

A DEFENCE of MASONRY, publish'd A. D. 1730.
Occasion'd by a Pamphlet call'd *Masonry Dissected*.

CHAP. I. **A**MONG the extraordinary Discoveries of the present Age, nothing has been received with more Delight and Exultation, than a few Sheets, written, it seems, *without Partiality*, call'd *Masonry Dissected*. The *Grand Secrer*, which has long withstood the Batteries of Temptation, that neither *Money*, the Master Key of the Heart, nor *good Liquor*, that unlocks the very Soul, nor *Hunger*, that breaks through Stone-Walls, nor *Thirst*, a sore Evil to a *Working Mason*, could bring to Light; has at last been disgorged *upon Oath*, to the great Easement of a tender Stomach, the eternal Scandal of the *Fraternity*, and the Good of the *Publick* never to be forgotten! The Design was no less than to disburthen a loaded *Conscience*, to acquaint the World, *That never did so ridiculous an Imposition appear among Mankind; and to prevent so many innocent Persons being drawn into so pernicious a Society!*

What could induce the *Dissector* to take that Oath, or the *Magistrate* to admit it, shall not at this Time be decided.

However, I must give the World Joy of so notable a Discovery, so honourable, so circumstantiated! a mighty Expectation was raised, and, without Doubt, is wonderfully gratified by this Course of Anatomy. *It must be this, it can be nothing else: It is as we always supposed, a whimsical Cheat supported by great Names to seduce Fools, who, once gull'd out of their Money, keep the Fraud secret to draw in others.*

I confess, I cannot come into this Method of Arguing; nor is it, in my Opinion, a fair Way of treating a *Society*, to run implicitly with the Cry, without examining whether these Reproaches are founded upon any Thing in the *Mystery* (as now represented) either *wicked* or *ridiculous*. For that stupid Imputation of *drawing in Fools for the Sake of their Money*, can have no Weight in the present Case; since the *Fraternity*, as it now stands, consists principally of Members of great Honour and Distinction, much superior to Views so fordid and ungenerous.

For once then, let this *Dissection* contain *all the Secrets* of FREE MASONRY; admit that every Word of it is *genuine* and literally *true*, and that the whole Scheme consists of no more nor no less: Yet under all these Concessions, under all the Disadvantages and Prejudices whatever, I cannot but still believe, *there have been Impositions upon Mankind more ridiculous, and that many have been drawn into a Society more pernicious.*

I would not be thought agitated upon this Occasion, as if I were any Way concern'd whether this *Dissection* be true or false? or whether the Credit of *Free Masonry* be affected by it or not? These Considerations can give me no Trouble. My Design is to address to the sensible and serious Part of Mankind, by making a few impartial Remarks upon this *Dissection*, without contending for the Reputation of *Masonry* on the one Hand, or reflecting upon the *Dissector* on the other.

CHAP. II. **T**HE formidable Objection which has given Offence to the better Part of Men, is the Copy of the *Oath* as it lies in the *Dissection*. It has been a Matter of Admiration, that so many Persons of great Piety, strict Conscience and unspotted Character, should lay themselves under so solemn an Obligation, under Penalties so terrible and astonishing, upon a Subject so trifling and insignificant.

To obviate this Objection, I observe; that the *End*, the *Moral* and *Purpose* of MASONRY, as described in the *Dissection*, is to *subdue our Passions, not to do our own Will; to make a daily Progress in a laudable Art; to promote Morality, Charity, good Fellowship, good Nature and Humanity*. This appears to be the *Substance*, let the *Form* or *Vehicle* be ever so unaccountable.

As for the Terms relating to *Architecture, Geometry* and *Mathematicks*, that are dispersed throughout the *Dissection*, it would be strange if a Society of such a Denomination, could subsist wholly without them; tho' they seem (to me at least) to be rather *Technical* and *Formal* (yet deliver'd perhaps by long Tradition) than essentially attached to the *Grand DESIGN*.

Now where is the *Impiety*, where the *Immorality*, or *Folly*, for a Number of Men to form themselves into a Society, whose main End is to improve in commendable Skill and Knowledge, and to promote universal Beneficence and the social Virtues of human Life, under the solemn Obligation of an *Oath*? And This, in what *Form*, under what secret Restrictions, and with what innocent Ceremonies They think proper?

