

ANTI-MASONRY: A NEGLECTED SOURCE

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INTRODUCTION

IN THE COURSE of general research into the origins of French Freemasonry I have been making a particular study of the causes of anti-Masonry. While doing so, my attention was drawn to a small pamphlet of forty-eight pages, 12mo, entitled *Examen de la Société des Franc-Maçons* and dated 1744. The subtitle is worth quoting: '*Où l'on développe en peu de mots son opposition aux Maximes du Christianisme* [in which are developed in a few words its opposition to the principles of Christianity]. It can be added that the work ends with a French translation of Pope Clement XII's Bull of 1738.

This publication was unknown to Wolfstieg but is quoted by Fesch¹ who gives it a date of 1746. François Weil² has 1745. But there is no evidence of its use by other authors writing about Freemasonry or, more specifically, anti-Masonry.

It does, however, contain all the arguments that have been used by detractors of the fraternity in their well-documented assaults. Its especially insidious text illustrates how those such as Lefranc³, Barruel⁴ and Robison⁵, and – later – Le Couteuls⁶ were so successful. It is clear that, before writing their own attacks on the society, they had been able to study this earlier condemnation.

My intention is to examine the origins and sources of this anonymous pamphlet. We can perhaps learn why there should have been, at the time, hostility to Freemasonry which was so new to France (the first lodge was established at Dunkirk⁷ in 1726) and which could be seen to be unopposed to both religion and the State.

The innocuous title, simply translated as 'A Study of the Society of Freemasons', in fact conceals what is a most vicious attack thereon. As we shall learn, it is based on contemporary political and religious issues and this undoubtedly lent an air of credibility to its accusations. Later detractors used similar arguments although times had changed and new problems had arisen. Traces of the outrageous calumnies were so entrenched in collective memory that Barruel had merely to extrapolate a few masonic attitudes in France or elsewhere to substantiate his claim that Freemasonry fostered the French Revolution and was therefore responsible for the deaths of the King and Queen and for the persecution of the Christian faith.⁸

THE PAMPHLET SUMMARIZED

1 *Principal Accusations against Freemasonry*

It is a new Calvinism and a resurgence of Jansenism. It is inspired by the Devil. It teaches atheism, because it admits members of any religion; therefore it is the enemy of all Christian morality, of the authority of the Church and the monarch. This is so because the Christian faith taught by the Church of Rome is the work of God and not of man; everything not of the Catholic faith is necessarily false and untrue. The author mentions in support the recently-published exposure, *Le Secret des Francs-Maçons* (1742).

2 *The Aims of Freemasonry*

To rule the State. Various means of achieving this are put forward; one is support for the republican principles of *Richerisme* [Edmond Richer (1559–1631)] or 'Gallicanism'. Freemasons are supposed to gain personal profit through their membership.

3 *Atheism*

Among the headings under which the society is castigated are indifference to the Roman Catholic faith; debauchery; denial (with the Protestants) of the existence of Purgatory; denial of the immortality of the soul; imitating the heathens by their celebrations in their lodges; uttering the most execrable oaths upon St John's Gospel. They are accused variously of being followers of Plato and the Epicureans (heathens), of Mahomet, of the Rosicrucians, of Spinoza and the Jewish Kabbala, and of the Anabaptists.

4 *They are Spokesmen of the Antichrist*

- (a) by analogy with the Templars, in that they worship such idols as that of Baphomet; that they use similar language in refuting accusations of irreligion; that they too drink to excess; that they possess a 'secret book'; that, seeing no difference between religions, they – like the Templars – have no religion; that they follow the 'Law of Nature' and renounce the Holy Gospels and the Saviour; that they too have the same external appearance of honesty.
- (b) by corrupt practices, in that they provoke incredulity and depravity (and here is quoted the extraordinary history of pilgrimages to the tomb in the Saint-Medard Cemetery of a Jansenist deacon who died in 1729, during which many experienced convulsions and tortured themselves; although the cemetery was closed and the 'Convulsionists' were outlawed, the movement persisted for many years with predictions of the future and claims to healing powers!). It is further claimed that the freemasons live as if there were nothing beyond life and death; that they believe neither in mercy nor in justice (they do not admit disabled persons to membership); that the Devil is their master ('What can we expect from a society with such a leader?').

5 *Conclusions*

Freemasonry must be rejected because

- (a) Those who are of evil intent hide from the light; so do the freemasons who hide in their 'secret synagogues'.
- (b) Like the Templars, who for many years behaved honourably, what will happen to a society which began very nearly when the Templars finished? What is evil remains evil.
- (c) Freemasonry is a sect which takes its origin from the Independents in England, themselves derived from Calvinism. It differs only in openly practising atheism, so it is really pernicious.
- (d) The Holy See has condemned it and its members have been proclaimed as enemies of the Church of Rome, of the Vicar of Christ and of God. They disobey the Pope and despise the Church and are traitors to them and to God.
- (e) Freemasons are worse than the Muslims, heathens, Lutherans and Calvinists for they are educated men, raised in the Catholic faith, who are reducing themselves to the level of animals by their debauchery. By offering themselves to the Devil they ensure their eternal damnation.

