A HISTORY OF FREEMASONRY
THE STORY OF ITS RELATIONS WITH SATAN AND THE POPES
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FOREWORD

America, which so strongly and so justly disapproves of the Iron Curtain in Europe, might be called the classic land of Iron Curtains. More than 20,000,000 of its adult citizens huddle together in more or less secret societies, and oaths of secrecy are so common that you might imagine that the scurvy agents of George III were still lurking in the shadows. It is fascinating to guess what these millions of grown men are doing behind their curtains.

We may be sure that the Knights of Columbus drink their holy water in an atmosphere of austerity and that the Knights Templars do not follow the picturesque but wicked practices of the monk-Knights whose name they have piously adopted, while the very name of the Nobles of the Mystic Shrine or the Velled Prophets of the Enchanted Realm freezes curiosity on the profane lips. What the Elks and the Eagles do or what the oddities of the Odd Fellows are we cannot imagine, but we picture to ourselves the Moose roaring in their Lodges, the graceful Elks disporting themselves in the sylvan glades, the Modern Indians play-fully chasing each other with blunt tomahawks . . .

Seeing the total consumption of rye, bourbon, and beer in America we are disposed to think that there is a healthy element of the cult of Bacchus in the veiled ceremonies of all of them; just as there was in the gatherings of the jovial monks of the Middle Ages who were their predecessors. But the chief mystery of these kindly and convivial societies is why the largest of them, the Ancient and Honorable Fraternity of Free and Accepted Masons and Concordant Orders, which professes to combine the wisdom of the world from the beginning of time with the most perfect blend of the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man, is condemned by the most powerful church in America with a virulence that makes our blood run cold. Since none of our learned encyclopedias illumines or even draws attention to this mystery, and even Masonic writers do not tell the full truth about it, I propose here, in accordance with my familiar and malicious practice of telling truths which more august authorities feel ought to be suppressed, to throw a little light on the matter.
I. THE SEARCH FOR A FATHER

It has intrigued me that a modern American should share the idea of some Europeans that the farther you can trace your pedigree back into earlier ages the more you are entitled to respect. If a man's ancestors came over on the Mayflower he preens himself, but if he can establish that those ancestors descend from one or other of the unmitigated ruffians and perverts who settled in England with William the Conqueror, his distinction is doubled.

A church that dates back only to the comparatively enlightened days of Erasmus and Luther is an upstart in comparison with one that reaches back to the Dark Age, while churches that were founded in the 18th or the 19th century are hardly entitled to public consideration. We seem to have equal respect for the science of our sons and the wisdom of our fathers.

This medieval vice was, naturally, worse in the Middle Ages when Freemasonry appeared, than it now is, and so the early admirers of that body sought to give it a pedigree as long as that of a piece of Chinese porcelain or a Hebrew religious rite. Hence the extraordinary mythology with which, now half-humorously, every history of Freemasonry begins. The great temple of Solomon easily caught their attention. It cost, it seems, according to a recent expert on such matters, $35,514,212,500—notice the realism in the figure—so there must have been some remarkable masons way down in Judea 3,000 years ago. Obviously the craft was by that time fully developed.

The Tower of Babel is an earlier landmark, and as that did not come so long after the Flood we want to know why the craft was not worked out in those rainy days.

Well, Noah and his sons, it seems, carved all the secrets on two columns which stood the onrush of the waters. One was found ages afterwards by a Greek named Pythagoras (hence the learning of that philosopher) and the second by another Greek named Hermes (who was a Greek God). But, of course, Noah, in spite of his fondness for strong drink, must have recollected all the secrets himself, so you find them embodied in the Egyptian pyramids, the audacious design to build a tower in Mesopotamia, and in the immortal glories of Solomon's fabulous temple.

In fact, it all started, we are told, in the Garden of Eden where the Lord taught Adam, in the days of his innocence, all the secrets of the craft. Why they were handed down to the Egyptians in particular, in whose history we read of so many "mysteries," is not explained, and the more skeptical of these learned historians prefer the theory that it was really Euclid (of about 300 B.C.) who was a son of Abraham (about 2000 B.C.), though the Old Testament forgot to mention him, that taught the Egyptians geometry, which is another word for Freemasonry. Moses stole the art and craft from the Egyptians and set up a lodge in the desert, with himself as Grand Master. In the fulness of time the Hebrews embodied it in the great temple of Solomon (950 B.C.) and their skill caught the eye of the King of France, Charles Marshall (Charles Martel) who invited Solomon (of 950 B.C.) to send him (in the 8th century A.D.) masons who would help him to adorn his country with beautiful churches and monasteries. (Incidentally, Charles was a half-civilized brute who sacked or burned large numbers of churches and monasteries but is not known
ever to have built one). This illustrious and benevolent monarch (of the 8th century) sent masons to help to civilize Britain, and they converted St. Alban (who was martyred by the conquerors in the year 304) and made him the first Grand Master of English Masonry. If you find this remarkable chronology too dizzy, there are plenty of alternatives. There is the theory that the Phoenicians, sailing to Britain in search of tin (which is not now believed), brought the sacred wisdom from the East and taught it to the Druids, who were the first British Freemasons. If you are still incredulous, how about the theory that the Essenes, the most austere Jewish sect in the time of Christ, fled to Britain from persecution and brought masonry with them; or the theory that a King of Troy (before 1000 B.C.) learned it in the schools of Athens (after 400 B.C.), sent missionaries to Britain, and inspired the Gypsies who brought this supreme wisdom from the East to Europe.

I do not find anybody has yet suggested that these marvelous early masons built the Parthenon at Athens before the recent Masonic writers have contended that we must recognize the secrets of the craft in the Greek Eleusinian Mysteries. Lessing, the most learned classical scholar and historian of the 18th century, scorned all these ingenious theories and suggested that it was the Crusaders who brought the treasures to England. In his day it was still believed that the Knights of the Order of Chivalry were really interested in truth and virtue. A rival sage then said that it was the Druids and the distinguished antiquarian of the last century, Godfrey Higgins, pointing out that a column or pole is one of the symbols used in Masonic decoration, connected it with that illustrious pole, the British May Pole, which is still celebrated in places in the month when the young man's fancy lightly turns to love, and tried to cut the whole business short by saying that Masons merely means May's Sons.

It must not be imagined that these are speculations of the ill-informed age of Thomas Aquinas and the Schoolmen or even of the little-better informed days of Luther. Who invented the legend nobody now knows but it must have been sometime later than the 18th century—probably much later—and the 18th century was well advanced when they were collected and presented as we now know them by the Rev. J. Anderson, one of the founders of British-American Freemasonry. In fact, the leading modern historian of the fraternity, R. F. Gould, devotes nearly half his "Concise History of Freemasonry" to them and is not at all disposed to dismiss them as entirely vain.

The Masonic symbols, he says, must be ancient, as he is convinced that they (the square, compass, etc.) always had a moral meaning. We do not still talk of a "square deal" when we may see some kind of ancient brotherhood behind them.

In the last century, in fact, when history became something better than a mosh of medieval traditions and clerical fabrications, so that all the gorgeous myths had to be abandoned, Masonic writers began to vindicate this pointed antiquity of their order in the same way. Most Freemasons probably do not care the toss of a crooked nickel about the signs and symbols and phraseology of their fraternity, and the minority who take them seriously puzzle themselves in them, they say, truths of the greatest value to the race. Yet they insist so severely on keeping them from the world, or behind the Iron Curtain of the oath of secrecy, that it is in some degree to know exactly what they are. It appears that one recognizes a fellow-Mason in any circumstances—strangers meeting on a ship, for instance—by some movement of the fingers or hands, like two Jesuit plots meeting in an ale-house in the days of Elizabeth.

It was long ago claimed that the medieval masons who built the great cathedrals carved the less solemn figures on the facades making these signs or gestures to each other. Travellers then began to report having seen the same signs in all parts of the world in the most ancient books of other civilizations. Sir Chaloner Alabaster, for instance, a distinguished writer on China, only half a century ago insisted that he found these symbols in the earliest annals of that country and that they prove the existence then of a mystic sect of a "Masonic form."

He is unfortunate when he says that here we find the same moral symbolism as was embodied in the Tabernacle of which Moses set up in the desert.

The Masonic symbols, especially if it is colored, of the structure which is described in the Old Testament will suggest a symbolism that will interest the policeman more than the moralist. However, in an apparent sympathetic paragraph on this theory, in the article on Freemasonry in the latest edition of the Encyclopaedia Britannica, it is suggested that these more or less identical signs and symbols in all parts of the world do point to a moral cult which looks rather like the last phase of the cult of the dying fertility-god.