This Liberty all Incorporate Societies enjoy without Impeachment or Reflection: An *Apprentice* is bound to keep the Secrets of his *Master*, a *Freeman* is obliged to consult the Interest of his Company, and not to prostitute in common the *Mysteries* of his Trade: Secret *Committees* and *Privy Councils* are solemnly enjoyn'd not to publish abroad their Debates and Resolutions. There appears to be something like *Masonry* (as the *Dissector* describes it) in all regular Societies of whatever Denomination: They are *All* held together by a Sort of *Cement*, by Bonds and Laws that are peculiar to each of them, from the Highest to the little Clubs and Nightly Meetings of a private Neighbourhood. There are *Oaths* administer'd, and sometimes solemn Obligations to *Secrecy*: There are a *MASTER*, two *Wardens*, and a Number of *Assistants*, to make what the *Dissector* may call (if he pleases) a *Perfect Lodge* in the City-Companies. There is the Degree of *Enter'd Apprentices*, *Master* of his Trade, or *Fellow Craft*, and *Master*, or the *Master* of the Company. There are *Constitutions* and *Orders*, and a successive, a gradual Enjoyment of *Offices*, according to the several Rules and Limitations of *Admission*.

But it is reply'd, that the general Design of *Masonry* may be commendable, or at least innocent, and yet be carried on to the same Advantage without the Solemnity of an *Oath*, especially pressed under such dreadful Penalties.

In answer, I observe, t at the *Question* is not whether the Purpose of *Masonry* may as well be served without an *Oath*? But *whether an Oath, in the present Case, be lawful, and may be taken with a good Conscience?* And to solve this Difficulty I

De Obligatione Juramenti Prælect. 3. Sect. 15.

I shall introduce the Opinion of *Bishop SANDERSON*, the most judicious Casuist that ever treated upon the Subject of *Oaths*; who says, *When a Thing is not by any Precept or Interdict, Divine or Human, so determin'd; but every Man, pro hic & nunc, may at his Choice do or not do, as he sees expedient; Let him do what he will, he sinneth not,* 1 Cor. vii. 36. *As if Caius should swear to sell his Land to Titius, or to lend him an hundred Crowns: The Answer is brief, an Oath in this Case is both lawful and binding.*

Now I would know what Precept, *Divine or Human*, has any way determin'd upon the Contents of the *Dissention*? And whether the general Design of *Masonry*, as there laid down, is not at least of equal Benefit and Importance to the Publick, with the lending of an hundred Crowns to a private Man? The Answers to these Questions are obvious, and the Consequence is equally plain, that *an Oath upon the Subject of Masonry is at least justifiable and lawful.*

As for the Terror of the *Penalty*, the World, upon that Occasion, is commonly mistaken; for the Solemnity of the *Oath* does not in the least add to the Obligation; or, in other Words, the *Oath* is equally binding without any *Penalty* at all. The same Casuist has this Expression: *A Solemn Oath of itself, and in its own Nature, is not more obligatory than a Simple One; because the Obligation of an Oath ariseth precisely from This, that God is invoked, as a Witness and Revenger, no less in a Simple Oath than in the solemn and corporal; for the Invocation is made precisely by the Pronunciation of the Words (which is the same both in the simple and solemn) and not by any corporal Motion or concomitant Sign, in which the Solemnity of the Oath consist.*

I write to intelligent Readers, and therefore this Citation wants not to be explain'd.

But further, if the *Oath* in the *Dissention* be taken by all *Masons* upon their Admission, no Member of the *Fraternity*, upon any Pretence whatsoever, dares violate the Obligation of it, without incurring the Guilt of *Perjury*; even supposing that *Masonry* were more trifling and indifferent, than in the *Dissention* it may appear to be. And therefore if the Conduct of the *Dissenter* has stagger'd the Conscience of any one of the Brotherhood, concerning the Observation of *that Oath*; and has induced him to trifle and play with the Force of it, I hope he will desist betimes, lest he becomes actually forsworn.

Prælect. 4. Sect. 11] This Case is thus determin'd by the same Casuist, *A Voluntary Oath is the more binding for being Voluntary; because there is no straiter Obligation than that which we take willingly upon ourselves.* And in another Place

Prælect. 3. Sect. 15] the Casuist is more particular, *Where a Matter is so trivial that*

that it is not wortb the Deliberation of a wise Man, nor matters a Straw whether it be done or not done; as to reach up a Chip or to rub one's Beard; or for the Slightness of the Matter is not much to be esteem'd; as to give a Boy an Apple, or to lend a Pin; an Oath is binding in a Matter of the least Moment: Because weighty and trivial Things have a like Respect unto Truth and Falshood; And farther, because every Party swearing is bound to perform all he promised as far as he is able, and as far as it is lawful: But to give an Apple to a Boy is both possible and lawful; he is bound therefore to perform it, he ought to fulfil his Oath,

CHAP. III. **H**AVING taken off the Weight of the great Objection, the Design of this Chapter is to remove an Imputation, which has been often urged with great Confidence, *viz.* The Principles and the whole Frame of Free Masonry is so very weak and ridiculous, that it reflects upon Men of the least Understanding to be concern'd in it! And now, say the merry Gentlemen, it appears evidently to be so by the *Dissertion*, which discovers nothing but an unintelligible Heap of Stuff and Jargon, without common Sense or Connection.