In short, Freemasonry proclaims the reign of the Antichrist, with the silent consent of the authorities. It is therefore the immediate duty of priests to warn their parishioners of the fearful temptation which is offered and to exhort them to pray fervently that, through God's mercy, the entire sect will be eradicated.

[Editorial Note: Considerations of space prevent the inclusion in this volume of a reproduction of the text of the pamphlet. Photocopies will be available on prior request from the offices of Q.C.C.C., who will also provide copies of the author's translation into English, to which he has added numerous explanatory notes. It should be borne in mind that the translation alone runs to twenty-six pages and that, with regret, we are unable to offer the copies free of charge!]

COMMENTARY

This unusually vicious pamphlet is, in a way, a synopsis of the accusations subsequently made by enemies of French Freemasonry, from the eighteenth century until the present day. It is anonymous, the place of its printing equally so and there is no indication of a 'Royal Privilege'. The quality of the writing – in a clumsy, sermonizing style – is far from the literary standards of its time.

The charges, often outrageous and for the most part incorrect, nevertheless had an impact which cannot be fully appreciated without examining them in their proper context – the social situation and the intellectual involvement of the upper classes at the period when they were set out. There is an added dimension, for false arguments are insidiously mixed with the truth, and this is a method consistently used by Freemasonry's detractors. Our pamphleteer differs from Barruel, Lefranc or Robison, who merely repeated and updated ideas which – as this 1744 text demonstrates – had been invented almost as soon as the Craft had first appeared in France. Since, as has been mentioned, Pope Clement XII's Bull of 1738 is printed at the end of the pamphlet (and it contains instructions for Bishops and clergy at large), it can be seen that its author had in view a readership of the Roman Catholic faith.

France in the Time of Louis XIV

The French kingdom was in 1744 undergoing full-scale restructuring and transformation. The monarchs since Henry IV⁹ (1589–1610) had presided over the reinforcement of absolute monarchy and the zenith of that absolutism had been reached during the reign of Louis XIV (1643–1715). Under the first Bourbons, the power of the throne increased with tremendous vitality. The kings were served by great ministers such as Sully^{10,11} under Henry IV, Richelieu and Mazarin under Louis XIII^{12,13}, and Fouquet and Louvois under Louis XIV^{14–16}.

Under Sully France found stability. The Edict of Nantes (1598) brought religious peace, financial recovery, increased prosperity and wise administration. Under Louis XIII (1610–43) the power of the great noble families was crushed, their leaders were eliminated and the Fronde insurrection was brought to an end. A Protestant revolt against Richelieu's demand for total submission to royal authority ended with the siege of La Rochelle in 1628 and the Edict of Alès which stripped the Huguenots of the political privileges granted by Henry IV, but limited religious freedom remained.

Louis XIV was infinitely lucky in having Colbert as Superintendent or Minister of Finance for twenty-two years. Colbert created several industries and started a huge Navy, manned by maritime conscription.¹⁷ This defended the French colonies, with finance derived from taxes on trade, and in 1662 France was a formidable sea power. The royal debt was covered by revenue from indirect taxation, and by levies on the most wealthy; the poorer classes were spared.

To summarize, France in little more than a century had grown from a semi-medieval kingdom into one of the strongest nations of Europe. The ambitions of its nobility had been stifled, its Third Estate muzzled and the economy was sound enough to bear the strain of an extraordinary war effort, thanks to financial planning rare in its day and to the centralization of all power in the throne.

But Louis XIV, 'His Most Christian Majesty', was inspired by his Jesuit confessors to establish the unity of faith in his realm and to repress all religious dissenters. He saw himself as the monarch and intended to reign over the souls as well as the bodies of his subjects. By the Edict of Alès, the Huguenots had been ensured freedom of worship and had prospered, but the Catholic clergy under the influence of the Compagnie du Saint-Sacrament sought to bring them back to the Roman Church, firstly by persuasion but then by a narrower interpretation of the Edict of Alès. It began with the Dragonnades and ended with the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, thus outlawing the reformed religion of the Huguenots.

The persecution of the Jansenists¹⁸ arose from similar principles. They had attracted

many of the disillusioned followers of the nobility. Through their writers – brilliant men such as Blaise Pascal, the Arnaud family, Quesnel and Lemaitre de Sacy – they created a formidable body of opinion, later winning support from the Parliament of Paris which was a court of justice opposed to the king's will. The Papal Bull *Unigenitus* (1713) condemned their doctrine, the origin of which is to be found in the posthumous publication in 1640 of Cornelius Jansen's *Augustinus*.¹⁹⁻²² Other religious opposition was also forbidden and the leaders were exiled or had to live under surveillance.