I have shown elsewhere that, on the contrary, the cult of the Mother Earth goddess was much alive until the last centuries of the old era, when ethical religion, or that cult of the Sky Father God, vanquished it; and that, in reason, is to say, for history does not suggest that it in practice ever did die. However, there you have, and under recent and respectable auspices, another theory of the origin of Freemasonry, and if you are a Mason and feel that there is nothing not quite respectable about it, you may, as some do, consider that this first religion of the human race, as it is called, is the universe, and it was the first pure revelation of himself to God as man. If you are not a Mason you may conclude that this discovery of Masonic symbols in ancient China and among primitive peoples of Africa and Australia is just one more proof of the richness of the mystic imagination.

Finally, there is a theory that seems to me to come much nearer to the truth than all these speculations about Adam and Moses, Nebuchadnezzar and Charles Martin. It is based upon the three unquestionable facts: the existence of, so-called or trade unions of the workers in the ancient Roman Empire, the existence of rather obscure workers in stone shown in the chronicles as the "Comacine Masons" or masons living round Lake Como in North Italy) during some centuries after the fall of Rome, and the Gilts of the Middle Ages. The theory is that the earliest Freemasons in Europe were the Masons Gilts in the general service of the medieval Gilts, the successors, through the Comacine builders of the old Roman college (or union) of masons.

Where I have had, in earlier historical works, to say something about the Gilts, I suggested, without at that time being aware of the Masonic speculations, that the Gilts were the revival or revivification of the Roman colleges, and I mentioned the Comacine builders as a possible, though not convincing, connecting link.

It is of course fully acknowledged today that the workers of the Greek-Roman civilization were organized in these trade unions. In fact, they were described at length in dictionaries of classical antiquities of the last century, but clericalism and learned knowledge of them has caused the present Christian status of the workers to be represented as unjust or meretable.

In every city the workers of each trade had their local branches and club-rooms. They held periodic social and religious functions, funds for assisting the sick or helping to pay for a funeral, and welcoming fellow-workers of their own craft from distant cities.

As the entire economic system was convulsed after the fall of the Empire it is not surprising to assume that this trade-union system disappeared, and when now unions or
Gilds appeared in the Middle Ages it was easy for the Church to take the credit of having created them. I pointed out that, on the contrary, the Gilds (called by that name even in the Latin documents) appeared in the Dark Ages (8th century) and instead of fostering them, the Church denounced them as “pagan,” fought them for 100 years, and only took them over and Christianized them when it could not surpass them. The clerical tradition was so strong that even experts on the Gilds like Gross suppress the evidence—which is plain in the Capitularies of Charlemagne and other documents—and misrepresent the facts. I pointed out also a fact which all historians of the Gilds miss; that in the contemporary descriptions of the procession that set Charlemagne at Rome in the year 800 it is mentioned that “schools” of the Roman workers marched under their own banners; which clearly means some sort of revival or survival of the old colleges.

The masons, or, as we now say, builders were one of the most important corporations of the Greek-Roman world, but in the appalling poverty and demoralization that followed its collapse one could imagine that the builders would be the first to suffer.

The modern theory is, as I said, that the references at the time to “Comacine masters” means that the Roman builders took refuge in the region of the Italian lakes. The interval between the fall of the Empire and the first appearance of the Gilds in the 8th century is so long (three centuries) that I was rather skeptical about this theory and did not work it out. But if you consider historical facts which the authors of the theory do not seem to have known, it is plausible enough.

After the collapse the city of Rome certainly did no serious building for ages, but in North-central Italy there were two excellent little civilizations in the three centuries: the Ostrogotic in the 6th century, which raised buildings that still survive at Ravenna, and the Lombard, which was even more advanced in art, in the 7th and 8th.

It is easy to assume that the workers of the Roman builders went to live in the Kingdom of the Franks after the death of Theodoric, retired to the Lake district when the Franks destroyed that Kingdom, returned to the cities—Como is only 50 miles from Milan, the second city of ancient Italy—when the Lombards invaded Italy, and there in the troubled times that followed the destruction of the Lombard civilization for the Pope by Charlemagne.

He may even have taken a body of the builders to his own Kingdom, where, as I said, the Gilds attracted the notice of church and state just at this time. Little more than a century later the marriage of a German prince to a Greek princess led to a new cultivation of art in Germany, and whatever builders there still were in North Italy were attracted. Here next came the French masons; European cathedrals arose, and it is significant that the Romanesque style in which they were built was a modification, not of the Byzantine style of the Greek artists, but of the classic Roman style.

I am not here developing a theory, which would be out of all proportion in this essay on Freemasonry generally, but stating a chain of historical facts which are certainly suggestive. An indisputable conclusion from them is that there was a Gild of Masons in Germany for artists, and that the 11th century cathedrals and a large number of churches were first built there in the 11th century. But were they, or why were they called “free masons”? And had they, or how did they come to have, the religious character and the special degree which have drawn such a rich screen of myths round their early development?

2. THE HOLY BEGINNINGS OF THE CRAFT

The one definitely known fact about the early history of Freemasonry is that the Grand Lodge which became the parent, apart from the lodges of the Scottish rite, of nearly all other branches and provided their Constitution was established in London in the year 1717. What happened during the seven centuries between the building of the first cathedral and that date is a problem full of obscurities. These, although they naturally enkindle a passionate interest in Masonic writers, do not greatly concern us here, but a short consideration of them must be included. Unpublished documents in archives and record-offices have been diligently studied and, after reading the numerous quotations in Gould and other writers, will simplify the issue as far as possible.

The most reliable authority, as far as it goes, on account of its strict impartiality and high standard of scholarship, is the Oxford Dictionary of the English language. This model work, in 30 or 40 folio volumes, supports the definitions of words that it gives by quoting the earliest uses of a word in English literature. It confesses that it is impossible to say definitely how the adjective “free” came to be applied to masons, because the story of the word is curiously ambiguous. If you take it in its ordinary sense, as one not held by restrictions, there is very little positive evidence to support it. Some suggest that the masons, being so important a trade in that great age of building, were relieved of the ordinary legal restrictions on the Gilds; and one quotation supports this. Others say that as they had to move from one big job to another in a distant city they were made free to do so, but this surely applies to all workers, though not apprentices, after the abolition of serfdom.

On the other hand the documents quite generally distinguish between the “free masons” and “rough masons” on the ground that the former worked in “free stone”; that is to say, the finest grained varieties of sand or lime-stone, which cut more freely. The workers in stone were the more skilful. An important civic document of the year 1376, kept in the Guildhall of the city of London, lists representatives of the Gilds in the city Council.

The writer first says that the Council includes “four free masons and two masons,” then crosses this out and says “six masons.” Twenty years later a charter of Richard II grants the Archbishop of Canterbury permission to have “24 masons called free and 24 called rough.” A difficulty arises when we find a group called “cowans” at one date, and free masons refusing to work with them; in one text because, they say, these cowans are “unfree.” But since in nine cases out of 10 of these references in the 13th, 14th, and 15th centuries we have a plain distinction between the terms “free” and “rough masons,” it seems to me that we have here the origin of the name. It explains why the word “free” has come down attached to the craft of the masons alone.

The Gild of the masons or workers in, as one document says, “the honor of craft or art” would, like all other Gilds, take on a religious character in the 10th century. Long before cathedral building began there were large and rich abbeys and massive stone castles to be built, and the masons would travel from one to another. As no worker could read in those days there was nothing corresponding to the modern union-card, so it is possible that they would have secret signs or gestures for mutual recognition and for excluding tramps or “rough”
masons. There would, in any case, doubtless be secrets of the craft to guard, as there were later secrets of making stained glass. When they were engaged on a large enterprise quarters or sheds were built for them and these are described as "lodges" in the contemporary documents. With the rise of the Romanesque cathedrals in Germany in the 11th century, the great Gothic cathedrals in the 12th century, and the erection of civic halls, abbeys, palaces, etc., etc., the Gild of Free Masons would become rich and powerful, and it would share with other Gilds the three degrees which are still generally recognized in Masonry: apprentices, journeymen (now Fellow Craftsmen), then the great body of the workers, and Master Masons. Masonic writers now deny that monks were the architects and chief builders of the cathedrals, and many modern writers on art agree with them that the conventional age, expressing itself in these soaring structures is one of the expiring Catholic myths. The Master Masons were, they contend, the architects; and there is, in fact, no special mention of architects in medieval literature.