I confess I am of another Opinion; tho' the *Scheme of Masonry*, as reveal'd by the *Dissertor*, seems liable to Exceptions: Nor is it so clear to me as to be fully understood at first View, by attending only to the *literal Construction* of the Words: And for aught I know, the *System*, as taught in the regular *Lodges*, may have some Redundancies or Defects, occasion'd by the Ignorance or Indolence of the old Members. And indeed, considering through what Obscurity and Darkeness the *Mystery* has been deliver'd down; the many Centuries it has survived; the many Countries and Languages, and *Sects* and *Parties* it has run through; we are rather to wonder it ever arriv'd to the present Age, without more Imperfection. In short, I am apt to think that MASONRY (as it is now explain'd) has in some Circumstances declined from its *original Purity*! It has run long in muddy Streams, and as it were, under Ground: But notwithstanding the great Rust it may have contracted, and the forbidding Light it is placed in by the *Dissertor*, there is (if I judge right) much of the *old Fabrick* still remaining; the essential Pillars of the Building may be discover'd through the Rubbish, tho' the Superstructure be over-run with Moss and Ivy, and the Stones, by Length of Time, be disjointed. And therefore, as the *Busto* of an old HERO is of great Value among the Curious, tho' it has lost an Eye, the Nose, or the Right Hand; so MASONRY with all its Blemishes and Misfortunes, instead of appearing ridiculous, ought (in my humble Opinion) to be receiv'd with some Candour and Esteem, from a Veneration to its *Antiquity*.

I was exceedingly pleas'd to find the *Dissertor* lay the *Original Scene* of *Masonry* in the EAST, a Country always famous for *Symbolical Learning* supported by *Secrecy*; I could not avoid immediately thinking of the old EGYPTIANS, who conceal'd the chief *Mysteries* of their Religion under *Signs* and *Symbols*, call'd *Hieroglyphics*: and so great was their Regard for *Silence* and *Secrecy*, that they

Vid Imagines Deorum, had a Deity call'd HARPOCRATES, whom they respected
 a Vincenio Cbartario. with peculiar Honour and Veneration. A learned Author
 has given us a Description of this Idol, thus; HARPOCRATES the God of Silence
 was formed with his Right Hand placed near the Heart, cover'd with a Skin
 before, full of Eyes and Ears; to signify by this, that many Things are to be seen
 and heard, but little to be spoken. And among the same People, their great God-
 dess IS (the same as MINERVA, the Goddess of Strength and Wisdom, among
 the Greeks) had always the Image of a Sphinx placed in the Entrance of her
 Temples; because their Secrets should be preserv'd under sacred Coverings, that they
 might be kept from the Knowledge of the Vulgar, as much as the Riddles of
 Sphinx!

PYTHAGORAS, by travelling into Egypt, became instructed in the Mysteries of
 that Nation; and here he laid the Foundation of all his Symbolical Learning. The

Vid. JAMBlichus. Vit. Pythagoræ. several Writers that have mention'd this Phi-
 LAERTIUS, Vit. Pythagoræ. losopher, and given an Account of his Sect and
 FORPHYRIUS. CLEM. ALEX. Strom. Institutions, have convinc'd me fully, that

FREE MASONRY, as publish'd by the Dissertor, is very nearly allied to the old
 Pythagorean Discipline; from whence, I am perswaded, it may, in some Circum-
 stances, very justly claim its Descent. To mention a few,

Upon the Admission of a Disciple, he was bound by a solemn Oath to conceal
 the Mysteries from the Vulgar and Uninitiated.

The principal and most efficacious of their Doctrines were (says JAMBlichus)
 ever kept Secret among themselves; they were continued unwritten, and preserv'd only
 by Memory to their Successors, to whom they deliver'd them as Mysteries of the
 Gods.

They convers'd with one another by Signs, and had particular Words which they
 receiv'd upon their Admission, and which were preserv'd with great Reverence, as the
 Distinction of their Sect: For (it is the judicious Remark of LAERTIUS) as Gene-
 rals use Watch-Words to distinguish their own Soldiers from Others, so it is proper to com-
 municate to the Initiated, peculiar Signs and Words, as distinctive Marks of a
 Society.