Louis XIV also had disagreements with Rome for he tried to assert the independence of his temporal power from pontifical authority, and the conflict which had begun under Louis XIII with Richer was aggravated by the question of the *Droit de Régale*.²³

Foreign Policy under Louis XV

France was ruined by four wars. When the king died in 1715, the country was certainly much larger but it was in a very poor way financially. His funeral was celebrated by the people with rejoicing rather than sorrow. The Regency of Philippe d'Orléans²⁴ ensued until, in 1723, the departed king's great-grandson attained his legal majority. Louis XV (1715–74) had, until 1743, Cardinal Fleury as his Prime Minister. Fleury's policy was to avoid continental commitments but he failed to do so and became involved with the War of Austrian Succession. At the time of his death in 1743 France was facing a strong anti-Bourbon coalition, inspired and guided by England. Louis XV, who had not appointed a successor to Fleury, declared war on Great Britain and Austria and the Marshal of France, Maurice, Comte de Saxe, invaded the Low Countries.

So, in 1744 France was under the absolute rule of the king and was under attack by the allied forces of Prussia, the United Kingdom, Spain (including its Netherlandic Provinces) and Holland. It had lost its fleet and some of its colonies. There was also internal opposition to the king. Some of the clergy adhered to the letter as well as the spirit of papal authority; this was 'Ultramontanism'. Another faction, led by the most senior ecclesiastical dignitaries in the land, evolved a nationalistic movement which rejected Rome's power other than in matters of dogma; this was 'Gallicanism'. The Parliament of Paris, the highest judicial court under the king, favoured Gallicanism while at the same time opposing Louis XV's attempts further to assert his supreme governance.

The monarchy was thus faced with an opposition whom Bossuet described with his brief, inflammatory phrase: 'Any man who thinks is a heretic'.²⁵ We must add that there was by now a law strictly forbidding 'associations of persons' (meetings) and in particular those of the 'société des frimaçons'.^{26,27} Offenders were liable to 'judicial pursuit'. The intelligentsia were closely watched and progressive thinkers, such as the Libertines, were subjected to censure and even to imprisonment. (We must explain that at this time a Libertine was a philosopher who doubted revealed truth in the name of science or reason and many distinguished men claimed so to be and demanded the right to incredulity. It was not until later that the word 'libertine' acquired a connotation of immorality or licence.)

Freemasonry in France in 1744

At the time of Fleury's death, Freemasonry in the country existed in lodges almost totally inspired by England. The Grand Master was the Duc d'Antin, who had in 1738 succeeded Charles Radcliffe, *soi-disant* Earl of Derwentwater. The Order had been under the watchful eye of Fleury's police and could make little progress, finding its recruits only in the nobility and the upper middle class. The police had continued to exert repression, especially in 1737 and 1740, taking action against the politically vulnerable members but avoiding the nobility. Fleury, though less pro-English than Cardinal Dubois, his predecessor who had served under the Regent, was until 1733 – in co-ordination with Walpole – pursuing a policy of protecting English interests in France. He refrained from persecuting Freemasonry because it would have been dangerous to mount a frontal attack on an Order which included many princes of the royal house: Louis de Bourbon-Condé (1709–1771), Comte de Clermont, for instance, and the Prince de Conti and the Comte de Saxe.

So Fleury took great care, as he had done when Chevalier Andrew Michael Ramsay submitted to him his famous lecture (never in fact given as an oration in lodge). Ramsay's masonic career was suddenly halted; he was financially dependent on the Minister. On 10 September 1737, the most 'vulnerable' freemasons were imprisoned but only for a few days; their royal brethren saw to their early release. Nevertheless, such action by the police served to discourage undue expansion of the French Freemasonry of the day.

The Duc d'Antin died in December 1743 and the Comte de Clermont succeeded him as Grand Master. After Fleury's death, his duties were allotted to Secretaries of State and two of these were freemasons: Saint-Florentin, Duc de la Vrillière, and the Comte de Maurepas.

Paradoxically, it was in 1744 that real opposition to Freemasonry began because the war with England brought the society under suspicion. Its close links with the royal family brought into focus three factors which were unacceptable to the ultramontane clergy. Firstly and most importantly, the concept of tolerance, anathema to the Roman Church, was now being efficiently attacked by a pamphleteer who would present the brotherly love between freemasons of different forms of religion as atheism and would condemn 'indifference' to the Catholic faith and the following of natural religion as debauchery. Secondly, the membership in the Order of several members of the royal household could notably influence the king, and even induce him to seek initiation, so enhancing the prestige of the fraternity which the Church regarded as loathsome. Thirdly, England – a country by now strongly established as Protestant in its faith – was seen as the source of French Freemasonry which was thereby suspected of being able to disseminate Jansenist and Calvinist influences.

It was no longer possible to act through a Prime Minister; the 'Gallican' Parliament of Paris was suffused with political Jansenism and so in clear antipathy to the ultramontane clergy. The only practical method of arousing public opinion against the freemasons was to use the printed word to spread false reports about them, which might also serve to warn the king of the dangers of royal association with them.