We ought not to press their importance too far, as crafts like that of the carpenter would also be of great importance in the new building, and we must remember that the houses of the richer burghers as well as of the workers were of wood. When we speak of timber, yet the masons must have figured prominently in the procession of the Gilds on holy days, and their lodges must have been exceptionally comfortable and their suppliers rich, and possibly their tools of higher quality. I have quoted the official document of the city of London in 1376 telling us that there were six masons in the Council. Trade halls (Finsmengers Hall, etc.) which survive in London today are handsome structures, richly decorated, unlike the proy structures in which the modern Unions have their headquarters.

This led gradually to a revolution in the character of the Free masons. We have evidence that several Gilds began in the 14th century to admit "honorary members"; and it is clear that the masons went far beyond others in this respect.

At first, we may assume, these "Accepted Masons" were prominent members of other Gilds or burghers who were admitted to share its guild welfare, the oath of secrecy, its religious rites and its supposed ancient lore. It was an age of boisterous sensuality and joviality in spite of the constant ravages of disease and war, and a rich Gild could offer attractions that were much superior to those that a modern Trade Union could offer. But it was the beginning of a development that carried on this particular Gild when all the others were destroyed and converted it into a body of middle-class and lower-middle-class gentry to decorate nobles and princes with the invariable name of Masons and incongruously retaining the aprons and other paraphernalia of "the honest craft of masonry" in a different world.

We shall see the "speculatives," as the newcomers were called, gradually take over from the "operatives" and use the secrecy of the lodges in some countries for conspiracy against the medieval church and state, while in Britain and America they unite a profession of ardent religious faith with a drowsy political philosophy of conservatism from the worker's point of view.

How this change proceeded from the 13th to the 15th century and the single trade-union lodge of the builders was converted into the modern Gild of Masonic lodges we do not know. The most informing documents are the Old Charges or the written directions for the holding of a meeting; the opening prayer, the rite of initiation and the rules or constitution. But the oldest of these that has been brought to light is the manual of the Kilwinning (Scotland) lodge of the year 1599. By that time the real workers Gilds were almost extinct, and the Reformation had profoundly modified the religious structure of the craft. It was still essentially Christian in form and content, but it seems already to have been affected by its new "speculative" adherents with its weird mythological history. There seems to have been a considerable spread of the new Freemasonry in England and Scotland.

Phineas Ashmole, one of the more learned men of his time, the original donor of the famous Ashmolean Museum at Oxford University, described in 1646 he was initiated as an Accepted Mason in a small town in the north of England. It is said that later in the century the great architect, Sir Christopher Wren, was admitted. It is not at all clear why distinguished scholars or artists like these sought admission.

They have known that the pretence of secret and ancient wisdom was, as Charles Bradlaugh, atheistic Mason, has said of it, "the elaborate lock to an empty iron chest." We will assume that they had the entirely respectable motive of a love of conviviality.

The collapse of the Gilds (or organized bodies of workers), which had by the end of the 15th century proved detrimental both to trade and to the workers themselves—it is not true that Protestantism destroyed them—had revolutionized the character of Freemasonry. It was now in the 14th and 16th centuries, an organization for convivial and mutual-aid purposes, with an air of secrecy and a dash of mysticism to season it, for gentry and middle-class folk with aristocrats as decorative leaders. It may have suffered from the interference of spies and traitors in the religious quarrels of the 16th century, and it encountered new molding influences in the 17th. In 1642, the English Civil War opened, and as it was largescale rebellion of the middle class against a tyrannical monarch one wonders what was its effect on Masonry.

In any case, the end of the war (1648) was followed by the 12-year rule of the Puritans, and this would certainly check it. We may assume that it threw again under the gay Charles II, but it seems to have drooped once more in the early part of the 18th century, when it experienced its second revolution. In 1717 it was reorganized and established on its modern basis as a combination of a cult of the Grand Architect of the Universe with the old policy of mutual help and conviviality and the familiar air of secrecy. Masonic writers discuss the history of their fraternity without any regard to the general history of the periods in which it experienced its successive transformations. They do not seem fainthearted to relate this consecutive growth of the old craft-gild into a general benevolent society to the notable changes of thought at this period.

Science, under the influence of Locke, Bacon and the more recent intellectuals, was making considerable progress, and, as Goethe had not quite recovered from the Thirty Years War and France had been demoralized by the reign of Louis XIV, England had taken the lead. There had, apart from this, been a notable growth of Delsm in England in the last years of the 17th and early years of the 18th century. Pope's deistic poetry is a monument of the time, and not only were there other brilliant men of letters (Shaftesbury, Bolingbroke, Horace, Walpole, etc.) in the school but there was a deep scepticism amongst the nobility and gentry.

Queen Caroline was an uncensored Delist who refused to take oaths of office or receive even the archbishop when she was dying. The greatest statesman of the time, Walpole, was a member, presumably a deeper skeptic, and some of the leading figures in the court, like Lord Hervey, were Delists.

The great astronomer Halley (god-father of the famous comet) openly professed Delsm. John Locke, who died in 1704, left disciples like Anthony Collins in the country gentry who wrote out-
spoken criticisms of the church. A French
writer says that ‘‘Toland, former Master of the Deists, Bolingbroke, Collins, Tindal, Wols
tom and Hume belonged, and that this was the model of the new Mas-
sonry. But he seems to have taken an imaginary society sketched by
told to have been a reality.

The new characteristic phrase of the Masons after 1717, ‘‘the Grand
Architect of the Universe,’’ is essen-
tially a Deistic expression, and
it is significant that one of the two
founders of the reorganized fra-
ternity was a distinguished sci-
entific man of the time. The two men
who in 1717 gathered together the members of a few scattered lodges in
London were the Rev. J. Anderson,
a Presbyterian minister, and J. T. Desaguliers, son of a French
Hugenot refugee. This man was a
friend of Sir Isaac Newton, a Fellow
of the Royal Society, a holder of
the much-coveted scientific dis-
tinction, the Copley Medal. We
have clear ground to believe that
this man was behind Anderson
when he began the project of the con-
stitution of the fraternity.

Anderson appears to have been
rather a simple-minded man. He
repeated all the old nonsense about
the antiquity of the fraternity and
gave as its motto the opening words
of the gospel of John, though in
Greek, which few would under-
stand. But instead of the old oath
to be ‘‘loyal to God and the Holy
Church,’’ he adopted the formula:
‘‘the Grand Architect of the Uni-
verse,’’ which might have been
taken from Bolingbroke or from
Pope’s ‘‘Essay on Man.’’ At one
point even the pious Gould calls it
Deistic.

This did not at once appear. The
first thing was to form the society.
Four groups of Masons of the old
type met in London in well known
taverns—the Goose and Gridiron,
the Crown, the Bunch of Grapes,
and the White Hart.

They were summoned to a meet-
ing in the Apple Tree Tavern on
July 24th, 1717, and agreed to amal-
gamate in a Grand Lodge under a
Grand Master with two degrees of
membership, the Apprentice and
the Fellow Craftsman or Master.
Anderson was to definitely
prepare a new charter, and Desaguliers,
who was the third Grand Master,
assisted him. When this new Con-
stitution of the Free Masons was
presented in the assembly in 1717
there was no opposition to the
Grand Master, the Duke of Whit-
ton, walked out of the room in dis-
gust. The name of Desaguliers had
been proposed for Deputy Grand
Master, on it was fiercely opposed.
One member was later expelled
from the fraternity for serious
The religious quarrel also continued,
and in 1733 Anderson produced a
revised Constitution in which he
brought them back to orthodoxy.

Desaguliers and the Deists—
Gould here uses the word
now split off and London again
enjoyed the spectacle and the fra-
ternity lost ground. ‘‘The Masons
are in so low repute in England’’
Horace Walpole wrote in 1743.
‘‘that one has scarcely heard of the
proceedings (the ban on the Order)
at Vienna. . . . As great as our fol-
lies are, we grow tired of them.’’
And, to finish with this chapter of
their history, there was a ‘‘great
schism’’ in 1751, when the Ancients,
or those who stood firm in the Con-
stitution of 1717, anathematized
the Moderns, who set up a rival
Grand Lodge; and London again
rekindled with gaiety.

It is clear that by this time, when
radical clubs and secret political
societies were spreading in England,
religion was not the only ground
of quarrel. But the French revolu-
tion in 1789 led to a fierce cam-
paign against radicalism and plots.
Freemasonry was only saved by its
noble patrons.