The PYTHAGOREANS profess'd a great Regard for what the Dissertor calls the
 four Principles of MASONRY, viz. A Point, a Line, a Superficies, and a Solid;
 and particularly held that a SQUARE was a very proper Emblem of the Divine
 Vid. PROCLUS in Euclid. Essence; the Gods, they say, who are the Authors of every
 Lib. II. Def. 2. & 34. Thing establish'd in Wisdom, Strength and Beauty, are
 not improperly represented by the Figure of a Square.

Many more Instances might be produced, would the Limits of my Design admit;

CLEM. ALEXANDR. Strom. 5. I shall only observe, that there was a False Brother, one HIPPAR-
 CHUS, of this Sect, who, out of Spleen and Disappointment,

broke through the Bond of his Oath, and committed the Secrets of the Society to
 Writing, in Order to bring the Doctrine into Contempt: He was immediately ex-
 pell'd the School, as a Person most infamous and abandon'd, as one dead to all

Sense

Sense of Virtue and Goodness; and the *Pythagoreans*, according to their Custom, made a *Tomb* for him, as if he had been actually Dead. The Shame and Disgrace, that justly attended this *Violation* of his *Oath*, threw the poor Wretch into a Fit of Madness and Despair, so that *He cut his Throat* and perish'd by his own Hands; and (which surprized me to find) his Memory was so abhorred after Death, that his Body lay upon the *Shore* of the Island of *Samos*, and had no other Burial than in the *Sands of the Sea*!

The *ESSENES* among the *Jews* were a Sort of *Pythagoreans*, and corresponded, in many Particulars, with the Practice of the *Fraternity*, as deliver'd in the *Dissertation*. For Example.

When a Person desired to be admitted into their Society, he was to pass through *Two* Degrees of Probation, before he could be perfect Master of their *Mysteries*. When he was received into the Class of *Novices*, he was presented with a *White Garment*; and when he had been long enough to give some competent Proofs of his *Secrecy* and *Virtue*, he was admitted to further Knowledge: But still he went on with the Trial of his Integrity and good Manners, and then was fully taken into the Society.

But before he was received as an establish'd Member, he was first to bind himself by solemn Obligations and Professions, *To do Justice, to do no Wrong, to keep Faith with all Men, to embrace the Truth, to keep his Hands*

Vid. PHILO de Vita Contemplativa. JOSEPHUS Antiq. lib 8. cap. 2.

clear from Theft and fraudulent Dealing; not to conceal from his Fellow Professors any of the Mysteries, nor communicate any of them to the Profane, tho' it should be to save his Life; to deliver nothing but what he received, and to endeavour to preserve the Principle that he professes. They eat and drink at the same Common Table; and the Fraternity that come from any other Place are sure to be received there. They meet together in an Assembly, and the Right Hand is laid upon the Part between the Chin and the Breast, while the Left Hand is let down straight by their Side.

The *CABALISTS*, another *Set*, dealt in hidden and mysterious Ceremonies.

The *Jews* had a great Regard for this Science, and thought they made uncommon Discoveries by means of it. They divided their Knowledge into *Speculative* and *Operative*. *DAVID* and *SOLOMON*, they say,

Vid. BASNAGE's Hist. of the *Jews*, OR *CABALA*. COLLIER's Dictionary on the Word *Cabala*.

were exquisitely skill'd in it; and no body at first presumed to commit it to *Writing*: But (what seems most to the present Purpose) the Perfection of their Skill consisted in what the *Dissector* calls *Lettering of it*, or by ordering the Letters of a Word in a particular Manner.

The last Instance I shall mention is That of the *DRUIDS* in our own Nation, who were the only *Priests* among the antient *Britons*. In their Solemnities they were clothed in *White*; and their Ceremonies always ended with a good *Feast*. *POMPONIUS*

Vid. CÆSARIS Comment. lib. 6. SAMMERS's History of *Britain*, Book I. Chap. 4.

MELA relates of 'em, that their Science was only an *Effort of Memory*; for they wrote down nothing, and they never fail'd to repeat many Verses, which they received

received by Tradition. CÆSAR observes, that They had a Head or CHIEF, who had sovereign Power : This President exercised a Sort of Excommunication, attended with dreadful Penalties, upon such as either divulged or profaned their Mysteries.

Thus, with reasonable Allowance for Distance of Time, Place, and other intermediate Accidents, the preceding Collections discover something, at least, like *Masonry*, if the *Dissection* contains any such Thing.

CHAP. IV. **W**hatever Reflections may attend the few Remarks that follow in this Chapter, arising either from an Overflow of Wit, or ill Nature, I shall be unconcern'd, and leave them wholly to the Mercy of the serious Reader ; only desiring them to remember that no more ought in any Case to be expected, than what the Nature of it will reasonably admit. I own freely, I received a great Pleasure in collecting, and was frequently surpriz'd at the Discoveries that must evidently occur to an observing Eye.