The unknown writer of the pamphlet was certainly comprehensive and somewhat repetitive in his assault. In analysing the various accusations one can discern the venom with which he returns again and again to each charge; we indicate the frequency of mention by a figure after each heading:

- (a) *of a religious nature*: Jansenism (7); Protestantism (4); Calvinism (5); atheism (16); as 'bad Catholics, abandoning the true faith' (15); free-thinkers, Libertines (6); irreligiousness, pagans, heretics (18); 'natural religion' (4); diabolical practices (5)
- (b) *of a moral nature*: pleasure (6); banquets (4); debauchery, implied (7)
- (c) *of a moral and political nature*: oaths (5); secrets (11)
- (d) *of a political nature* (subversive to Church and State): assimilated to the Templars (6); ignoring papal edicts (4); harmful to State security (2)

Viewed against the French background in the early 1740s, these arguments seem vicious indeed. But they have persisted in anti-masonic publications to the present day. Let us consider them in greater detail.

Accusations of a religious nature

The pamphleteer sets the tone from his very first line, deliberately confusing Jansenism with Calvinism and so making clear his own ignorance. His mention of Calvinism links Freemasonry not only to France's political enemy, England, but also to the proponents of reform who had been outlawed by the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. Unlike the Jansenists, the Calvinists had never attempted to define 'Grace' and their association in this way was deliberately misleading. Church writers would never have made such a comparison; an ill-intentioned but learned thinker must have been aware that Jansenists, although accused of heresy, were fundamentally members of the Church of Rome. An uneducated mind, however, and there were many who were writing at the time, could confuse the two movements if only through a misunderstanding of the idea of 'justification'

(to describe one as righteous).

We cannot here pursue in depth the story of Jansenism, other than to repeat that Cornelius Jansen's doctrine was disseminated after his death in his *Augustinus* (1640) and soon condemned in the Papal Bull *Cum Occasione* of 1642. In essence, Jansen held that man has no free will but is entirely dependent upon God. His followers included Blaise Pascal, whose *Lettres Provinciales* also offended the Vatican and gave rise to the Bull *Ad Sacram*. It was then that the Jansenists, hitherto a theological movement, adopted a political stance and attracted repressive measures from Cardinal Mazarin. Pasquier Quesnel, who was now leading them, earned yet another Bull, *Unigenitus* (1713), for his writings. His party joined forces with the Gallican Parliament of Paris in the struggle against royal absolutism and they may be seen as having prepared some of the ground for the French Revolution of some seventy years later.

This is perhaps the moment to mention once more Edmond Richer, a theologian who had earlier tried – at the request of Louis XIII – to suppress the clergy's autonomy, and especially that of the Jesuits. He propounded an ultra-Gallican viewpoint which earned the anathema of Pope Innocent XI, and he found himself for a while in prison. He was however regarded as the apologist of political Gallicanism and in this he had been approved of by Richelieu, who in external politics contested papal authority. In 1682, on royal authority, Jacques Bénigne Bossuet inspired the 'Declaration of the Four Articles' which sought to regulate the respective powers of Church and monarch:

- (1) The power of the Pope is purely spiritual and has no secular form.
- (2) In spiritual matters, papal authority is plenipotentiary to that of councils of states.
- (3) Papal authority must recognize the validity of previous rulings and customs of the Church and the French kingdom.
- (4) The Pope is infallible in matters of faith but only if he is supported by the whole Church.

This declaration, which defined Freemasonry as 'a sort of Jansenism or Calvinism', also condemned it as a most dangerous element of destabilization and as the enemy of the State.

This 'Royal Gallicanism' was prominent for ten years but the declaration was then retracted by Louis XIV, primarily to please the newly-elected Pope Alexander VIII. In return the Pope recognized the '*Droit de Régale*' relating to temporal goods and spiritual rights of vacant bishoprics. This did not please the Jansenist bishops!

The pamphlet which we have been describing, in selecting Jansenism as a key factor in its attack on Freemasonry, thus tries to argue that the fraternity was equally antagonistic to State and Church authority. This was of course echoed in the later writings of the Abbé François Lefranc (*Le Voile Levé* . . . , 1791) and the Abbé Augustin Barruel (*Mémoires pour servir* . . . , 1797), who needed only to update the arguments.

We have not quite finished with the pamphleteer's accusations on religious grounds. When the Edict of Nantes was revoked, Protestantism was outlawed in France. Since Freemasonry was clearly derived from England, with whom a state of war existed, the anonymous author could effectively raise doubts about French freemasons' loyalty. Atheism, deism, free-thinking, and the doubters and Libertines, were also placed beyond the law. The *Lettres Juives* (1741)²⁸ by Jean Baptiste de Boyer, Marquis d'Argens (1704–71) is also quoted and attacked. With other works from the same pen, all printed at The Hague, in France it had at the time to be read in secret for the writer – probably himself a freemason – was introducing a new humanism and open-mindedness and bold ideas about tolerance and the search for truth.