They languidly maintained their

Withal the fraternity made fair
progress. In 1729 there were 42
lodges in London and 11 in the
province; and in 1730 the Duke of
Norfolk, head of the English no-
bility and a Catholic, became Grand
Master. In 1731 the Order got its
first royal member, the Duke of
Lorraine, and in 1735 the Prince of
Wales was elected Grand Master.
The Scottish Masons, who were
largely in exile in France where
they supported ‘‘Bonny Prince
Charlie,’’ Pretender to the throne
of England, tried in vain to prove
that theirs was the real old firm.
When the Grand Master of the
Templars had been executed in the
14th century, they said, his suc-
cessor had fled to Scotland and
founded true Masonry there. The
religious quarrel also continued,
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They languidly maintained their
rival Grand Lodges throughout the
Napoleonic wars, and in 1813 they
reunited. Two years later they
found their final formula in regard
to religion: ‘‘Let a man’s religion
or mode of worship be what it may
he may be excluded from the Order,
provided he believes in the glorious
architect of heaven and earth and
practises the sacred duties of mor-
ality.’’

One writer says that the real
motto now adopted as regards
religion and politics I may translate:
‘‘Hear everything, see everything and keep your mouth shut.’’ It
seems better than the familiar leg-
end of the three monkeys: ‘‘Hear
nothing, see nothing, say nothing.’’
In point of fact, although English
Masonry has ever since been a
shrine of conservatism and ortho-
doxy, the religious and moral pre-
tension is not taken seriously by
the majority.

Charles Bradlaugh, the atheistic
orator, was a Mason. British Mas-
sons have indignantly denied this
religion’s connection with his death
of it in her life of her father (1.203-6). He was already a Mason when
the radical refugees from Europe foun-
ded a lodge in London in 1850, in
which he was active. He quit the
English fraternity when it proposed
to make the Prince of Wales Grand
Master; and he must have smiled
when the prince later insisted in
his speech that the charge about
belief in God must be retained in
the interest of morality.

If any man does not know what
the morals of the Prince of Wales
(who is Edward VII) were, let him
read—in the French original—
Zola’s ‘‘Nana’’ in which ‘‘the Prince
of Scotland’’ is Edward. Of Brad-
taught the world that henceforth
American Masons I will speak later; and how
and why British and American
Masonry came to damn the athe-
estic Masonry of the French Grand
Orient I will now proceed to tell.
3. IT SINKS INTO ATHEISM AND CONSPIRACY

A French writer on Freemasonry in his own country has said that it was Deistic in the 18th century, Pantheistic in the first half of the 19th century, and Atheistic in the second half. In the light of what we have seen we may say that it had been Polytheistic in Ancient Rome, where it had its first form as the monadons or builders' trade union, Catholic in the Middle Ages, and Protestant in the 17th century.

All of which means that religion was just a mantle that it wore instead of an essential part of its nature: a garment which it naturally changed with every alteration of the prevailing religious fashion, which in this it resembles the race itself. Religion never stopped being a garment that men wore because they were taught to wear it when they became fully conscious and civilized they found themselves wearing some such garment and the priests persuaded them in every age until ours that it would be as unduly taken to return to spiritual nudity as it would be to discard all material clothes even in the warmest latitudes or seasons.

But there is a deeper meaning in the official decision of the French Masons to discard all religion about 70 years ago and the unofficial abandonment of it by the Masons of several other countries.

If Masons were sincerely to look out on life under the luminous sign of the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man, which they solemnly set up in 1717, they could not remain insensible of the ancient lies that still ruled the state and the profound injustices that degraded it.

Contrary to the popular belief, the French are a particularly logical and realistic people, and it was natural that French Masons should be the first to develop and proclaim the corollaries of their principles.

The bitterest enemies of the fraternity, the Pope and Catholic writers generally, are insistent that the revolutionary slogan, "Liberty, Equality and Fraternity" and the Declaration of the Rights of Man are just the expansion of the second principle of Masonry.

Nowadays they do not remind us that that principle is the Brotherhood of Man, as disdain of it would hardly be consistent with their claim that the Church inspired that principle, but quite clearly this was a starting point of the thinkers and workers who brought on the French Revolution. They decided that the destruction of political despotism and the establishment of democracy were essential for the introduction of that social justice which Europe had been denied for 14 centuries. Then, when they saw how fiercely the Popes and their Church allied themselves with the bloody reaction of the 19th century, they, in the same logical and realistic spirit, decided to attack reli- gions as well as political corruption. The superior American Freemason, with his supercilious talk about these French "extremists," is completely ignorant of the part this religion played in the tragic history of Europe in the 19th century.

Masonic Lodges were first set up in France, when the Masons' Gild had perished, between 1720 and 1725. They were established by English refugees from England. James (Jacob) II, young brother and successor of Charles II, "a cruel, revengeful, deceitful despot" (as even Ploetz's Dictionary of Dates calls him) was a Catholic in league with the French and the Vatican.

The English people could not tolerate him for more than three years, and he fled to France to escape the ignominious fate of his father. The nobles, largely Catholic, who were the "Jacobites" and were welcomed by Louis XV. One of them was the young Earl of Derwentwater, a close friend of Bonnie Prince Charlie, son of James and Pretender to the throne of England, was a London noble and a Mason.

You remember that it was in 1717 that the Grand Lodge was established in London, Derwentwater set up a lodge in Paris in 1722. For some years the French lodges were not only open to nobles, chiefly English, but in the 30's they began to admit the (rich) French bourgeoisie, and the Church took alarm at the secrecy of their proceedings. The cardinal induced the King to exclude from his court any noble who joined a Lodge. This advertised the obscure lodges and they multiplied.

Pope Clement XII then, in 1738, made the first Papal attack (to which we will return) on the craft, but the Paris Parliament refused to register it, and it was therefore invalid in France.

Adventurers and crooks set up other societies in imitation. One admitted women, but in this "Order of Fidelity," says the French Encyclopaedia, "the moral purity of the ladies was not conspicuous." Sexual freedom was considered as great an evil in France, and meetings in dark sealed rooms were appreciated.

The Scots set up lodges with their rite and tried to get the support of the whole body for Prince Charlie, and there was a very lively time. One lodge took up the idea that it was the Knights Templars who had founded the order, and they made it their aim to get revenge on royal and church, reviving the memory of the Grand Master of the Templars—on a fairly-proved charge of organized sodomy. The Paris lodge got Prince Louis de Bourbon as Grand Master and founded the Grand Lodge of France or struck the word English out of the title. The higher officials called themselves Knights of the Orient; which is how the word Orient came to be used by French Masons; especially when, in 1768, their democrats under the Duke of Chartres, declared the East "uncer- tain, unscrupulous, and ambitious Duke of Orleans, drew off from the main body. One colorful branch, the Sublime Elect of Truth, was established by a single-minded mystic and the arch-crook of the age Cagliostro.

But we are not here interested in these details of the history of French Masonry. In 1772 the Grand Orient had 132 lodges, and a few years later the Encyclopaedia, "were all the young nobles who followed the humanist philosophy of the 18th century."

By 1789 there were 669 lodges, and, among Catholic writers, the Revolution that broke out in that year was plotted in detail in these lodges. D'Estampes and Jannet, for instance, the chief Catholic writers on this phase, give a long list of Masons of the time, and nearly every one of the figures in the history of the Revolution is named in the list. But writers who solemnly insist on such reckless lies as that the revo- lutionaries who "wrested a prostitute from the altar of Notre Dame" do not invite belief.

As I have repeatedly shown that the French Revolution was a splendid, beneficent, and comparatively bloodless event, ruined, 20 years later by the pious Delors (or Unitarian) Robespierre, I should be happy to seize this rare opportunity to agree with Catholic writers, but positive evidence is scanty.

Voltaire and most of the Encyclopaedists (Diderot, Grimm, Helvetius, Holbach, etc.) certainly were Masons. Rousseau, as far as I can ascertain, was not. Such moral reformers as Miraheau, Silesy, and Conthemet (not Talleyrand) were Masons.

We may take it for granted that at least the majority of the leaders, who were nearly all Delors or Atheists, were. But it is a mistake to say that Masonry inspired the Revolution. It was prepared and carried
by men who, already fired with a zeal for social and political reform and the freedom of the Church by the great humanitarian writers of the time, found the secret meetings of the lodges an excellent machinery for their work.

The truth is that the revolutionaries defeated Masonry and nearly destroyed it in France. French historians say that this was mainly because so many aristocrats were Masons, which seems to me feeble; and it is not easy to understand how, it nearly every leading revolutionary was a Mason, nearly every lodge closed down by 1793.

