

## AHIMAN REZON.

BEFORE we enter into the Cause or Motive of the first Institution of Free-Masonry, it is necessary in some measure to shew the Excellency of Secrecy, and with what Care it is to be kept.

ONE of the principal Parts that makes a Man be deemed wise, is his intelligent Strength and Ability to cover and conceal such honest Secrets as are committed to him, as well as his own serious Affairs. And whoever will peruse sacred and profane History, shall find a great Number of virtuous Attempts (in Peace and War) that never reached their designed Ends, but were shaken into Shivers and defeated, only through Defect of secret Concealment ; and yet, besides such unhappy Prevention, infinite Evils have thereby ensued. But before all other Examples, [2] let us consider that which excels all the rest, deriv'd ever from God himself. Who so especially preserves his own Secrets to himself, never letting any Man know what should happen on the Morrow ; nor could the wise Men in Ages past, divine what should befall us in this Age : Whereby we may readily discern, that God himself is well pleased with Secrecy. And although (for Man's good) the Lord has been pleased to reveal some Things, yet it is impossible at any Time to change or alter his Determination, in regard whereof the reverend wise Men of ancient Times, evermore affected to perform their Intentions secretly.

WE read that *Cato* the Censor often said to his Friends, that of three Things he had good Reason to repent, if ever he neglected the true Performance of all or any one of them : The first, if he divulged any Secret ; the second, if he adventured on the Water when he might stay on dry Land ; and thirdly, if he should let any Day neglectedly escape him without doing some good Action. The latter two are well worthy of Observation ; but the first concerns our present Undertaking. *Alexander* having received divers Letters of great Importance from his Mother, after he had read them, in the Presence of none but his dear Friend and himself, he drew forth his Signet which sealed his most private Letters and without speaking set it upon

*Ephestion's* Lips : intimating thereby, that he in whose [B 2-3] Bosom a Man buries his Secrets, should have his Lips locked up from revealing them.

AMONG the rest it may not be disagreeable to the Reader to peruse the following Story, as told by *Alius Gellius* in his *Attick Nights*, and by *Macrobius* in his *Saturnals*.

THE Senators of *Rome*, at their usual sitting in the Senate-House, had constituted a Custom among themselves, that each Brother Senator who had a Son, should be admitted with his Father to abide in the Senate-House during their sitting, or depart if Occasion required : nor was this Favour general, but extended only to Noblemen's Sons, who were tutored in such a Manner as enabled them to become wise Governors, capable of keeping their own Secrets. About this Time it happened that the Senators sat in Consultation of a very important Cause, so that they stayed much longer than usual, and the Conclusion referred to the following Day, with express Charge of Secrecy in the mean Time. Among the other Noblemens Sons who had been at this weighty Business, was that faithful Youth the Son of the grave *Papirius*, whose Family was one of the most noble and illustrious in all *Rome*.

THE young Lad being come home, his Mother (as most of the Fair-Sex, are highly affected with Novelty) intreated him to tell her what strange Case had been that Day debated in the Senate, that had Power to detain them so long beyond their usual Hour: The virtuous and noble Youth courtiously [4] told her that it was a Business not in his Power to reveal, he being in a solemn Manner commanded to Silence : Upon hearing this Answer, her Desires became more earnest in stricter Enquiries into the Case, and nothing but Intelligence thereof could any way content her : So that first by fair Speeches and Entreaties, with liberal Promises, she endeavoured to break open this poor little Casket of Secrecy : But finding those Efforts in vain, to Stripes and violent Threats was her next Flight : because Force may compel, where Lenity cannot.

The admired noble Spirit finding a Mother's Threats to be very harsh, but her Stripes more bitter than any Thing beside ; comparing his Love to her as his Mother, with the Duty he owed to his Father : the one mighty, but the other impulsive ; he lays her and her fond Conceit in one Scale ; his Father, his own Honour, and the solemn

Injunctions to Secrecy, in the other Scale ; and finding her intrinsic Weight as being his Mother, but lighter than Wind being thus gone out of herself. Whetting his tender Wit upon the sandy Stone of her edging Importunity, to appease her, and preserve his own Honour by remaining faithful, he thus resolved her.