The Conformity between the *Rites* and Principles of *Masonry* (if the *Dissection* be true) and the many Customs and Ceremonies of the *Antients*, must give Delight to a Person of any Taste and Curiosity ; to find any Remains of *Antique Usage* and Learning preserved by a *Society* for many Ages, without Books or *Writing*, by oral *Tradition* only.

I. The Number THREE is frequently mention'd in the *Dissection* ; and I find that the *Antients*, both *Greeks* and *Latins*, professed a great Veneration for that *Idyll. B.* Number. THEOCRITUS thus introduces a Person who dealt in secret Arts.

Ἐς τρις ἀποσπένδω καὶ τρις τὰδε πότνια Θωῶν !

Thrice, Thrice I pour, and thrice repeat my Charms !

Ovid. Metam. lib. 7.

Verbaque Ter dixit : *Thrice he repeats the Words.*

Virg. Ecl. 8.

Necte tribus Nodis ternos, Amarille, colores.
Three Colours in Three Knots unite.

Whether this Fancy owes its Original to the Number THREE, because containing a *Beginning, Middle and End*, it seems to signify *All Things* in the World ; or whether to the Esteem the *Pythagoreans* and other *Philosophers* had for it, on Account of their TRIAD or TRINITY ; or lastly (to mention no more Opinions) to its Aptness to signify the *Power of all the Gods*, who were divided into *Three Classes, Celestial, Terrestrial and Infernal* ; I shall leave to be determin'd by Others.

The *Gods* had a particular Esteem for this Number, as *Virgil* asserts.

Eclog. 8. Numero Deus impari gaudet. *Unequal Numbers please the Gods.*

We find THREE fatal Sisters, THREE Furies, THREE Names and Appearances of *Diana*. *Triæ Virginis Ora Dianæ, Three different Forms does chaste Diana bear.*
Virgil. Æneid. lib. 4.

The Sons of Saturn, among whom the Empire of the World was divided, were THREE: And for the same Reason we read of JUPITER's *Fulmen Trifidum* or *Three-forked Thunderbolt*; and of NEPTUNE's *Trident*, with several other Tokens of the Veneration they bore to this particular Number.

II. A particular Ceremony belonging to the *Oath* (as declared by the *Dissector*) bears a near Relation to a Form of Swearing among the *Antients* mention'd by a learned Author *The Person who took the Oath, was to be upon his bare Knees with a naked Sword pointed to his Throat, invoking the Sun, Moon and Stars to be Witnesses to the Truth of what he swore.*

Alexander ab Alexandro
Lib. V cap. 10.

III. A Part of the MASONS *Catechism* has given Occasion to a great deal of idle Mirth and Ridicule, as the most trifling and despicable Sort of Jargon that Men of common Sense ever submitted to. The *Bone Box* and the *Tow Line* has given wonderful Diversion: I think there are some Verses in the last Chapter of the Book of *Ecclesiastes*, which in some Manner resemble this Form of Expression: I shall transcribe them with the Opinion of the Learned upon them, without making any particular Application, *viz.*

In the Day when the Keepers of the House shall tremble; and the Grinders cease, because they are few; and those that look out at the Windows be darkned; and the Doors shall be shut in the Streets; when the Sound of the Grinding is low; and he shall rise up at the Voice of the Bird; and all the Daughters of Musick shall be brought low: Or ever the Silver Cord be loosed; or the Golden Bowl be broken; or the Pitcher be broken at the Fountain; or the Wheel broken at the Cistern!

Ecl. xii. ver. 3, 4, 6.

The Expositors upon these Verses are almost unanimous in their Opinion, that they ought to be thus explain'd, *viz.* The *Keepers* of the House are the *Shoulders, Arms* and *Hands* of an human Body; the *Grinders* are the *Teeth*; those that look out at the *Windows* are the two *Eyes*; the *Doors* are the *Lips*; the *Streets* are the *Mouth*; the *Sound of the Grinding* is the *Noise* of the *Voice*; the *Voice of the Bird* is the *Crowing of the Cock*; the *Daughters of Musick* are the two *Ears*; the *Silver Cord* is the *String* of the *Tongue*; the *Golden Bowl* is the *Pia Mater*; the *Pitcher* at the *Fountain* is the *Heart*, the *Fountain of Life*; the *Wheel* is the *Great Artery*; and the *Cistern* is the *Left Ventricle of the Heart!*

Bish. Patrick,
Doctor Smith,
Forsterus,
Melancthon, in
locum, &c.

