Records of Freemasonry,” by the Editor. “The Royal Arch Banners,” by the Editor. “The

“Strangest Adventure.” “A Recovered Manuscript.” “The Editor’s Easy Chair.” “Book Notices,” and “Tidings from the Craft.”

Without pledging ourselves to a coincidence of opinion in all these articles,—indeed it is but fair to add that from some of the views promulgated we differ *in toto*,—yet no one can take up this number of *Mackey’s National Freemason* without benefit to himself and fully admitting that the articles it contains are written by scholars and gentlemen. But if we, as Englishmen, institute a comparison between the nameless sheet issued here and the publication under notice, it makes one blush to think that whilst American Brethren can write sense, in gentlemanly and scholarly diction, we are treated to the impertinences of an interested clerk, an ex-militiaman, impostors, charlatans, and ignoramuses, whose sole attempt tends to drag a noble science—far above their comprehension—down to the lowest depths of imbecility and ignorance.

Anxiously awaiting the arrival of number two we cordially tender our best thanks to the editor of *Mackey’s National Freemason* and wish him all the prosperity he can, himself, desire for this, his most recent character on that stage where he won golden opinions of old and to which he has returned to achieve new fame.

### CORRESPONDENCE.

—:O:—

*The Editor does not hold himself responsible for the facts, or opinions, expressed by any correspondent. He reserves to himself the right of deciding when any subject shall be discontinued, and of rejecting such matter as he deems unsuitable to THE MASONIC EXAMINER. Every communication must be accompanied by the full names, masonic rank, and address of the writer, not necessarily for publication, unless desired, but as a guarantee of good faith. These particulars will always be treated as a confidential trust. close typed.]*

#### ANCIENT AND PRIMITIVE RITE OF MASONRY : THE GRAND LODGE OF ENGLAND : AND THE REFORMED RITE OF MEMPHIS.

To the Editor of THE MASONIC EXAMINER.

DEAR SIR AND BROTHER:—The following correspondence (names suppressed) has taken place between the officials of the Ancient and Primitive Rite, and the Craft Grand Lodge. Please instruct your readers thereon,\* and allow me to state that the Rite has representatives in and with the Grand Orient of France, and Italy—with Chili, Roumania, &c., &c., &c. ; and is largely practised in America, most of the Knights Templar who were *filial* here, being high functionaries ; and the founder of the “Cryptic” humbug, who acted in conjunction with the Gd. Mk. Master Bro. Portal, and Capt. Philips, 33°, A. and A.—is one of the 33°, A. and P. Rite. The order is of great purity in its rituals, tolerant, and universal, well and easily ruled, and is calculated to become a great success in this country. The circular alluded to in the following correspondence, laid down basis of laws for working the degrees of the *Chapter* (4° 11°), *Senate* (12° 20°), *Council* (21° 30°), *Mystic Temple* (31° 32°). The first is a very excellent series, terminating with *Rose Croix* ; the second terminates with Gd. Inspector, following the Knt. Kadosh ; and the third enters upon Egyptian Theosophy as the foundation of all Masonry. All fees are to be used for the legitimate purposes of Masonry, and refreshments dispensed with. The Northern Councils are held under the Sovereign Sanctuary of America until some brother of position is placed at the head of affairs in London. A bronze decoration is to be granted for noble deeds in man or woman ; and there are many features of peculiar interest connected with the rite.

It is to be hoped some brother in your next issue will enlighten us upon the system of the “Royal Grand Council of Ancient Rites—time immemorial.”

“September 16th, 1871.

“Although I am aware that nothing in Masonic publications ‘is to be taken officially, yet as they are said to represent the ‘office of Grand Lodge, I write to ask a question.

“I find it stated that ‘Bro. Morton Edwards and Bro. Meyer Lowenstark have organised a Lodge of Memphis’ and ‘that ‘no Member of the Order of Memphis can be allowed to enter ‘a regularly constituted Lodge under the Grand Lodge of ‘England.’

“You will see from this Circular that I am mixed up here ‘with the ‘Ancient and Primitive Rite of Masonry,’ which is ‘neither a Lodge or higher grade of Memphis, but a cumulation of the Scottish, Mizraim, and Memphis Rites—and ‘embracing the best of all—by the ruling body or Grand Orient ‘of France. The rite has numerous members in America, ‘Roumania, and elsewhere, and admits only Master Masons, in ‘good standing, under the Constitutional Grand Lodges. It ‘works precisely in the same way as the ‘Ancient and Accepted ‘Scottish Rite,” but unlike that has never claimed dominion ‘over the Grand Lodges of blue Masonry. The rite is like the ‘Craft—tolerant and universal in principle ; nor will it ever ‘interfere in blue Masonry in any way to its disadvantage. ‘Anything to the contrary is Calumny. The Rite is superior in ‘every shape and form to the ‘Ancient and Accepted,’ and if ‘one of the Grand Lodge Laws is illegal—so is the other.

“As, however, I wish to do nothing contrary to the laws of ‘Grand Lodge, I should be glad to have a line from you at your ‘earliest convenience touching upon this, and the statement ‘heading this letter.”

Reply :—“September 21st, 1871.

“Permit me to say, in the first instance, that” [the periodical is here mentioned by its title] “does not in any way represent ‘the office of Grand Lodge, neither has the office anything to ‘do, either directly, or indirectly, with that which may appear ‘in its columns, hence I can offer no opinion on the extract you ‘quote.

