

**THE MASONIC MANUAL: OR,
LECTURES ON FREEMASONRY,
CONTAINING THE INSTRUCTIONS,
DOCUMENTS, AND DISCIPLINE OF
MASONIC ECONOMY**

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The Masonic Manual: Or, Lectures on Freemasonry, Containing the Instructions, Documents, and Discipline of Masonic Economy by Jonathan Ashe

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MASONIC ECONOMY.

BY (THE LATE)

REV. JONATHAN ASHE, D.D., M. M.

A NEW EDITION,
WITH ANNOTATIONS AND REMARKS, BY THE
REV. GEO. OLIVER, D.D.,

PAST D.P.G.M. FOR LINCOLNSHIRE, ETC.

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1855.

Original Dedication,

TO

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS AUGUSTUS FREDERIC,

DUKE OF SUSSEX AND INVERNESS, BARON ARBLOW,

M. W. GRAND MASTER OF MASONS, &c., &c.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS,

I TAKE the liberty to dedicate a Book on Masonry to you. Your rank at the head of the Fraternity, and high station in society, distinguish you as the fittest personage to patronize such a work. It will, I expect, prove instructive and profitable to Masons in particular, and induce men in general, who read it, to appreciate the Masonic principle in its truth and virtue. My intention in writing it is to supply a *desideratum*, viz., a volume containing the instructions, documents, and discipline of the Masonic Economy, in all its bearings. The use of it must be obvious. It will plainly and completely tell the Craft their eternal and temporal obligations, and afford the uninitiated a fair review and estimate of Masonry, as much as it can be universally known in the reflection and effect of its benefit and beauty.

It argues well for your Royal Highness's head and heart, that you are warmly interested in promoting Masonry. Your presiding with ability, as you do, in the Chair of the Grand Lodge, (in which the Prince Regent presided before, and a popular nobleman at present going to shed lustre on his Majesty's Eastern Empire,

sat as an applauded Substitute,) superadds a bright advantage to the cause, and promises a better era to Masons. Masons already look up to your Royal Highness as their *MECÆNAS*. Your presidency is hailed as the day-spring from on high to dissipate the darkness which obscures Masonry, and to develope its learning and benevolence. Masonry, we know, is calculated to ameliorate man in the world—to make him imitate the Divine Architect's attributes, and so to superinduce the Maker's image in the human mind. Its progress and encouragement, if so, is very good. From the common condition of man in the multitude, and its own peculiar Constitution, Masonry must be confined and limited at all times. However, if it be judiciously managed, it will tend to humanize and bless mankind. So the occult operation of elementary fire insinuates its powers, and feeds all nature,—its fostering heat is every where, and its fervent force is found in each material substance. May the warmth and light of Masonry be regulated and directed by means of your Royal Highness, diffusing solid comfort and satisfactory entertainment in the community, assisting the advancement of the Arts and Sciences, and inspiring your own illustrious breast with the consolations arising from a consciousness of doing good. In the faithful spirit of this sacred sentiment, I beg to subscribe myself,

May it please your Royal Highness,

Your very obedient Servant,

And truly devoted Fellow-Member of

The Fraternity of Freemasons,

JONATHAN ASHE, D.D., M.M.

Bristol, Nov. 1, 1813.

THE ANCIENT FRATERNITY

OF

FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS.

WORTHY BRETHREN,

I feel it necessary to address you in editing a new work on Masonry. Many among you are aware that a MASONIC MANUAL was wanted, both for Lodges and individuals, in order to supply a summary of the principles and duties of the Brotherhood, as much as the economy of Masonry can or ought to be explained in such a manner. I humbly hope that I have succeeded in contracting and combining the spirit and provisions of Masonry, so as to present the analysis and interest of it in an unperplexed and undivided body of obligation and ethics. In the progress of this interesting task, which I found more arduous than I expected, I had to consult the recorded history and detached writings of Masons in every age and era of the world. As I disclaim originality I shall not be accused of plagiarism, and it might be even prolix to enumerate the sources and authorities from which I derived and took my materials. I do think it right, however, to mention the respected names of PRESTON, SMITH, FURNOUGH, and CALCOTT,¹ as au-

¹ It is rather extraordinary that our worthy Brother should have omitted the name of HURCHINSON, when enumerating the authors to whose labours he had been indebted in the compilation of his work; because he has borrowed more matter from "The Spirit of Masonry," than from all the rest combined.—EDITOR.

thors to whom I am particularly indebted for enabling me to preserve a regulated arrangement in setting forth the doctrine and discipline of Masonry.