IV. There could not possibly have been devised a more significant Token of Love, Friendship, Integrity and Honesty, than the *Joining* of the *RIGHT HANDS*, a Ceremony made use of by all civilized Nations, as a Token of a faithful and true Heart. *FIDES* or *Fidelity* was a *Deity* among the *Antients*, of which a learned Writer has given us this Description, *viz.* *The proper Residence of Faith or Fidelity was thought to be in the Right Hand, and therefore this Deity sometimes was represented by Two Right Hands joined together; sometimes by two little Images shaking each the Other's Right Hand; so that the Right Hand was by the Antients esteemed as a Thing Sacred.* And agreeable to this are those Expressions in *Virgil, Æneid. IV.*

Chartarius in lib. ut supra.

En Dextra Fidesque! as if shaking by the Right Hand was an inseparable Token of an honest Heart. And *Æneid.* I.

————— cur Dextræ jungere Dextram
Non datur, & veras audire & reddere Voces ?

that is, *Why should we not join Right Hand to Right Hand, and hear and speak the Truth.*

Vol. I. pag. 251. *In all Contracts and Agreements (says Archbishop POTTER, in his Antiquities of Greece) it was usual to take Each Other by the Right Hand, That being the Manner of plighting Faith. And this was done either out of Respect to the Number Ten, as some say, there being Ten Fingers on the Two Hands; or because such a Conjunction was a Token of Amity and Concord; whence at all friendly Meetings they join Hands, as a Sign of the Union of their Souls.*

It was one of the Cautions of PYTHAGORAS to his Disciples, *Take heed to whom you offer your Right Hand!* which is thus explain'd by **Ambit-chus**. *Take no One by the Right Hand but the Initiated, that is, in the Mystical Form; for the Vulgar and the Profane are altogether unworthy of the Mystery!*

V. The *Diffector* frequently taking Notice of the Number SEVEN, I instantly recurred to the old *Egyptians*, who held the Number Seven to be Sacred; more especially they believ'd that whilst their Feast of Seven Days lasted, the *Crocodiles* lost their inbred Cruelty: And **Leo Afer**, in his Description of *Africa*, Lib. VIII. says, *that even in his Time, the Custom of Feasting Seven Days and Nights, was still used for the happy Overflowing of the Nile.* The *Greeks* and *Latins* professed the same Regard for that Number, which might be proved by many Examples.

VI. The Accident, by which the Body of *Master HIRAM* was found after his Death, seems to allude, in some Circumstances, to a beautiful Passage in the 6th Book of *Virgil's Æneids*. **Æchilles** had been dead for some Time; and **ÆNEAS** his Son professed so much Duty to his departed Father, that he consulted with the *Cumæan Sibyl*, whether it were possible for him to descend into the *Shades below*, in Order to speak with him. The Prophets encouraged him to go; but told him he could not succeed, unless he went into a certain Place and pluck'd a *golden Bough* or *Shrub*, which he must carry in his Hand, and by that means obtain Directions where he should find his Father. The Words are well translated by *Dryden*, viz.

————— *In the neighbouring Grove
There stands a Tree; the Queen of Stygian JOVE
Claims it her own: Thick Woods and gloomy Night
Conceal the happy Plant from mortal Sight!
One Bough it bears, but wondrous to behold,
The ductile Rind and Leaves of Radiant Gold;*

This

*This from the vulgar Branches must be torn,
 And to fair PROSERPINE the Present born,
 Ere Leave be given to tempt the nether Skies;
 The first thus rent, a second will arise,
 And the same Metal the same Room supplies.
 The willing Metal will obey thy Hand,
 Following with Ease.*———

ANCHISES, the great Preserver of the *Trojan Name*, could not have been discover'd but by the Help of a *Bough*, which was pluck'd with great Ease from the *Tree*; nor, it seems, could HIRAM, the *Grand Master* of MASONRY, have been found but by the Direction of a *Shrub*, which (says the *Difffessor*) came easily up. The principal Cause of ÆNEAS's Descent into the *Shades*, was to enquire of his Father the *Secrets* of the *Fates*, which should sometime be fulfill'd among his Posterity: The Occasion of the *Brethrens* searching so diligently for their *Master* was, it seems, to receive from him the *secret Word* of *Masonry*, which should be deliver'd down to their *Fraternity* in *After-Ages*. This remarkable Verse follows,

Prætereâ jacet exanimus tibi corpus amici,
 Heu nescis!
*The Body of your Friend lies near you dead,
 Alas, you know not how!*——— This was

MISENUS, that was murder'd and buried *Monte sub Aërio, under an high Hill*; as (says the *Difffessor*) *Master* HIRAM was.