It seems clear that the connection with Masonry has been greatly exaggerated, that the men of revolutionary ideas had merely sheltered behind the Masonic curtain for some decades, and it was no longer necessary to do so. In the calmer days of 1795 the lodges began to decline.

It is disputed if Napoleon himself ever became a Mason, but it had been many members amongst his relatives and intimates. Joseph Bonaparte became Grand Master. The French women and chief ladies of her court joined one of the societies of women affiliated to the fraternity. Most of Napoleon's great generals and ministers—Murat, Massena, Kellerman, Cambacérès—were Masons.

In short, under Napoleon mellowed Masonry had something like a golden age. They admired its secrecy and were little interested in any of its communal features. To the Fatherhood of God, and especially to the idea of the Masonic Lodge as a special Masonic lodge of their own, the Grand Lodge of the Philosophers, they paid the same lip-honour as the Take of Satanic Napoleon himself did, and their idea of its Brotherhood of Man was the Napoleonic version of Liberalism and Freemasonry.

Innocuous as Masonry had become under the Empire, it, like everything Napoleonic, fell under the frown of the restored monarchy. In the years of fierce persecution of Liberalism and Republicanism, the Grand Lodge and the grand Lodge of France wasプリ ット化され、インリットゥームを担当しました。その後、公開された秘密会社としてのマasonic Lodge would be used by plotters, as doubtless it often was. It was therefore a diminished and more serious fraternity that witnessed and loudly applauded the Second Revolution in 1830, and it was not long before the Masons discovered that the new royal line that was permitted to take the throne was just as Catholic and despotic as its predecessors.

Five men in a quarter of a century thundered against them, as we shall see, and in thus sealing the alliance of the Vatican with reaction they made inevitable that hostility of French Masonry to religions which American and British Masons profess that they cannot understand; and as the history of the 19th century is now written in rose-water they are not likely to understand it. But it was an entirely logical development.

In 1838 the French carried a heavy blood-price, their Third Revolution and restored the Republic; and as the revolutionary wave rolled over France, sweeping away five thrones and kingdoms, many thought that the millennium of the Brotherhood of Man had dawned.

In a few years the French found that they had been duped by Napoleon III and, more, in alliance with the Church, reaction set in and the progressives were scattered. In London they sadly met their brother refugees from Germany, Poland, Austria, Russia, Hungary, and Spain, and it is interesting to observe that they founded a special Masonic lodge of their own, the Grand Lodge of the Philosophers (or of Brotherhood). Garibaldi, Mazzini, Louis Blanc, Ledru Rollin, and other heroes of the revolution met in its dingy club, and their writings ought to have taught English Freemasons why they were becoming less and less polite to the Grand Architect of the Universe. All of them except the dreamy Mazzini were Atheists.

In the dark days after the bloody reaction of 1848 it was impossible for continental Masons to have any respect for their brethren across the Channel ever since the fall of Napoleon had supported every tyrant in Europe and approved the martyrdom of at least a quarter of a million democrats. The failure of nearly a score of revolutions since 1789 and the terrible revenge of the restored monarchies were just as clearly attributable to the clergy as to the royalists, and a stern new fight against both was to fill the years 1850 to 1870.

Natural as it may seem to Catholics to be a Freemason for every kind of revolt during the rest of the century, it was just as natural for the democratic middle class of Europe to use Masonry to plot the downfall of all clerical and political tyranny. For this they had to make it just as secretly and concordantly on the Brotherhood of Man. Skepticism was now making rapid progress in the educated middle class, and it was no longer the Deism of Voltaire. The majority of the men who met in the lodges in France, Germany, Belgium, Spain, Italy and Portugal were now Atheists and they were impugned of this insincere homage to the Grand Architect of the Universe.

Writing in 1838 the French Catholics, D'Estampes and Jannet, said: "For a century most writers, in the 19th century the majority of teachers, present almost all men of influence generally have been or are Freemasons." So in 1877 the Grand Orient struck out of its Constitution the profession of belief in God and eliminated from the ritual all references to Christianity and the Bible. British and American Masons alone professed to be scandalized by the change.

A recent census of public opinion in Europe has disclosed that in Britain less than 50 per cent of the people believe in a personal God, so something more than half of the English Masons who profess to do so are in reality atheists. They and the Americans, with their peaceful political evolution and their (at that time) tame and comparatively harmless creed, could afford this lazy compromise with untruth. The Masons of France, Italy, Spain and Portugal had still too stern a fight on their hands.

The French had a last proof of this after the Fourth Revolution, in 1871. A new force, vaguely foreshadowing the fourth phase of Masonry, had appeared in the arena. The workingmen of Communards of Paris had united the economic prosperity of the bourgeoise. At once the Liberals quit their hostility to the Church and restored it to power. But the menace soon disappeared, and by 1875, the Republic now being definitely assured, the French Masons coldly concentrated on the elimination of the Church from public life. No one proposed to persecute religion, but Church and State were to be forever separated, the idle and mischievous monks reduced, and education completely secularized; as was done, chiefly under the Mason Premier Combes, in the next 20 years.

Catholic writers acknowledged that at least three-fourths of the people had already quit the Church. I quoted a number of them in my 'Decay of the Church of Rome' (1889). There were only about 30,000 Freemasons in France but they carried out the will of all but about 8,000,000 of the people. That is supposed to be what democracy means.

Yet the loud protests of the Vatican were heard with respect by British and American Masons. In 1884, Pope Leo XIII scattered over the world an encyclical in which he fulminated the anger of the Vatican. I will not comment on it in the next chapter and will notice here only the folly of his thinking that a threat to communicate any who joined the fraternity had any serious meaning whatever when already three-fourths of the nation laughed at his orders. The only consequence of his encyclical was an amazing development that I described at some length in my recent Holman Julius booklet, 'The History of Satanism.' He opened his encyclical with a melodramatic assurance that Satan was marshalling all the forces of evil in the world to make a grand and final attack on Christianity.
The ritual and symbolism of Freemasonry sometimes provoke smiles but the suggestion that, in spite of all the exhortations to virtue and mutual benevolence, the Masons were being used by the Anger Magyus of the ancient Persians to destroy civilization and, further, to ensure the damnation of the Devil in the Catho-lic fairy tale too far. French bishops and preachers, however, took up the cry, and presently one or two crude adventures like "Leao Taxil" turned up with personal ex-perience of the devil in the lodges that made Catholic blood run cold.

The present scare about Com munism will give you some idea of the extraordinary literature that circulated in France in the last dozen years of the 19th century. In a big batch of Catholic books and novels, I notice titles like (to translate them) "Satan, Inc."; "The Masonic Murders"; "The City of Antichrist"; "The Book of the Pope"; "The Red Priests"; and "The Devil in the 19th Century." and so on; and, while apologists in America were telling inquirers that to see the full beauty of the faith they must wait for life in the Catholic country like it is in France, the Church in that country was the laughing stock of Europe. Catholic writers, of course, kept the truth out of America, but the cream of the joke was that Ameri- can Masonry, which professed to be greatly shocked by the action of the French Masons, was deeply in-volved by the French Catholics in their Satanic romance. Posing as if ability to observe that they found that the wilder your story the more profit you made, the exogenous of Masonry—chiefly two completely unscrupulous French writers who laughed at the Church by being openly and for-tune out of their roguery and ret-tired—invented an American high priestess of the diabolical regiment with headquarters at Charleston. This "Diana Vaughan," a blend of Mlle. Lilith, Lilith, and Joan of Arc, the literal descen-dant of a British-American-Indian and a lady-devil, was as real to 8,000,000 Frenchmen at the end of the 19th century as Buffalo Bill was; and the author of the fiction, was rewarded with a Papal dec-reation by the Pope. De Popes." Leo XIII. The other arch-adventurer "Leo Taxil" had a most cordial interview with the Holy Father. Bishops fawned on him and hailed him as the savior of the faith. Today the devil is in Russia and the myth-makers are in America.

But I will return to that point in the next chapter. It is enough to say here that the American and British Masons, complemen-tarily locked on and wrapped themselves in their Delstic formula while the name of their fraternity was dragged in the gutter by the French Church and the Vatican. The story ran that in the lodges Satan or one of his lieutenants appeared in person, led the ceremonies, which often con-sisted of a Black Mass and other obscene performances, and egged on the new initiate to the ten-verse, serene, and virtuous Church. As far as I can discover even, was raised in America even to point out that these libels refuted themselves by their own monstrous origin, and in the old figment of the Inquisition in France was that the Vatican and the hierarchy most blatantly dis-played their own unscrupul-ness or—if you feel that they really believed in this legion of devils and their antics—complete unfit-ness for world-guidance. The American press continued to use its cliches about the Venerable Head of the Venerable Church, and when Leo died in 1905, still mont-hing these obscenities, the obituary articles credited him with a wis-dom and integrity more than that of Washington, Lincoln and Theodore Roosevelt put together. Let me say here that I put one of my own cliches: such is public in-formation in our time.