Baruch Spinoza (1632–77) is another who is mentioned. His Jewish origin is emphasized because the author understood that recruits from that faith were not excluded from English lodges although they were in France. Spinoza's works amply demonstrate his belief in god's existence but his contemporaries regarded him as an atheist and an enemy of Rome.²⁹

Here again can be seen in the pamphlet an implication that the freemasons encouraged

the reading of condemned texts, some of which were published beyond the French frontiers.

Accusations of a Moral Nature

In attributing to the fraternity the practice of debauchery and describing 'pleasure-filled banquets presided over by a goddess', the pamphlet is – in unnecessarily exaggerated terms – putting forward accusations which contain a remote element of truth. The earliest members of the French lodges were recruited from the minor nobility and the '*grand bourgeoisie*', and probably did spend more time on the delights of the table than on philosophy. This was possibly an advantage as assemblies might otherwise have been forbidden out of hand. Such an image was better calculated to mislead the spies of both government and Church. It is worth mentioning that several priests as well as other 'bad Catholics' were freemasons of what the pamphleteer so frequently refers to as the 'Sect'.

This term indicates the importance with which he regards Freemasonry as a new heresy, tending to replace the notion of God – and in particular the God represented in the dogma of the Catholic Church – by a very much more liberal concept of deism, free-thinking or irreligion. We have seen how often the author repeats himself on this, and how he refers to 'natural religion' or even 'diabolical practices'. While, to lend further colour to his thesis, he mentions a secret and 'abominable oaths', he gives no details of these. But there is an implication that something of what was supposed to occur with masonic assemblies escaped civil authority and that, despite denials contained in *Le Secret des Francs-Maçons*, it serves both as a cover for debauchery and for plots against all values proposed or imposed by the State. As Ferrer-Benimeli points out,³⁰ the Holy Inquisition could not believe that the 'secret' was harmless. Something concealed could only be devilish; otherwise it would not have to be secret!

Enter the Templars. Since the relevant decree of 1307 remained on the statute-book, the Order of the Temple was in France illegal. Thus to describe freemasons as the legitimate heirs of the medieval Order gave yet another reason for the fraternity to be detested. It was from Ramsay's 'Oration' that the assumed connection was derived. This, published in 1741, probably at Constantinople in the *Almanach des Cocus*,³¹ referred twice to 'our ancestors the Crusaders'. By this, however, Ramsay was intending to convey the Holy Crusade of a spiritual search for liberation. Vigorously but vainly, he protested against an implied link between Freemasonry and the Order of the Temple, but this did not prevent the founder of the Rite of Strict Observance from claiming such a link, as did the *Illuminati*. Various writers, including at a later period Lefranc, Barruel and Robison, willingly adopted the theory but meanwhile the Templar connection had been added to the ammunition of the anti-masons.

Interesting to members of the Ancient and Accepted (Scottish) Rite of today is the Kadosh legend where a theme of vengeance for the persecution of the Templars arises. Barruel and Montjoie³² report upon this. We are of the opinion that this element could not have come into being if writings such as the pamphlet now under review had not already laid a foundation by charging freemasons with the crimes which had been laid at the door of the medieval Order.³³

The Pamphlet's Purpose

As has already been suggested the author's aims can be understood only in the context of the struggles between the French monarchy and the Church of Rome. We must note that the Bull of 1738, *In eminenti*, in which Clement XII fulminated against the *liberi muratori*, was at the time neither published in France nor registered at the Parliament (the court of justice) in Paris. Thus it had no legal force and one of the intents of this multi-purpose attack must be seen as bringing the Bull to notice and thereby reaffirming the supremacy of Vatican power over Gallican France.

Another was to prove to the king that the Society of Freemasons represented a state within the state, fermenting conspiracy against morals, religion and royal authority.

The style of the pamphlet and its excesses and contradictions in bringing in so many

diverse groups (Jansenists, atheists, etc., etc.) lead us to believe that it was intended for reading aloud as a church sermon. It certainly lacked any literary pretension.

We are prevented by considerations of space from discussing further certain matters which have already been touched upon and from quoting from and referring to other writers.

CONCLUSIONS

The pamphlet describes vividly the state of mind of the Catholic clergy, defenders of a state religion fraught with Gallican dissensions and in conflict with the Parliament of Paris. The recent establishment of lodges had begun during a temporary adjustment of international political alliances and in the term of office of a minister whose police had been ordered to favour British interests. We must remind ourselves that French Freemasonry was derived from English lodges.³⁴ By their very existence, the lodges that appeared later were the unwitting pawns of this policy.

Let us pause to consider some of these lodges. The first, established in Paris in about 1729 was that of St Thomas, and this was followed in 1732 by *Saint-Thomas du Louis d'Argent*, this having been founded by English freemasons. While the first had as its first Master the *soi-disant* Earl of Derwentwater, the second was owned (at that period the Master was in fact the owner) by Thomas Le Breton, a jeweller (not to be confused with André-François, the publisher of the *Encyclopédie*). Police records still existing include a list of eleven members, including Louis de Chauvelin, advocate-general of the Parliament, Abbé Antoine Joseph Perneti, and the poet Jean-Baptiste Gresset.