MADAM, and dear Mother, you may well blame the Senate for their long sitting, at least for calling in Question a Case so impertinent ; for except the Wives of the Senators be admitted to consult thereon, there can be no Hope of a Conclusion : I speak [5] this but out of my young Apprehension, for I know their Gravity may easily confound me; and yet, whether Nature or Duty so instruct me, I cannot tell : But to them it seems necessary, for the Increase of People, and for the public Good, that every Senator should be allowed two Wives ; or otherwise their Wives two Husbands : I shall hardly under one Roof call two Men by the Name of Father ; I had rather call two Women by the Name of Mother. This is the Question, Mother ; and To-morrow it must have Determination.

THE MOTHER hearing this, and his seeming unwilling to reveal it, took it for infallible Truth : Her Blood was quickly fired, and Rage ensued. I need not put the Reader in mind that such sudden Heats seldom admit of Consideration ; but on the contrary hurry the Senses and Faculties further to Rashness, and other Follies : by which they are rendered incapable of doing themselves such good Actions, or Services, as their Case often require : So without requiring any other Counsel, she immediately sent to the other Ladies and Matrons of *Rome*, to acquaint them with this weighty Affair ; wherein the Peace and Welfare of their whole Lives was so nearly concerned. This melancholy News blew up such a brain-sick Passion, that the Ladies immediately assembled ; and though (some say falsely) that a Parliament of Women are seldom governed by one Speaker, yet this Affair being so urgent, the Haste as pertinent, and the Case (on their Behalf) meerly [6] indulgent, the revealing Woman must prolocute for herself and the rest. And on the next Morning such a Din was at the senate Door, for Admission to sit with their Husbands in this wonderous Consultation, as if all *Rome* had been in an Uproar. Their Minds must not be known before they have Audience ; which (though against all Order) being granted, such an Oration was made by the Woman Speaker, with Request that Women might have two Husbands rather than Men two

Wives, who could scarcely content one, &c. Upon the Riddle's Solution, the noble Youth was highly commended for his Fidelity, and the Ladies greatly confounded, and departed very likely with blushing Cheeks. Nevertheless, to avoid the like Inconveniency for the future, it was determined that thence forward they should bring their own Sons no more into the Senate : only young *Papirius* who was freely accepted, and his Secrecy and discreet Policy not only applauded, but himself with Titles of Honour dignified and rewarded.

NOR should we forget the faithful *Anaxarchus* (as related by *Pliny*, in his seventh Book and twenty-third Chapter) who was taken in order to force his Secrets from him, bit his Tongue in the Midst between his Teeth, and afterwards threw it in the Tyrant's Face.

The *Athenians* had a Statue of Brass, which they bowed to: the Figure was made without a Tongue, to declare Secrecy thereby. [7]

LIKEWISE the *Egyptians* worshipped *Harpocrates*, the God of Silence : for which Reason he is always pictured holding his Finger to his Mouth.

THE *Romans* had a Goddess of Silence named *Angerona*, which was pictured like *Harpocrates*, holding her Finger to her Mouth, in Token of Secrecy.

THE Servants of *Plancus* are much commended, because no Torment could make them confess the Secret which their Master intrusted them with.

LIKEWISE the Servant of *Cato* the Orator was cruelly tormented, but nothing could make him reveal the Secrets of his Master.

*Quintus Curtius* tells us, that the *Persians* held it an as inviolable Law to punish most grievously (and much more than any other Trespass) him that discovered any Secret : for Confirmation thereof, he, says King *Darius*, being vanquished by *Alexander*, had made his Escape so far as to hide himself where he thought he might rest secure : no Tortures whatsoever, or liberal Promises of Recompense, could prevail with the faithful Brethren that knew it, or compel them to disclose it to any Person: And furthermore says, that no Man ought to commit any Matter of Consequence to him that cannot truly keep a Secret.