The result in France was the complete triumph of the Masons and the ruin of the Church. In 1909, what careful estimate of the Church's losses in my "Decay of the Church of Rome," I, conscious that I was being gener-ous, gave the Vatican 5,500,000 followers in 39,000,000 people. Sab-bit, one of the leading French religious workers in Russia, said that the total was really not more than 3,000,000. Then came the First World War and an accession of nearly 2,000,000 Catholics in Al-

Spain—due to the popula-

tion of France. The others, up to pacify the two provinces, which never wanted to return to France, has profoundly modi-"ed the policy of the govern-

ing class and that of the French Masons. In the war Marshal Joffre had been a Mason, French Catholic, Clemenceau and Poincaré Atheists, and Masons. But the Church had now a formidable hold on them all and pressed it. Moreover there now appeared the new force which was to affect world-Masonry: the Com-

munist menace. Masonry is essen-

tially bourgeois: Communism es-

sentially anti-bourgeois. Banks are more sacred than churches, and every ally, even the Pope and the Grand Architec-

t, was welcome in the fight. So French Masonry has risen again, or sunk, to the level of British and American Masonry. One great constructive and French Masons in the old figment group was F. Bulson. In 1924, when I met him in Paris and re-

minded him of his creation of France's great system of secular schools, he muttered: "Oh, don't think I would do it today" Statesmen who were notorious Atheists fawned on the Pope's Nuncio and attended mass in honor of Joan of Arc. In the post-war years the middle and lower classes, still Atheists, rallied to the Pope's thinly-disguised M.R.P. The recent Senator-

eal elections mean that, on papal suggestion, they change from it to non-"Anti-Gaulism.

In an essay on this, it is impos-

sible to follow the development of Masonry in all the leading coun-

tries of Europe but a short account of it in Spain will show that it was much the same in all Latin coun-

tries. Spanish Masons claim evidence of the existence of the craft in their country in the 16th century but the story really begins after the establishment of the Grand Lodge in London in 1717.

In 1726 English officers and mer-

chants opened a lodge in Gibraltar; in 1727 one in Madrid.

In the course of the century French Grand Lodges—particularly in Spain—one of Voltaire's works was sold 300,000 copies in a Spanish translation—and by 1748 there were 500 Masons in Spain. Those who do not know Spanish history, will wonder why it struggled to birth at all in the classic land of the Holy Inquisition, but the great ministers Don Garza, probably the finest statesman modern Spain ever produced, was a Deist and a close friend of Vol-

taire. He founded and became Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Spain in 1760. In 1780 it became the Spanish Grand Orient, in close cooperation with the Freemasons, and the colorful charlatan Cagliostro founded a number of lodges of his spurious brand.

The Church was paralyzed and the Inquisition suppressed by the French, and Voltaire's brother pressed the cause of Masonry, so that early in the century there were 420 lodges in the country. In the next 20 years they rose and fell with the phases of that bloody and tragic history of Spain which I describe elsewhere. In the reign of Ferdinand VII alone, although he was twice deposed and twice perjured his way back, more than 50,000 democrats were done to death; and we may be sure that the number included all the Freemasons. But Liberalism gained un-

der his successor, and by 1883 there were three rival Grand Orient in Spain. Persecution was renewed under Alfonso XII—corrupt as he was, like every other Spanish Bourbon—and there were many judicial murders and horrible tortures in the jails. The Liberals continued to fight, and in 1910 there were 262 lodges; and nearly all that was brilliant in Spanish letters of the academic world was at least in symp-

tony with them.

To prevent an exposure of his evil conduct Alfonso XIII set up a military dictator, but the people in 1932 won a bloodless victory at
the polis and set up a secular Republic. But, as in France, the Socialist growth alarmed the comfortable middle class and they deserted the Socialist allies with whom they had won the Republic and prepared the way for Franco. Their Masonry has perished under the vile regime of Church and army, though most of them share the high prosperity of the upper-middle class, the aristocracy, and the clergy, while the Spanish people who carried six revolutions in a hundred years in the name of Freedom and Democracy and lost nearly 100,000 martyrs are now suffered by the French, British, and American champions of Freedom and Democracy to languish and suffer under the most sordid tyranny in Europe.

Much the same has been the fortune of Masonry in Portugal. The English founded a Grand Lodge in Lisbon in 1735. Later in the century the great statesman Pombal, a Voltairean, gave the fraternity the same opportunity as D'Aranda had given it in Spain, and the Napoleonic armies had further favored it. The royalist-clerical reaction was more horrible than it was in Spain, but it was shorter, and in the latter part of the century Freemasonry flourished. As in France it was mainly atheistic, and its leaders, like Maghalac Lima, worked intimately with the like-minded Masons of France and Italy. It was they who organized the republican movement at the beginning of the present century and carried the revolution of 1910. By that time I was intimate with some of the fighting Spanish Masons and was aware of the plans of the republican organization long before they were carried out. But here again the economic issue made a breach between the bourgeois Masons and the workers, without whom they are always powerless, and the way was prepared for the crushing clerical aristocratic dictatorship which is still throned on the poverty and misery of the people.

It was the same in all the so-called Latin countries. The bitter denunciation of Masonry by every Pope of the 19th century reminds me that Masons were, until recent times, deadly enemies of the Vatican and had an important share in bringing about both the revolution of 1848, and the war by which the Piedmontese put an end to the Kingdom of the Pope and that of Naples, and the final unification of Italy.

In the middle of the 18th century, when the genial spirit of Voltaire softened the rigidity of the old regime, the English had planted Masonry in Naples, which had then a fine Deistic minister. The French fostered it when they set up a Republic at the end of the century, but the royalist-Catholic reaction after Waterloo was even more savage than in Spain and Portugal. During a half century of struggle in the Kingdom of Naples (the kings of which were as brutal and corrupt as those of Spain and Portugal) about a quarter of a million democratic men and women, it is said by native historians, were put to death.

The South Italians, whom so many despise, made the longest and sternest fight of all in the great war for freedom. In the Pope's Kingdom, Central Italy, the clerical regime was almost as barbaric; and the Austrians who ruled North Italy were merely more refined in their cruelties. The leading emancipators (Garibaldi, Mazzini, etc.) were, as I said Masons and the fraternity had a fine part in setting up the Kingdom of Italy in 1870 and keeping it solidly anti-Papal until the First World War. Then Socialism and Communism appeared and, as in France, the middle class Masons rallied to the standard of reaction; and Mussolini, whom they supported, sold them to the Papacy. In 1904 I took part in a vast gathering of 30,000 Free-thinkers at Rome and we were officially received by the Atheist Mason mayor of Rome, Nathan, while the Popes still thundered against Masonry. Today...
4. THE POPES AGAIN SAVE CIVILIZATION

Masonry has invented a hundred names for itself in the course of its many schisms and quarrels over origins, ritual, officers, and jurisdiction. That has been the fate of most organizations that professed an idealist aim. But we may surely say that for the world at large the only classification that really matters is that all lodges and Grand Lodges fall into two categories: Acquiescent and Progressive Masonry, or those whose names are not included in the list. For Masonry has not been alone in persecuting Masonry; Protestant Holland attacked it before the Popes did and Protestant Switzerland has some harsh proclamations to its credit. He shows also that, especially in the 19th century, many Catholics joined the order. I have told on an earlier page how at one time a Duke of Norfolk, head of an ancient ducal family of which the late Duke of Norfolk was a member, joined the Order. He has been a prominent Mason and a particularly proud Mason, was Grand Master of the English Grand Lodge.

The work is interesting also because it gives details of persecution in many countries, but, besides the fact that the craft is not yet a monopoly of Masons in America, there is much that may profitably be added to it.

Not even a Mason, probably, now reads the text—Wright gives many pages of excellent translations—of these Papal fulminations, but some of the writers copy passages from Catholic writers who are not so well known. He has given an impression of earnest and learned, if not always accurate, pontiffs shedding tears over a world that is reeling to destruction here and damnation hereafter. In most cases this is just Catholic moonshine.