“I am in a similar position with regard to the ‘Ancient and ‘Primitive Rite of Masonry,’ of which I know nothing beyond ‘what you are good enough to communicate in your note, and ‘am therefore unable to say how it might be viewed by Grand ‘Lodge. I may, however, recall to your recollection that in ‘October 1859, a circular was issued by Grand Lodge, repudiating the Reformed Masonic Order of Memphis, and cautioning ‘all Lodges against admitting its members.”

Acknowledgement :—“September 22nd, 1871.

“Whilst thanking you for your letter I must point out that ‘the law of 1859 is directed against *irregular Masons* of the ‘three first degrees. The G. C. has nothing to do with ‘extraneous rites, which make the *regular* symbolic degrees ‘their basis, as you yourself instructed me when I attempted to ‘cite the ‘Ancient and Accepted Rite’ before the Board for ‘swindling under a forged power : *that*, out of the twenty-eight ‘rites now practised, is the only one whose basis is fraudulent.”

SINCERITY.

\*[Our correspondent must excuse us from attempting to instruct any one on a subject of which we have no knowledge. —ED. MAS. EX.]

#### NOTES AND QUERIES FOR FREE-MASONS.

—o—

##### THE ANCIENT AND ACCEPTED RITE.

QUERY I. If Frederick the Great invented the A. & A. Rite, why did he not style it Prussian, instead of Scottish ?

2. If he invented the 33°, why did he make the eagle double-headed like that of his Austrian enemy, instead of using the single-headed black eagle of Prussia ?

3. If he invented the motto—“My God and my right,” how came he to trespass upon the English *Dieu et mon droit* ?

ANSWER : Frederick never received any but the third degree

during his father's life, and paid no attention to the craft afterwards.

#### DERIVATION OF SIGNS (No. IV. p. 16).

I AM afraid GNOSIS is going rather fast. He appears to have yet to learn that mere *resemblance*, which in thousands of cases is purely accidental, can never prove *relationship*. Imagination, no doubt, can do wonders, but it can never supply the place of real proof, while the critic who wishes to deal with facts is bound to give a wide berth to mere dreams and fancies. The following will serve as a specimen of my reasons for saying so as applicable to the business in hand:—In the Aberdeen Burgh Records, under date 1530, it says the "haill toun maks oath be thair hand uphaldin in jugment, the holy croce tuichit, euery man be himself, to obserue and keep all and sindrie the ponts and artikilles forsaid," &c. Now if GNOSIS were to see an old picture of this transaction he would be ready to imagine that a certain portion of one of our masonic degrees was being given; but if so he would be wrong, as the business in hand was quite public, and the "haill toun" jengaged in it. An old form in the fifteenth century shows us that after a burgess or gild-brother had taken the oath "he ought to kiss the provost and the brethren, if he be a brother of the gild." Then in a charter of King Robert II. A.D. 1373, we read:—"The same Holy Gospels by each of them touched, swore their bodily oath . . . and each raising his hand after the manner of faith-giving, in token of the universal consent of the whole clergy and people, publicly expressed and declared their consent and assent." The custom of raising the hand and looking up was an old posture of prayer, as per Ezra ix., 5, &c. W. P. BUCHAN.

[BRO. BUCHAN appears to assume that GNOSIS has to learn BRO. B.'s system of synthesis but, if the latter will turn to page 16, we think he must see that GNOSIS makes a suggestion of points which strike him as worthy of observation and says, he "fancies" that the derivation of our masonic signs "may" be traced to a very high antiquity. *Q. a different thing from confounding resemblance with relationship.*—ED. MAS. EX.]

#### THE TRANSFIGURATION.

What authority had the late Bro. Dr. Oliver for asserting, or from whence could such a notion have been derived, the Transfiguration to have been a lodge of perfection? Is not such an assertion the height of irreverence? XIV.

[Dr. Oliver wrote more sound truth than any other Free-Mason. At one time we thought as you do, but living and learning,—we hope we may say never losing sight of our Faith,—we have come to believe he was right. But Dr. Oliver only followed the early fathers of the Church, in that avowal, and was fortified in it by the writings of many mediæval brethren. It is a subject we do not care to enter upon in print but shall have no objection to go into with you, quietly, next time you come to town.—ED. MAS. EX.]

### NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

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A MASONIC STUDENT. The number is complete. Arrangements are being made by which it is expected important services will be rendered to Free-Masonry through the COUNCIL OF MASONIC EXAMINERS. You, in common with the Craft, will know all in due time.

A NINETIETH. We cannot profess to advise about matters of which we have no knowledge. The plan of THE MASONIC EXAMINER is to afford those interested in Un-recognised degrees a fair hearing, under the conditions printed in every number, but we cannot undertake to advocate, Editorially, any usage of which we are ignorant, or disapprove. A fair field and no favour will be afforded if you choose to avail yourself of it.

J. L. Eat your leek in privacy: the fragrance of the process is not savoury to the nostrils of by-standers.

AN OLD-FASHIONED MASON. We have not identified ourselves, in any way, with the thing you mention. If you would see the true character of the men, misleading some of our most cherished friends, turn to *Pomeroy's Democrat* of September the 16th. and the 14th. of the present month. The revelations they contain should be a caution to every English Gentleman.

C. S. Go to a lodge of Instruction. We do not discuss points of ritual in our columns.

M. M. Call. We shall be happy to see you.

B. No. The suggestion is valueless.

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London: Printed by RANKEN & Co., Drury House Printing Office, Drury Court, St. Mary-le-Strand, for Bro. Matthew Cooke; and published by him at 13, Harpur Street, Red Lion Square, W.C., in the County of Middlesex.—Wednesday, November 1st, 1871.