Lodge Coustos-Villeroy was created by the Protestant John Coustos, who has been so well documented in recent times, largely for his appearance before the Inquisition in Portugal. He had transferred the lodge to the Duc de Villeroy in 1737 before his departure for Lisbon. Lodge Bussi-Aumont had as Master an English painter named Collins and its members included the Duc d'Aumont, Abbé Le Camus, the almoner of the King's Guards, and the Marquis de Calvière, a founder of lodges in Avignon and Languedoc.

These, then, were young lodges³⁵ and rumours about their aims circulated widely. The fact that Freemasonry could be said to be a school for tolerance and for respect for others was an embarrassment for an absolute monarch who was backed by Gallican clergy who did not enforce Papal Bulls! The logical outcome was a stream of accusations inspired by the Ultramontane faction to discredit the masonic Order among the faithful, and especially among political leaders, and to achieve its suppression. And, as we have previously observed, much the same sort of thing is still happening.

The text of the *Examen* has been shown to be exaggerated, to say the least, but we might ask ourselves whether the accusations themselves have really changed with the passage of time. Our purpose in translating and analysing this hitherto little-known pamphlet, while setting it in its historical context, was to bring it to the attention of masonic students generally. We hope that we have been able to cast some light on its underlying motives. Anti-Masonry over almost two and a half centuries has drawn directly or indirectly upon the work of the unknown author, adding as appropriate the further 'proofs' which are supposed to have emerged as time rolls on.

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NOTES

¹ Paul Fesch, *Bibliographie de la Franc-Maçonnerie*, Coll. Deny, Brussels, 1976, p. 538.

² Françoise Weil, 'La Franc-Maçonnerie en France jusqu'en 1755', *Studies on Voltaire* XVIII, Oxford, vol. 27, pp. 1787-1818.

³ Abbé François Lefranc, *Le Voile levé pour les curieux* . . ., 1791.

⁴ Abbé Augustin Barruel, *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire du Jacobinisme*, Hamburg, 1803.

⁵ John Robison, *Proofs of a Conspiracy* . . ., Edinburgh, 1791.

- ⁶ Le Couteuls de Canteleu, *Les Sectes et Sociétés secrètes politiques et religieuses*, Paris, 1863.
- ⁷ Pierre Chevallier, *Histoire de la Maçonnerie Française*, 1974, vol. 1, p. 10.
- ⁸ Abbé A. Barruel, *Histoire du Clergé pendant la Révolution Française*, London, 1794.
- ⁹ *Encyclopedia Britannica*, vol. 9, p. 714.
- ¹⁰ Préclin et Tapié, *Le XVIIème siècle*, 1949.
- ¹¹ P. de Vaissière, *Henry IV*, 1928.
- ¹² V. L. Tapié, *La France de Louis XIV et de Richelieu*, 1952.
- ¹³ *Encyclopedia Britannica*, vol. 9, pp. 15–16.
- ¹⁴ M. Gabriel Hanotaux et le Duc de la Force, *Histoire du Cardinal de Richelieu*.
- ¹⁵ Pierre Gaxotte, *La France sous Louis XIV*.
- ¹⁶ J. Michelet, *Histoire de France*.
- ¹⁷ Gaxotte, op. cit.
- ¹⁸ Gorce et Mortier, *Histoire des Religions: 'Le Catholicisme moderne'; 'Le Jansénisme'*, pp. 199–218.
- ¹⁹ *ibid.*
- ²⁰ Louis Cognet, *Le Jansénisme*, 1961, p. 14.
- ²¹ Nicolas Fontaine et Lemaitre de Sacy, *Histoires tirées de l'ancien et du nouveau testament par messire de Royaumont, archevêque de Sombreffe*.
- ²² Cognet, op. cit., p. 215.
- ²³ J. Flammermont, *Remontrances du Parlement de Paris au XVIIème siècle*, 1898.
- ²⁴ J. Buat, *Journal de la Régence*, 1865.
- ²⁵ Quoted by Albert Lantoine, *La Franc-Maçonnerie chez elle*, 1925, p. 174.
- ²⁶ Chevallier, op. cit., pp. 44–7.
- ²⁷ Albert Lantoine, *Histoire de la Franc-Maçonnerie française: La Franc-Maçonnerie dans l'état*, 1935, pp. 6–36.
- ²⁸ Jean Baptiste de Boyer, Marquis d'Argens, *Lettres Juives, Lettres cabbalistes*, 1741.
- ²⁹ D. Huisman, *Histoire de la Philosophie au XVIIème siècle*, p. 190.
- ³⁰ José Ferrer Benimeli, *Les archives secrètes du Vatican et de la Franc-Maçonnerie*, 1989.
- ³¹ *Almanach des Cocus ou amusement pour le beau sexe, pour l'année 1741*, Constantinople, p. 30.
- ³² Montjoie, *Histoire de la conjuration de Louis-Philippe Joseph d'Orleans*, 1796.
- ³³ Dupuy, *Traitez concernant l'histoire de France, savoir la condamnation des Templiers ...*, 1700.
- ³⁴ Chevallier, op. cit., pp. 5–10.
- ³⁵ The public became aware of their existence when they were mentioned in the police records for the winter of 1736–7 (Chevallier, op. cit., pp. 7–8).