But there is another Story in *Virgil*, that stands in a nearer Relation to the Case of HIRAM, and the Accident by which he is said to have been discover'd; which is this: PRIAMUS King of *Troy*, in the Beginning of the *Trojan War*, committed his Son *Polydorus* to the Care of *Polymnestor* King of *Thrace*, and sent with him a great Sum of Money: But after *Troy* was taken, the *Thracian*, for the Sake of the Money, kill'd the young Prince and privately buried him; ÆNEAS coming into that Country, and accidentally plucking up a *Shrub* that was near him on the *Side* of an *Hill*, discover'd the murder'd Body of *Polydorus*, Æneid. III. By *Dryden*.

*Not far, a rising Hillock stood in View,
 Sharp Myrtles on the Sides and Cornels grew;
 There while I went to crop the Sylvan Scenes,
 And shade our Altar with the leafy Greens,
 I pull'd a Plant: With Horror I relate
 A Prodigy so strange and full of Fate!
 Scarce dare I tell the Sequel! From the Womb
 Of wounded Earth, and Caverns of the Tomb,
 A Groan, as of a troubled Ghost, renew'd
 My Fright; and then these dreadful Words ensued:
 Why dost thou thus my buried Body rend?
 O spare the Corps of thy unhappy Friend!*

The Agreement between these two Relations is so exact, that there wants no further Illustration,

VII. We are told that a *Sprig of Cassia* was placed by the *Brethren* at the Head of *HIRAM's Grave*; which refers to an old Custom of those *Eastern Countries* of Embalming the Dead, in which Operation *CASSIA* was always used, especially in preparing the *Head* and drying up the *Brain*; as *Herodotus* more particularly explains. The *Sweet-Wood*, *Perfumes* and *Flowers*, used about the *Graves* of the *Dead*, occur so frequently in the old *Poets*, that it would be tedious to mention Metam. lib. 15. | them. *Ovid* thus describes the Death of the *PHOENIX*.

*Upon a shady Tree she takes her Rest,
And on the highest Bough her funeral Nest
Her Beak and Talons build; then strews thereon
Balm, CASSIA, Spikenard, Myrrh and Cinamon:
Last on the fragrant Pile herself she lays,
And in consuming Odours ends her Days!*



Brother EUCLID's *Letter* to the *Author* Against unjust Cavils.

BROTHER ANDERSON, after Thanks for printing the clever *DEFENCE*, by the Advice of our Brethren, I send you this Epistle, to answer some lying Cavils. But first we would acknowledge, that

Indeed, the *Free Masons* are much obliged to the generous Intention of the unbiass'd *Author* of the above *Defence*: Tho' had he been a *Free-Mason*, he had in Time perceived many valuable Things suitable to his extended Views of Antiquity, which could not come to the *Difsector's* Knowledge; for that They are not intrusted with any Brothers till after due Probation: And therefore some think the ingenious *DEFENDER* has spent too much fine Learning and Reasoning upon the foolish *Difsection*, that is justly despised by the Fraternity, as much as the other pretended Discoveries of their Secrets in publick *News-Papers* and *Pasquils*, all of a Sort; for all of 'em put together don't discover the profound and sublime Things of *old Masonry*; nor can any Man, not a *Mason*, make use of those incoherent Smatterings (interspers'd with ignorant Nonsense and gross Falsities) among bright Brothers, for any Purpose but to be laugh't at; our *Communications* being of a quite different Sort. Next, it is well known,

That the Antiquity and Decorum of our Worshipful Fraternity have been envied by some, who, very lately, have coalesced into Societies, in Imitation of the *Free-Masons*, and some in Opposition to them, tho' in vain; as the *Cozmagons*, who soon disappear'd, and Others are going.

But

But tho' we envy not the Prosperity of any Society, nor meddle with their Transactions and Characters, we have not met with such fair Treatment from Others; nay, *even* Those that never had an Opportunity of obtaining any certain Knowledge of us, have run implicitly with the Cry, and without Fear or Wit, have vented their Spleen in accusing and condemning us unheard, untry'd; while we, innocent and secure within, laugh only at their gross Ignorance and impotent Malice.

Have not People in former Ages, as well as now, alledged that the *Free Masons* in their *Lodges* raise the *Devil* in a *Circle*, and when they have done with him, that they lay him again with a *Noise* or a *Husb* as they please?

How have some diverted themselves with the wild Story of an *old Woman between the Rounds of a Ladder*? Only they should allow the *Free-Masons* to laugh too in their Turn.

Others will swear to the Cook's *red hot Iron* or *Salamander*, for making the *Indelible Character* on the *new made Mason*, in order to give him the Faculty of *Taciturnity*! Sure such Blades will beware of coming through the Fingers of the *Free-Masons*.