The first Pope to denounce the fraternity was Clement XII, in 1738, 15 years after the appearance of the first Constitution. Of what happened he probably knew as little as the Grand Lama of Tibet did, but as I said, Masons abroad had established lodges (France, Spain and Italy), and the Pope had a vague idea that some of its non-Christian international force, conspiring in sealed chambers, was spreading over Europe and threatening thrones and churches. It was rather the cry of a scared child. It was of Clement XII that the king of Savoy said that "he would have made an excellent Pope if they hadn't made him one." He still so far lived in the Middle Ages that he rebuked the Protestant Elector of Brandenburg for taking the title of King of Prussia without his permission. So his sonorous language about Masonry is amusing. The "brigands" (Masons) are growing alarmingly. "The wine is the true flesh of the Lord's vineyard." They have secret meetings and so were probably heretics. Any Catholic who joins or in any way helps them incurs major excommunication from which the Pope alone can release him. The few score Masons who met in small rooms in places separated by hundreds of miles from each other must have roared with laughter over their pot wine and walnuts.

The French Church was at that time independent of the Vatican and did not accept papal orders unless the state endorsed them. Through the Parlement the state refused to endorse this ridiculous proposition. It was therefore not valid even for Catholics in France, though doubtless there were many who were intimidated. At all events it is said that when the Pope declared 1750 a "Jubilee Year" and there were the usual conflux of streams of Catholics to Rome, so many French pilgrims sought papal absolution for having joined the Freemasons that the Pope was compelled to renew the threat of excommunication in a new Constitution (1751).

Benedict XIV was so exceptionally learned for a Pope and so thoroughly broad-minded that there has been much talk of special pleading on his part. The Pope was an opponent of Masonry, and the Pope answered amiably with Voltaire, who dedicated his tragedy "Marat" to the Pope, and with Frederick of Prussia, who asked him for a bishopric for a Catholic canon, a favorite of his of flagrant morals and so little religious that he used to dip his crucifix into his wine to keep it fresh. The only cardinal—the Pope was more respected in Protestant countries than in Rome—who was really friendly with him was a rich Casino owner. The Pope's extraordinary conduct abroad is curiously illustrated in the extant letters of the distinguished French jurist, President de Brosses, who was familiar with him. De Brosses says that while the Pope was represented as a drunkard and rascal, his character is said not to be arduous at the age of 65 to 75—he was "indecent in speech." As a matter of fact Benedict, just before his "elevation," uses a particularly gross expletive in a letter to his friend Cardinal Tencin. In another letter he tells Tencin with joy that he has bought a nude marble Venus and finds that the Prince and Princess of Wurttemberg have scratched their names on her private parts. He was then in an incredible state of debauch.

All this would be well known to English Masons—Horace Walpole was friendly with Benedict—and they would not hold it against him when, for some obscure reason, he was compelled to renew the condemnation of the fraternity. I fancy the cardinals, disliking his purge for libelary, forced him. But here we repeat the Constitution of Clement XII: adding—which must have amused many—a vague charge of vice and perversity. He must have been very much pleased with the secret assemblies that came into the open.

The different were the condemnations of Masonry by the popes of the 19th century. The first was Pius VII in 1822. This was the Pope whom Napoleon had "handled like a lackey." The "noblest among the Catholic literatures" (who signed away the temporal power under pressure of threats. In 1823 Napoleon was in
The three popes who followed Pius VII were despoiled throughout Europe. Two Cardinal Secretaries of State, Consalvi and Albani, really ruled the Catholic world from 1816 to 1830. The only real delicacy recorded about them is that both cardinals refused to become priests as they felt more comfortable in their amorous adventures. Consalvi was Secretary of State for Leo XII and Pius VIII, and he issued the usual type of blundering and vitriolic condemnation of the Masons for each, though their combined ten years of power were still mostly Catholics who opposed the temporal power of the popes. In any case, nine-tenths of the Masons of the world worshipped the Grand Architect and were good Christians. Worse still, "the moral principles in their doctrines"—which Masons hold to be "sublime"—were "horrible" (chiefly, of course, the Brotherhood of Man and the Bible); their meetings were "horribly sacrilegious" and they "most impudently encouraged debauch and pleasure." The Inquisition, now gloriously restored, must smell out what is left of them in Italy and France; and it did, with the usual savage consequences.

This unpardonable libel of the fraternity was not merely repeated by every pope of the 19th century but received its greatest and most stupid expansion in the declarations of the one and only of them to whom the world at large gave a respectful hearing, Leo XIII. But there is another aspect of these condemnations. Most Masonic writers, especially in America, do not know on account of the general suppression, since Catholics became a voting power, of the sordid facts of American history from 1816 to about 1870.

The Vatican and papal Rome, now supported by the Holy Alliance of the Northern Powers as an ally in the destruction of revolution, fell back at once into their old lazy sensuality, administrative corruption, and supine indifference to the welfare of the people. The destruction of such infamies as the Papal and the Neapolitan rule in Italy. In fact, Liberalism seemed to have invaded even the clerical world here and there, and the new Pope, Pius IX, was publicly hailed as a Liberal.

Twenty years of savage repression had failed to silence the Italian people. The Church had raised this Pius IX to the rank of Venerable (or Venerable in sound history) he is an equivocal character. His temperate British biographer, T. A. Trollope, says that in his youth he was "the biggest liar in the school," and his Italian contemporaries said that he was a panzy in his youth. Larousse, editor of the famous French encyclopedia dictionary, said in earlier editions of that work that Pius, the most vitriolic critic of the Masons before Leo XIII, had himself been a Mason; and at one time the French put into circulation a portrait of him in full Masonic regalia. You can imagine the reception of the similar-looked Masons by the French Masons, they said, had cut off the head of a portrait of a Mason and substituted for it the head of the saintly Pope. But Dudgeon Wright gives it as his "Roman Catholicism and Freemasonry" the official proof that the charge is true. Pius was admitted to the Euphrates Cataca lodge at Palermo in 1839, when he was already a 46-year-old priest; and other documents show that as a papal emissary in South America he was received in the lodges at Monte Video.

Cardinal Albani had long passed away, and Pius had chosen Cardinal Antonelli as his Secretary of State; and of this man it is enough to say that he was born the son of a poor peasant, led a life of luxury and license, and at his death left $30,000,000, and a bastard daughter, who became the wife of Countess Lamberti, fighting for it in the courts. Pius had not even the excuse of the revolutions of 1848 for his attack on the Freemasons, for it was launched on the world in 1846.

After 1848, when the Romans sent him flying disguised as a
woman to Naples, he cast aside all pretence of Liberalism and repeatedly libelled the Masons in the familiar style. I say libelled because all these attacks include a charge of conspiring against moral principles as well as against civil and ecclesiastical authority and religion. Most of us will be aware that Masons are in private life as healthily appreciative of wine, women and song as Catholics or ourselves are. But their code is as insistent on conventional morality as any other, and it entirely lacks the casuistry and dishonesty of the Catholic code. As to their secret meetings being the kind of merry performances in which the devil may be presumed to be interested, it is only a Catholic priest who could make so ludicrous and dishonorable a charge.

Yet this deepest depth of calumny and falsity was reserved for, as the more sober Catholics would tell you, the greatest Pope since the genial Benedict XIV—Leo XIII. Against Leo's personal character I never heard any reproach. He was, it is true, 68 years old when he was consecrated Pope, since the cardinals, as usual, wanted another vacancy as soon as possible, but the nearest approach to frivolity I ever heard about his earlier clerical career was that, when he had been Papal Nuncio at Brussels and a malicious Liberal noble had offered him his open snuff-box with a nude lady painted on the inside of the lid, Leo had taken a pinch and asked smilingly: "Is this Madame la Marquise?" I fancy, however, that he knew well that Cardinal Vannutelli, one of the most important in his Sacred College and in the opinion of many destined to be his successor as Holy Father, had a mistress and children living openly within a mile of the Vatican. An American Consul once pointed out the house to me.

Let us say for Leo, who became Pope in 1878, that he had much more reason than his predecessors to attack the Masons. After their temporary return to the Church (1870-5), from fear of the Communards, the French bourgeoisie-Masons were again in full cry against Rome. The Italian Masons, now united and enthusiastic from Naples to Milan in the new Kingdom of Italy (1870), were becoming formidable. Spain had a more liberal regime, and the Masons made great progress. In Germany they rallied to the support of Bismarck and his anti-Catholic program. The world had become far brighter for man, and proportionately darker for the Church, since the days of Gregory XVI. A new sun was rising—evolutionary science—and the pale moon of theology was sinking.

But, while the press receives all papal pronouncements on bended knees, no pope ever yet accurately described the realities of life. The stereotyped papal laments cannot be used unless the facts are first grossly distorted. From a sound sociological angle the eighth decade of the last century saw the swiftest advance from the lingering medieval injustices and illusions toward modern civilization. But Leo XIII, still in the prime of his life, affected to see in it the omen of the end of civilization.