*Horace*, among his continual Laws, would have every Man keep secret whatsoever was done or said : For this Reason the *Athenians* were wont (when they met at any Feast) that the most

ancient among [8] them should shew every Brother the Door whereat they entered, saying, Take Heed that not so much as one Word pass out from hence, of whatsoever shall here be acted or spoken.

THE first Thing that *Pythagoras* taught his Scholars was to be silent, therefore (for a certain Time) he kept them without speaking, to the End that they might the better learn to preserve the valuable Secrets he had to communicate to them, and never to speak but when Time required, expressing thereby that Secrecy was the rarest Virtue : Would to God that the Masters of our present Lodges would put the same in Practice.

*Aristotle* was demanded what Thing appeared most difficult to him ; he answered, to be secret and silent.

To this Purpose St. *Ambrose*, in his Offices, placeth among the principal Foundations of Virtue, the patient Gift of Silence.

THE wise King *Solomon*, says in his Proverbs, that a King ought not to drink Wine, because Drunkenness is an Enemy to Secrecy; and in his Opinion, he is not worthy to reign that cannot keep his Secrets ; he farthermore says, that he which discovers Secrets is a Traitor, and he that conceals them is a faithful Brother : He likewise says, that he that refraineth his Tongue is wise : And again, he that keeps his Tongue, keeps his Soul. I could mention many other Circumstances of the Excellency of Secrecy ; and I dare venture to say that the greatest [9-C] Honour, Justice, Truth, and Fidelity, has been always found amongst those who could keep their own and others Secrets ; and this is most nobly set forth by *Horace*, who says:

The Man resolv'd and steady to his Trust,  
Inflexible to Ill, and obstinately just ;  
May the rude Rabble's Insolence despise,  
Their senseless Clamours and tumultuous Cries ;  
The Tyrant's Fierceness he beguiles,  
And the stern Brow and the harsh Voice defies,  
And with superior Greatness smiles:  
Not the rough Whirlwind, that deforms  
*Adria's* black Guph, and vexes it with Storms ;  
The stubborn Virtue of his Soul can move:  
Not the red Arm of angry *Jove*,  
That flings the Thunder from the Sky,

And gives Rage to roar and Strength to fly.

Should the whole Frame of Nature round him break,  
In Ruin and Confusion hurl'd :  
He unconcern'd wou'd hear the mighty Crack,  
And stand secure amidst a falling World.

THEREFORE I am of Opinion, that if Secrecy and Silence be duly considered, they will be found most necessary to qualify a Man, for any Business of Importance : If this be granted, I am confident that no [10] Man will dare to dispute that Free-Masons are superior to all other Men, in concealing their Secrets, from Times immemorial : which the Power of Gold, that often has betrayed Kings and Princes, and sometimes overturned whole Empires, nor the most cruel Punishments could never extort the Secret (even) from the weakest Member of the whole Fraternity.

THEREFORE I humbly presume it will of Consequence be granted, that the Welfare and Good of Mankind was the Cause or Motive of so grand an Institution as Free-Masonry (no Art yet ever being so extensively useful) which not only tends to protect its Members from external Injuries, but to polish the rusty Dispositions of iniquitous Minds, and also to detain them within the pleasant Bounds of true Religion, Morality, and Virtue : for such are the Precepts of this Royal Art, that if those who have the Honour of being Members thereof would but live according to the true Principles of the Ancient Craft, every Man that's endowed with the least Spark of Honour or Honesty, must of course approve their Actions, and consequently endeavour to follow their Steps. And although very few or none of the Brethren arrive to the Sublimity and beautiful Contrivance of *Hiram Abif* : yet the very Enemies of Free-masonry must own, that it is the most renowned Society that ever was, is now, or (perhaps) ever will be upon Earth : the following true Des- [11-C 2] cription of the Royal Art, will clearly shew its great Use to Mankind.