A member, as I am, of the sacred profession, some blame may be attached to me for writing on Masonry. I have been an admirer of it for many years; and I hope that my illustration of it in this book will exculpate me from the charge of profaneness in being a Mason, and continuing to admire its principles. If its economy be sometimes subject to abuse, it may be well asked, what system or institution of human society can be kept entirely incontaminate? My book cannot fail to have some tendency to disabuse Masonry, and rescue it from the unfair obloquy frequently cast upon it by individuals, however gifted they might be, who possessed neither opportunity or candour duly or truly to appreciate its merits. A few men of talent have attacked it with some apparent success, but I need not observe to Masons that they were, after all their efforts, impotent assailants. Truth may be aspersed and traduced, but it cannot be destroyed, or put down from the adamantine basis on which it stands. In kingdoms and dynasties of despotism, Masonry was always watched with jealousy, if not excluded by tyranny. But the Government of England was never hostile to it, because, being founded in the genius of civil liberty, it always made truth its ally. In France, at any time, Masonry could not be tolerated by the ruling powers.³ Arbitrary sovereignty extinguishes

³ The French Masons, during the last century, spoke of English Freemasonry in the most absurd and improbable terms, classing it amongst societies of a ridiculous tendency, which they ignorantly affirm we call coteries. "Les Coteries de Gras et de Maigres, des Rois, de St. George, des Voisins Logés dans une même rue; des Nigauds et des Buveurs de Bière de Brunswick, des Duellistes, de Deux Sols, des Laids, des Gauds au frange, des Amoureux; la Coterie Eternelle, et nombre d'autres. La Coterie Eternelle, qui n'a

the spirit of discussion, whenever individuals presume to erect themselves into a private or secret body. And should even the story which the Abbé Baruel published with such sounding solemnity, be founded in truth, the charge cannot come home to British Masons, composed as they are of the sovereign himself, the sons of the sovereign, and the nobility of the realm, as well as the most loyal and excellent supporters of the Constitution and Commonwealth. Indeed, Baruel sufficiently invalidated his own allegations against Masons. It is plain that every Masonic Lodge to which he was admitted, (without taking the necessary obligations which guard Masonry, as if by "a flaming sword,") constituted merely a secret club of Jacobins, as sanguinary as the original conspirators who met in the Rue de St. Jacques. His charges thus fall to the ground; and it is evident that he is an enemy to British freedom, and also ignorant of Masonry, to all its intents and purposes.

Baruel's book is, no doubt, not only a libel on Masonry, but insidiously libellous to the civil and religious polity, which Britons support as the pure eternal head-spring out of which all their benefits and blessings flow, and to which Masons never cease to wish prosperity in the sentiment of Father Paul--*Eato Perpetua!!!*

The writer of this work will be sorry, indeed, if it frustrate his expectations of utility in its circulation.

été instituée que vers la fin du guerres civiles d'Angleterre, et qui a souffert quelques interruptions, avoit pourtant déjà consommé au commencement de ce siècle, cinquante tonneaux de tabac, trente mille pièces de biere, mille barriques du vin rouge du Portugal, deux cens pipes d'eau-de-vie," &c. The author adds, that by Freemasons "la bouteille s'appelle *baril*; il y a qui disent *barrique*, cela est indifferant. On donne au vin le nom de *poudre*, aussi bien qu'à l'eau; avec cette différence, que l'un est *poudre rouge*, et l'autre *Poudre blanche*. On n'a que de gobelets, qu'on appelle *canons*." (L'Ordre des Francs Masons trahi; par l'Abbé l'erau, p. 13, 41.) What superlative trash is this!—EDITH.

For the entertainment of Masons it was chiefly made, and it is fondly hoped it will afford them a considerable degree of information and use. In this laudable expectation it is submitted by the author, who begs to subscribe himself, with faithful good wishes for the success of Masonry, and the honour and advantage of all its members,

Their truly Obedient Servant,
Friend and Brother,
JONATHAN ASHE, D.D., M.M.

Bristol, Nov., 1813.