Bro. Cyril Batham, acting Master, in proposing a vote of thanks, said:

Some members may say that Quatuor Coronati Lodge should concern itself solely with masonic research and should not become involved with attacks against the Craft. I do not agree. Apart from other considerations, it is reassuring to know that in spite of scurrilous attacks, even before the foundation of the premier Grand Lodge in 1717, Freemasonry survived, spread throughout the civilized world more completely and more quickly than any other movement, religious, political or social, and today provides inspiration and encouragement to brethren of many nations and affords companionship from which they derive so much moral support.

Bro. Litvine provides an excellent summary of the unusually vicious pamphlet, as he describes it, both vicious and insidious, as it mixes false arguments with the truth. He leaves little room for comment other than to say that it is difficult to understand why it could have been given so much credence when it was known that, among enthusiastic members of the fraternity, were many princes of the royal house such as the Prince de Conti, and many prominent noblemen including the Duc d'Antin (a close friend of the king and of Cardinal Fleury), the Duc de Villeroy, the Duc d'Aumont, the Comte de Clermont and the Comte de Saxe, as were members of the Catholic clergy. It was said, in fact, that in every village in France, there was at least one priest who was a freemason.

Bro. Litvine mentions the claim made by Barruel '... that Freemasonry fostered the French Revolution and was therefore responsible for the deaths of the King and Queen and for the persecution of the Christian faith'. I think he should have made it quite clear that this claim, although also put forward by subsequent writers, has been completely repudiated, as was shown by the late Bro. Alec Mellor in his paper, 'French Freemasonry and the French Revolution' that appeared in *AQC* 97.

Bro. Litvine refers to the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685 by Louis XIV and states that it outlawed the reformed religion of the Huguenots. It did more

than that. French Protestants lost all legal status, their property was confiscated, and all personal rights were forfeited. Their churches were destroyed, they had the option of being converted to Catholicism or of leaving France within fourteen days under penalty of death, and their children had to be left in France and brought up as Catholics.

There are other matters concerning which I am not in accord with Bro. Litvine. He refers to Ramsay's famous oration and says that it was never given in lodge. There may not be any record that it was so delivered but that is not conclusive as masonic records of the eighteenth century are virtually non-existent, and Ramsay himself states that he gave his oration '... at the acception, at different times, of eight dukes and peers and of two hundred officers of the first rank and highest nobility ...'. There may be some exaggeration in this but it cannot be entirely devoid of truth.

When it comes to the matter of early lodges in France, I congratulate Bro. Litvine in having dismissed, by implication, such ridiculous claims as that of *La Constance* Lodge at Arras, said to have been constituted in 1687 by Lord Pembroke, under authority of the Grand Lodge of England, which did not come into existence until thirty years later, and of equally fictitious lodges at St. Germain-en-Laye in 1685, still believed by some romantic writers to be matters of fact.

However, I cannot agree with him that the first lodge in France was *L'Amitié et Fraternité* at Dunkirk in 1726 and, in any case, the year is usually given as 1721. It is said that it was constituted on 13 October by John, Duke of Montagu, Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of England. This is palpably untrue. There is no record of any such event in the English records, nor of the Duke's consecrating any other overseas lodge. The warrant, which disappeared during the second world war, was proved to have been a forgery. Further, both the Grand Orient of France and the Grand Lodge of France give 1 March 1756 as the date.

As far as the early lodges in Paris are concerned, although there is no proof of it, the general assumption is that Lalande's account is correct of a lodge founded in the rue des Boucheries at the premises of Hure, an English caterer, in or about the year 1725, by the Earl of Derwentwater and other Stuart supporters.

Further, both G. Bord (*La Franc-Maçonnerie*) and the Grand Lodge of France list St. Thomas's Lodge as founded on 12 December 1726 and St. Thomas's-Louis d'Argent on 7 May 1729.

These differences do not detract from the value of Bro. Litvine's paper.

Bro. Richard Sandbach, Junior Warden, said:

It is certainly interesting to find so coherent a denunciation of Freemasonry at such an early date, but its very coherence makes me wonder whether it is necessarily the original source from which later criticisms have sprung. It suggests rather that certain thoughts were already current and that the writer was merely putting them together with such skill as he possessed. This would imply a considerable level of opposition in France at that very early date, which perhaps is a little surprising.

We have had recent experience in this country of how criticism from former times can be resurrected, and claimed as authoritative, without reference to the answers that were given when they were first made.