Waste and irregular still the World had been,  
A Prospect rude not pleasant to be seen ;  
Inclement Seasons would destroy Mankind,  
With Dog-Star's Heat and Winter's freezing Wind:  
The greedy Savage, whose Voice to human Ear  
Ungrateful Sound, and fill the Heart with Fear:

Aspiring Warriors, Who could their Strength withhold ?  
 Their daring Insults and Attempts most bold ?  
 Without Masonry, OUR Glorious Shield,  
 We to all those and many more must yield.  
 Hail ! mighty ART, thou gracious Gift of Heaven,  
 To aid Mankind by our Creator given:  
 It was you alone that gave the Ark its Form,  
 Which sav'd the Faithful from the impending Storm ;  
 When sinful Cowans were grov'ling in the Tide,  
 The Masons Ark triumphantly did ride  
 O'er mighty Waves, nor car'd they where it steer'd  
 Till Floods abated and dry Land appear'd:  
 On *Arrarat's* Mount, after the mighty Storm,  
 There stood their Ark and open'd Lodge in Form ;  
 There the Mason, of his own Accord,  
 Built an Altar to the heavenly Lord ;  
 Return'd Thanks with offering Sacrifice,  
 Which pleas'd Jehovah ; and to himself he cries, [12]  
 I ne'er will curse the Ground no more,  
 Nor smite the Living as I've done before:  
 While Earth remain this Blessing I'll bestow ;  
 A proper Time when you your Seed may sow ;  
 The Harvest-Time to bless the lab'ring Swain,  
 With fruitful Crops for all his Care and Pain:  
 Nights, Days, and Seasons shall surround this Ball,  
 Nor shall they cease until the End of all:  
 And to confirm my Promise unto thee,  
 Amidst the Clouds my Bow a Witness be ;  
 An heav'nly Arch shews how God sav'd the Lives  
 Of Masons four, likewise their happy Wives.  
 Such are the Blessings of each Time and Season,  
 Which God has promis'd to that Master Mason ;  
 By which we see that mighty Things were done  
 By this great Art, since first the World began.  
 What Mortal living, whether far or near,  
 Around the Globe within the heavenly Sphere,  
 Can name one Art so much by God approv'd,  
 As Masonry in *David* whom he lov'd ;

Witness *Moriah* where God appear'd to Man,  
 And gave the Prince the Temple's Plan ;  
 Which Charge wise *Solomon* after did fulfil,  
 By *Tyre's* Aid and *Hiram's* mighty Skill.  
 This is the Art that did the World excel,  
 And pleas'd the Lord of Hosts to come and dwell [13]  
 Amongst the Masons ; who did the Temple frame,  
 To worship God and keep his sacred Name.  
 By Masons Art aspiring Domes appear,  
 Where God is worship'd still in Truth and Fear:  
 By Masons Art the greedy Miser's Breast,  
 (Tho' Iron-bound, impenetrable as his Chest)  
 Compassion feels and values not his Store,  
 And freely gives what he ne'er thought before:  
 By Masons Art the injurious Tongue doth fall  
 Before the Throne, when awful Silence call:  
 By Masons Art the Wings of loose Desire,  
 Are soon elipt short and cannot soar no higher :  
 The lascivious Mind the Ancient Craft restrain  
 From immediate Bents, unlawful and profane:  
 By Masons Art the puny foppish Ass,  
 (Mankind's Disgrace, and Sport of ev'ry Lass)  
 Soon quits his Folly and more wiser grown,  
 Looks on himself as one before unknown:  
 By Masons Art the proud Engines of State,  
 (Ambition's Nurs'ry, and her lofty Seat)  
 Are deemed vain and useless Toys,  
 Free-Masons prize more solid Joys.

BUT methinks I hear some of my Readers say, surely if  
 Free-Masonry be such as it is here represented, the Brotherhood most  
 certainly are the happiest Men living : and yet, on the contrary, we  
 often [14] meet some very miserable, others very great Knaves, and a  
 number of ignorant, illiterate, stupid Fools of the Society ; or at least  
 would endeavour to make the World believe so. This shall be duly  
 considered, and answered, in its proper Place hereafter. In the mean  
 Time I am well assured, that none but Strangers to the Craft, and  
 ungenerous Enemies to good Society, will doubt the Veracity of what



is here inserted concerning Free-Masonry. And for further Satisfaction to my female Readers, and such of the male Sex as have not the Honour of being initiated into the Mystery, I here beg Leave to treat of the Principles of the Craft (so far as comes under the Limitation of my Pen) which I hope will meet with a just Admiration, because they are founded upon Religion, Morality, Brotherly-Love, and good Fellowship.