His encyclical (1884) opened with a contrast of the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of the Devil. He went back 2,400 years, to the hills of ancient Persia, for his answer to modern science, democracy, and freedom. Every progressive movement in the world came from the devil, who had organized all the forces of evil for a grand attack; and the devil's shock-troops were the Freemasons. They had made "incredible progress" and they were "blind slaves" to unknown authorities who were in league with Satan. They rejected God and immortality, attacked marriage and the family, were corrupting morals everywhere. He writes these things in a city which only half a century earlier had been described by a devout priest as "the foulest sewer ever opened up to the eye of man" and was now enormously improved by the Italian authorities. He tells states that they are in danger of perishing, yet he knew well that secular statesmen, largely Masons,
5. FREEMASONRY IN AMERICA

It would be ludicrous to suggest that a Papal crusade of this kind defeated atheistic Masonry. In the Latin countries it continued to flourish for a quarter of a century after Leo XIII had informed a dazed world that devils attended the lodges and gave the Masons their plans for destroying religion and civilization. In France it had won all its aims by 1914, and as the secular Republic was firmly established, the statesmen, who were to a great extent Masons, felt that they could safely flirt with the Vatican between the two World Wars.

In Italy Masonry remained powerful until the spread of Socialism drove the middle class under the Fascist banner, and Mussolini sold the Masons out to the Papacy when he needed an alliance with it.

In Spain the Masons were curbed under the dictatorship of de Rivera, then worked with the Socialists to get rid of him and found a Republic, finally deserted the socialists and rallied to the support of Franco in alliance with their hereditary enemies, the priests. The same occurred in Portugal and, as I explained, in South America.

This was the end of what I have called Progressive Freemasonry, which was, in fact, mainly atheistic. It was in a sense a victory for the Church, which had always assured the privileged classes that it was their most powerful supporter. During the same period the Masonic Masonry made more rapid progress than ever. At the beginning of the 19th century there were far less than a million Masons in America. By 1838, when the continental Masonic Masonry was either powerless or became Aesculapius everywhere, there were in America 3,300,000, besides another million in "Slade Orders" and probably a further million in irregular (colored folk, etc.) societies. Some peculiarity of American life or character seems to favor the growth of these bodies with what you might call an air of synthetic mysticism. There are, as I said, about 20,000,000 adult Americans enrolled in them, and their very names and their professions of secrecy, which one would at first glance think entirely at variance with the realism of the American character, make them prosper more in the United States than in any other country. There are more than half a million of the Mystic Shrines and two million members of the Order of the Eastern Star: which is described as a "secret sisterhood" in which female relatives of Masons can partly enjoy the melodramatic oaths and ceremonies of the craft. I have not said anything up to the present about this question of woman and masonry, which seems to fascinate many. Dudley Wright has written on the subject and it is authoritative. He surprises me only when he says that there is "presumptive evidence" that women were admitted to the Order of the Knights Templars of the Middle Ages. That order was crushed and its leader burned at the stake, and the ground on which it was comprehensively addicted to sodomy and, as I show elsewhere, French jurists have generally held, with good reason, that the trial of them was fair and the verdict justified.

Into Masonry proper, Craft Masonry, only three or four bold bad women have ever penetrated whether by accident or design — or, they might have tried to, by the use of their charms. But at all times there have been androgynous (bisexual) bodies which he calls "Adoptive Masonry," like the American Order of the Eastern Star. He reproduces the full liturgy of several of these bodies and says that in the year in which he wrote there were "three Grand Lodges of Androgynous Freemasons." Mrs. Annie Besant was at one time Deputy-Master of Co-Masonic and Great Britain and Ireland. These bodies, sometimes controlled by the Grand Lodges and always in close relations with them, seem to have escaped the eagle eye of the Vatican. What groans they would have drawn from the pontifical breast!

It is claimed that there were many Masonic centers in the American colonies before the English Grand Lodge gave charters for regular lodges in 1730 and 1733. Doubtless British or Scottish Masons from the early societies were amongst the pioneers, and we have to imagine one of these settling in a district and recommending to his born neighbors the kind of convivial meeting to which he had been accustomed. There seems to have been no particular care on the part of the masons who wanted to learn about these early traces of the fraternity or settle the mixed question whether the establishment of the lodge in Burlington by Daniel Cox was really prior to the activity of Henry Seke of Boston must consult Melvin Johnson's exhaustive "Beginnings of Freemasonry in America" (1924). Nor need I here summarize the story of the craft in America from 1730 to recent times.

Until the War of Independence the lodges were all, or nearly all, chartered by the English Masons, but they repudiated the allegiance at the Declaration of Independence. Since then every variety of Masonic rite has been introduced. It is enough that 14 Presidents — Washington, Adams, Jefferson, Monroe, Jackson, Polk, Fillmore, Buchanan, John, Garfield, Harrison, McKinley, Taft, and Theodore Roosevelt are claimed for the fraternity, and some writers further claim Madison, Taylor, and Pierce. A large number of other distinguished men — Lafayette, Franklin, Paine, Burr, Sherman, Hamilton, Fulton, etc. — are on the lists.

There is perhaps some fallacy in naming distinguished men who are known to have joined a lodge at one time or other when we do not know their mature opinion of the fraternity. It is often stressed that such famous German scholars and writers as Goethe, Lessing, and Herder joined the fraternity in the 18th century, when its secret meetings appealed particularly to young rebels against the narrow traditions and clerical despotism of the older Germany, but it seems that they quit it in disgust and sometimes bitter reproaches. Others, on the other hand, read of high character and considerable culture have not only persisted in it but expressed their appreciation of it in quite remarkable language, as if it really possessed some secret wisdom or force that could be of great value to the world. One must, of course, make some allowance for the American love of florid oratory and moving pictures, on condition of exclusive admissions. There are hundreds of gems like the following in the records:

"Masonry is the shrine of grave thoughts and beautiful sentiments, the seminary for the improvement of the moral and the mental standard of its members."

What surprises the outsider most of all is that the most serious or responsible members of the fraternity speak constantly of its "sublime morality" and find this symbolically expressed in the signs, regalia, and rites which seem false to the outsider. It is this, probably, which move even recent Masonic writers to say that the craft must be of great antiquity and make them study the history, especially the mythical history, of the past in search of a founder.

Few non-Masons who give adequate thought to the subject will doubt today that the fraternity deserves the Gild of builders in the Middle Ages and that the symbols are not expres-
sions of truths but that these propositions have been read into them. There is, in fact, some inconsistency in the attitude of those who profess to believe that the fraternity has some profound and valuable truths of great value to the race, yet these have to be yelled by a strict secrecy from the community. The secrecy, in so far as it exists—in some of the illustrated Masonic works there are colored plates of the theatrical-looking higher officers in their most solemn rites and free quotations of the ritual—seems now to be one of the super official attractions of the lodge.

Most of us have had sufficient personal acquaintance with Masons to feel justified in saying that to the immense majority of them Freemasonry is neither a religion nor a set of moral truths. During one of my long ocean voyages I became friendly with the higher officers of the boat, who were all Masons. The only one who insisted on its high value as a pure religion was the chief engineer who often rebuked my Atheism. I have heard men swear in many languages but I never met one who was so fluent in profane language as he was; and the chief officer, an oldish man who had sailed the Seven Seas, said the same about him. I do not regard swearing as anything more than a picturesque variation of speech, but . . . At all events, I have found Masons always too human to suppose that they were enshrining some beautiful religious truth or sublime morality in their breasts. It is often, if not generally, said by readers that the chief attraction of the fraternity is, like that of the Knights of Columbus, economic; it improves your business prospects to belong to it. My Masonic friend Dudley Wright always denied this, yet he never spoke of Masonry as a lofty religion or ethic, and it seems that the majority of its members do not seriously regard it in that light. To them it seems to be a genial and real fraternity for convivial and mutual aid purposes with a

"With tongue and pen, with all our open and secret influence, with the purse and, if need be, with the sword, we will advance the cause of human progress and labor to enfranchise human thought." That is precisely what the disowned atheistic Masons were doing from Italy to Peru. It would astonish this generation of American Masons if they applied a tithe of their ample funds to the completion of a sort of Masonic martyrology: a list of the Masons of France, Austria, Hungary, Italy, Spain, Portugal and Latin America who laid down their lives or perished in infamous jails or penal colonies in the cause of freedom and democracy in the course of the 19th century.