Some have basely calumniated the *Fraternity* as the *Enemies* of the *FAIR SEX*, in Terms not fit to be rehears'd, and unworthy of a Reply: But tho' in *Lodge Hours* Masons don't allow of *Womens Company* (like many other Societies of Men) yet they make as good Husbands as any other Men, according to their laudable Charges.

Others wonder at their admitting Men of all Professions, Religions and Denominations: But they don't consider that *Masons* are true *Spaichidas*, and require no other Denominations, (all other Distinctions being of Yesterday) if the new Brother is a *good Man and True*: For Those of 'em that don't study *Architecture*, are often capable of encouraging the *Craft*, and help to support the poor decay'd Brethren.

Have not some rigid People been displeas'd at the Admission of some *worthless Men*? But if the *Free-Masons* are sometimes deceiv'd about Mens Characters, they are not the only Persons so deceiv'd: Yet when a Brother is obnoxious to Censure, if they don't expel him, they endeavour to reform him. However, the *Grand Lodge* has taken due Care of That.

Others complain that the *Masons* continue too long in the *Lodge*, spending their Money to the Hurt of their Families, and come home too late, nay sometimes intoxicated with *Liquor*! But they have no Occasion to drink much in *Lodge Hours*, which are not long; and when the *Lodge* is closed (always in good Time) any Brother may go home when he pleases: So that if any stay longer and get intoxicated, it is at their own Cost, not as *Masons*, but as other imprudent Men may do; for which the *Fraternity* is not accountable: And the Expence of a *Lodge* is not so great as That of many a private *Club*.

Some observing that *Masons* are not more religious, nor more knowing, than other Men, are astonish'd at what they can be conversant about in *Lodge Hours*! But tho' a *Lodge* is not a School of Divinity, the Brethren are taught the great Lessons of their old Religion, *Morality*, *Humanity* and *friendship*, to abhor *Persecution*, and to be peaceable Subjects under the Civil Government wherever they reside: And as for other Knowledge, they claim as large a Share of it, as other Men in their Situation.

Indeed, the *antient Lodges* were so many *Schools or Academies* for teaching and improving the *Arts of Designing*, especially *Architecture*; and the present *Lodges* are often employ'd that Way in *Lodge-Hours*, or else in other agreeable Conversation, tho' without *Politicks* or *Party Causes*; and none of them are ill employ'd, have no *Transactions* unworthy of an honest Man or a Gentleman, no personal *Piques*, no *Quarrels*, no *Cursing* and *Swearing*, no cruel *Mockings*, no obscene *Talk*, nor ill *Manners*: For the *noble* and eminent *Brethren* are affable to the *Meaneſt*; and *Theſe* are duly respectful to their *Betters* in *Harmony* and *Proportion*; and tho' on the *Level*, yet always within *Compaſs*, and according to the *Square* and *Plumb*.

Nor can it be denied, that a *Fraternity* so strongly cemented, is more eligible and safe than most Others; especially that there is no Fear of betraying Conversation: and that since *Masonry* has been so much countenanced by Great Men, there have been more fine *Architects* and more expert *Fellow Crafts* in *Britain*, than, perhaps, in all *Europe* besides

This appears by the stately and regular *Buildings* throughout these *Iſlands*, from the first Days of the Great *Juſto Jones*, the *Engliſh PALLADIO*; nor is the fine Taste abated in this present Reign of King *GEORGE II.* but is rather improved; witness the curious House for the *Bank of England*, the *South-Sea* House, the *Front* of the *East-India* House, the Lord *Talbot's* fine House in *Lincoln's-Inn-Fields*, the many stately *Fabricks* in the Parishes of *St. George Hanover* and *St. Mary la Bonne*, and many more in and about *London* and *Westminster*, and other *Towns* and *Cities*, besides *Country-Seats*, raised in the good old *AUGUSTAN* *Stile*; and some also design'd only, or begun, as the Lord *MAYOR* of *London's* New Palace, the admirable New *Bridge* at *Westminster* crosses the *Thames*, &c. all which discover the *Engliſh MASONS* *Grand Deſign* of rivalling fair *Italy* in *Architecture*, even those eminent *Revisers* of the *AUGUSTAN* *Stile* mentioned Part I. Chap. VII.

May the *ROYAL ART* go on and prosper, and spread itself from *Pole* to *Pole*, from *East* to *West*! As it certainly now does in all polite *Nations*, in spite of the *Ignorant* and *Malicious*. I am

From our *old Lodge*, the *HORN*,
in *New Palace-Yard*, *West-*
minster. this 2d *Thursday*, or
9th *Nov.* in the *Vulgar*
Year of *MASONRY* 5738.

Your true and faithful Brother

Euclid.