A MASON is obliged by his Tenure to believe firmly in the true Worship of the eternal God, as well as in all those sacred Records which the Dignitaries and Fathers of the Church have compiled and published for the Use of all good Men : So that no one who rightly understands the Art, can possibly tread in the irreligious Paths of the unhappy Libertine, or be induced to follow the arrogant Professors of Atheism or Deism ; neither is he to be stained with the gross Errors of blind Superstition, but may have the Liberty of embracing what Faith he shall think proper, provided at all Times he pays a due [15] Reverence to his Creator, and by the World deals with Honour and Honesty, ever making that golden Precept the Standard-Rule of his Actions, which engages, To do unto all Men as he would they should do unto him : For the Craft, instead of entering into idle and unnecessary Disputes concerning the different Opinions and Persuasions of Men, admits into the Fraternity all that are good and true; whereby it hath brought about the Means of Reconciliation amongst Persons, who, without that Assistance, would have remained at perpetual Variance.

A MASON is a Lover of Quiet ; is always subject to the civil Powers, provided they do not infringe upon the limited Bounds of Religion and Reason : And it was never yet known, that a real Craftsman was concerned in any dark Plot, Designs, or Contrivances against the State, because the Welfare of the Nation is his peculiar Care; so that from the highest to the lowest Step of Magistracy due regard and Deference is paid by him.

BUT as Masonry hath at several Times felt the injurious Effects of War, Bloodshed, and Devastation, it was a stronger Engagement to the Craftsmen to act agreeable to the Rules of Peace and Loyalty, the many Proofs of which Behaviour hath occasioned the ancient Kings and Powers to protect and defend them. But if a Brother should be so far unhappy as to rebel against the State, he would meet [16] with no Countenance from his Fellows ; nor would they keep any private

Converse with him, whereby the Government might have Cause to be jealous, or take the least Umbrage.

A MASON, in Regard to himself, is carefully to avoid all Manner of Intemperance, or Excess, which might obstruct him in the Performance of the necessary Duties of his laudable Profession, or lead him into any Crimes which would reflect Dishonour upon the ancient Fraternity.

HE is to treat his Inferiors as he would have his Superiors deal with him, wisely considering that the Original of Mankind is the same ; and though Masonry divests no Man of his Honour, yet does the Craft admit that strictly to pursue the Paths of Virtue, whereby a clear Conscience may be preserved, is the only Method to make any Man noble.

A MASON is to be so far benevolent, as never to shut his Ear unkindly to the Complaints of wretched Poverty ; but when a Brother is oppressed by Want, he is in a peculiar Manner to listen to his Sufferings with Attention ; in Consequence of which, Pity must flow from his Breast, and Relief without Prejudice according to his Capacity.

A MASON is to pay due Obedience to the Authority of his Master and presiding Officers, and to behave himself meekly amongst his Brethren ; neither neglecting his usual Occupation for the Sake of Company, in running from one Lodge to another ; [D-17] nor quarrel with the ignorant Multitude, for their ridiculous [*sic*] Aspersions concerning it ; But at his leisure Hours he is required to study the Arts and Sciences with a diligent Mind, that he may not only perform his Duty to his great Creator, but also to his Neighbour and himself : For to walk humbly in the Sight of God, to do Justice, and love Mercy, are the certain Characteristics of a Real Free and Accepted Ancient Mason : Which Qualifications I humbly hope they will possess to the End of Time ; and I dare venture to say, that every true Brother will join with me in, *Amen*.

THE Benefits arising from a strict Observance of the Principles of the Craft, are so apparent that I must believe every good Man would be fond to possess and practise the same ; because those Principles tend to promote the Happiness of Life, as they are founded on the Basis of Wisdom and Virtue.

IN the first Place ; our Privileges and Instructions, when right-

ly made Use of, are not only productive of our Welfare on this Side of the Grave, but even our eternal Happiness hereafter.

FOR the Craft is founded on so solid a Basis that it will never admit Blasphemy, Lewdness, Swearing, Evil-Plotting, or Controversy ; and tho' they are not all of the same Opinion in Matters of Faith, yet they are ever in one Mind in Matters of Masonry ; that is, to labour justly, not to eat any Man's Bread for [18] Nought, but to the utmost of our Capacity to love and serve each other, as Brethren of the same Household ought to : Wisely judging, that it is as great an Absurdity in one Man to quarrel with another because he will not believe as he does, as it would be in him to be angry because he was not exactly of the same Size and Countenance, &c.

THEREFORE to afford Succour to the Distressed, to divide our Bread with the industrious Poor, and to put the misguided Traveller into his Way, are Qualifications inherent in the Craft and suitable to its Dignity, and such as the worthy Members of that great Body have at all Times strove with indefatigable Pains to accomplish.

THESE and such like Benefits, arising from a strict Observance of the Principles of the Craft (as Numbers of Brethren have lately experienced) if duly considered, will be found not only to equal but to exceed any Society in being.

IF so, the worthy Members of this great and most useful Society can never be too careful in the Election of Members ; I mean, a thorough Knowledge of the Character and Circumstance of a Candidate that begs to be initiated into the Mystery of Free-masonry.

UPON this depends the Welfare or Destruction of the Craft ; for as Regularity, Virtue, and Concord are the only Ornaments of human Nature, (which is often too prone to act in different Capacities) [D 2-19] so that the Happiness of Life depends, in a great Measure, on our own Election and a prudent Choice of those Steps.

FOR human Society cannot subsist without Concord, and the Maintenance of mutual good Offices ; for, like the working of an Arch of Stone, it would fall to the Ground provided one Piece did not properly support another.

IN former times every Man (at his Request) was not admitted into the Craft, (tho' perhaps of a good and moral Reputation) nor allowed to share the Benefits of our ancient and noble Institution, unless he was endued with such Skill in Masonry, as he might thereby

be able to improve the Art, either in Plan or Workmanship ; or had such an Affluence of Fortune as should enable him to employ, honour, and protect the Craftsmen.

I would not be understood, by this, to mean that no reputable Tradesmen should receive any of our Benefits ; but, on the contrary, am of Opinion that they are valuable Members of the Commonwealth, and often have proved themselves real Ornaments to Lodges.

THOSE whom I aim at, are the miserable Wretches of Low-Life, (often introduced by excluded Men<sup>a</sup>) [20] some of whom can neither read nor write : and when (by the Assistance of Masonry) they are admitted to the Company of their Betters, they too often act beyond their Capacities ; and under Pretence of searching for Knowledge, they fall into Scenes of Gluttony or Drunkenness, and thereby neglect their necessary Occupation and injure their poor Families, who imagine they have a just Cause to pour out all their Exclamations and Invectives against the whole Body of Free-Masonry, without considering or knowing that our Constitutions and Principles are quite opposite to such base Proceedings.

HERE I think it necessary to put in a Word of Advice to some who may have an Inclination to become Members of this ancient and honourable Society : First, they are to understand that no Man can be made a regular Free-Mason, but such as are free from Bondage, of mature Age, upright in Body and Limbs, and endued with the necessary Senses of a Man : This has been the general Custom of Masons, in all Ages and Nations, throughout the known World. [21]

To this I beg Leave to add a Word or two : The Persons to whom I now speak, are Men of some Education, and an honest Character : but in low Circumstances : I say, let them first consider their Income and Family, and know that Free-Masonry requires Ability, Attendance, and a good Appearance, to maintain and support its ancient and honourable Grandeur. I could say a great deal more on this

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<sup>a</sup> That is, Men excluded from their Lodges for Misdemeanors, & who (finding themselves deemed unworthy of so noble a Society,) still endeavour to make the rest of Mankind believe, that they are good and true, and have full Power and Authority to admit, enter, and make Free-Masons, when and wheresoever they please, &c. These Traders, (though but few in Number) associate together, and for any mean Consideration admit any Person to what little they know of the Craft. Little I say, for I honestly assure my readers, that no Man who rightly understands the Craft, can be so blind as to trample over its ancient Landmarks ; therefore all Victuallers, &c. ought to be very cautious of entertaining such, from whom neither Benefit nor Credit can be expected. See *New Regulation*, viii.

Point, but I think the Regulations are sufficient, and therefore refer the Reader to the Perusal of them.

THE next Thing to be considered is the Choice of Officers to rule and govern the Lodge, according to the ancient and wholesome Laws of our Constitution ; and this is a Matter of great Concern, for the Officers of a Lodge are not only bound to advance and promote the Welfare of their own particular Lodge, but also whatsoever may tend to the Good of the Fraternity in general.

THEREFORE no Man ought to be nominated or put in such Election, but such as by his own Skill and Merit, is deemed worthy of Performance, *viz.* He must be well acquainted with all the private and public Rules and Orders of the Craft ; he ought to be strictly honest, humane of Nature, patient in Injuries, modest in Conversation, grave in Counsel and Advice, and (above all) constant in Amity and faithful in Secrecy.[22]

SUCH Candidates well deserve to be chosen the Rulers and Governors of their respective Lodges, to whom the Members are to be courteous and obedient, and, by their wise and ancient Dictates, may learn to dispise the over-covetous, impatient, contentious presumptuous, arrogant, and conceited Prattlers, the Bane of human Society.

HERE I cannot forbear saying, that I have known Men whose Intentions were very honest, and without any evil design commit great Errors, and sometimes been the Destruction of good Lodges ; and this occasioned by their Brethren hurrying them indiscreetly into Offices, wherein their slender Knowledge of Masonry rendered them incapable of executing the Business committed to their Charge, to the great Detriment of the Craft and their own Dishonour.

AMONGST the Qualities and Principles of the Craft, I have given a Hint concerning the Behaviour of a Mason in the Lodge, to which I beg he may add the few following Lines, *viz.* he is to pay due Respect, and be obedient (in all reasonable Matters) to the Master and presiding Officers : He must not curse, swear, nor offer to lay Wagers ; nor use any lewd or unbecoming Language, in Derogation of GOD's Name, and Corruption of good Manners ; nor behave himself ludicrously, or jestingly, while the Lodge is engaged in what is serious and solemn : Neither is he to introduce, support, nor mention any [23] Dispute or Controversy about Religion or Politicks ; or force any Brother to eat,

drink, or stay against his Inclination ; nor do or say any Thing that may be offensive, or hinder a free and innocent Conversation ; least he should break the good Harmony, and defeat the laudable Designs and Purposes, of the ancient and honourable Fraternity.

AND I honestly recommend Free-Masonry, as the most sovereign Medicine to purge out the above, or such other Vices ; and regular Lodges, as the only Seminaries where Men (in the most pleasant and clearest Manner) may hear, understand, and learn their Duty to God ; and also to their Neighbours. And this without the Multiplicity of spiteful and malicious Words, long Arguments, or fierce Debate ; which have been made Use of, among mistaken Mortals, upwards of a thousand Years past : And instead of uniting Men in one sacred Band (as the Servants of God, and Brethren of the same Household) have divided them into as many different Opinions, as there were (not only Languages, but even) Men at the Confusion of *Babel*.

As to the Behaviour of the Brethren when out of the Lodge, I hope this short Space between each Lodge-Night will not admit of Forgetfulness of the Decency and good Decorum observed in the Lodge, which may serve them as an unerring Rule for their Behaviour and Conduct in all other Companies and Places ; and like the worshipful discreet Master of a [24] Lodge, rule, govern, and instruct their Families at home in the Fear of God and Love of their Neighbours, while they themselves imitate the Member's Obedience, &c. in paying due Respect to their Superiors.

THESE few Hints may serve to put the Brethren in Mind of the Duty incumbent on them as Free-Masons ; and likewise, how to behave themselves in such a Manner as may be acceptable to God, agreeable to the Principles of Masonry, and much to their own Honour : But for further Satisfaction to my Readers in general, I shall here insert the several old Charges of Free and Accepted Masons.