It would be too much to expect that we shall not have the same unjustified denunciations being made again at some future time. I would suggest that we, as a lodge of researchers, have our part to play in preparing to meet them, by being careful to stress again and again the way in which Freemasonry has slain the dragon of slander, envy and malice, and has developed into the system of morality of which we have every reason to be so proud today. Our history as a lodge shows how we have always tried to seek the truth, and knowledge of how these myths arose is part of that truth. We have not perhaps been sufficiently alert to our duty to state in clear and unequivocal terms how our work is directed to support the true virtues of our Craft. It is all very well to slay the dragon,

but there is a need too for constructive work to put right the devastation it has caused. I hope that we shall not be found wanting in doing our part in this, and I congratulate Bro. Litvine on his efforts in this regard.

Bro. Yasha Beresiner said:

I have only a short comment on such a meticulously analysed and well prepared presentation. Bro. Litvine poses the rhetorical question in his introduction as to 'why there should have been, at the time, hostility to Freemasonry, which was so new to France'. He then proceeds to give a detailed analysis of the circumstances leading to the publication of this printed attack on the French Craft.

I suggest that, in addition to all that happened and was happening in France itself, the anonymous author of the pamphlet may also have been influenced – maybe even motivated – by established anti-masonic feeling in England.

Bro. Litvine goes so far as to state that the ideas of Anti-Masonry had been 'invented' in France as soon as the Craft first appeared there. By 1745, when the pamphlet in question was published, many if not most of the ideas for masonic attacks had existed in England for the best part of half a century. Samuel Prichard's *Masonry Dissected* (1730) was certainly the inspiration for the French exposures of the period, all of which had intrinsic anti-masonic undertones. England, having been recognized as the source of French Freemasonry, could perhaps be considered as, at least, one source of French Anti-Masonry.

It would be interesting to have Bro. Litvine's comments as to whether, in his view, some of the numerous anti-masonic 'ideas' referred to in his paper may have been 'adopted' rather than 'invented' by French writers against the Craft.

Bro. Michael Spurr said:

Considerable research has obviously been put into this paper but I find it hard to understand how it actually advances our knowledge, apart from the attention which it draws to the pamphlet itself. As Bro. Litvine says, it was published two years after *Le Secret des Francs-Maçons* appeared and that was used as a source.

Le Secret was, according to Bro. Harry Carr (in *The Early French Exposures*, 1971), published in 1742 by the Abbé Gabriel Louis Calabre Perau. It was only the first exposure of several, and was followed by Louis Travenol's *Le Catéchisme des Francs-Maçons* (1744), the anonymous *L'Ordre des Francs-Maçons Trahi* (1745) and Abbe Larudan's *Les Francs-Maçons Écrasés* (1747). In this five-year period there were, then, four exposures as well as this pamphlet. However it must not be forgotten that, when the prohibition on masonic assemblies was introduced in 1737, the earliest French exposure – *Réception d'un Frey-Maçon* – was published in the same year. It appeared again in 1738 when it was incorporated in *La Réception Mystérieuse*, and once more in 1741 in a newspaper. Versions were also put out in the Dutch and German Press.

It was as if the issue of *Réception* has led to a sudden interest in Freemasonry and to an upsurge of publications which either claimed to reveal its secrets or quite simply vilified it. Once the bandwagon started to roll, everyone jumped on board!

The official anti-masonic action and the disputes within the French Grand Lodge which were referred to in Bro. Bernheim's recent paper ('*The Mémoire Justificatif ...*') brought the Craft into the public eye so that any such pamphlet found a ready market. It is perhaps unfortunate that no evidence has been found to connect this anonymous attack of 1744 with anti-masonic moves by the French government or to indicate that it was widely read or had any influence on the thinking of the general public.

The sentiments of a religious nature which are expressed in it are hardly surprising if it was intended to be delivered as a sermon in a church. Protestantism, or anything derived from a Protestant background, would have been anathema to a practising Roman Catholic of the day, especially if he happened to be a supporter of the Ultramontane faction. The

same calumnies, in almost the same terms, are still repeated by those opposed to the Craft. Lies over three centuries old continue to be used because it is easier to record what has been written in the past than to check them against the truth.

It can be seen that plagiarism is not a recent invention. It was common for material to be used without acknowledgement to its source and the examples which I have mentioned are but a few of these in which – perhaps with only minor variations – earlier texts have been republished under different titles.

Bro. F. W. Seal-Coon wrote:

Bro. Litvine's chance discovery is of particular interest in that it shows that no subsequent French detractor of Freemasonry has been able to find further grounds for complaint, merely adapting the same ones to his own time and circumstances. Two hundred years later, in wartime France in the 1940s, Fay, de Boistel and others were rehearsing the same tired accusations on behalf of the Nazi propaganda machine, while half a century earlier Pagès (Léo Taxil) was exercising his twisted ingenuity within those limitations, albeit with considerably more theatricality.

One is impelled to wonder why France, so fertile a soil for Masonry in its derivative forms, should also harbour in parallel elements so bitterly opposed to it for varying reasons. Ignorance leading to baseless fears has always existed, as has religious bias and anti-Semitism, all seething below the surface to re-appear in virulent form from time to time, as witness the persecution of the Cathars, the Templars and the Huguenots prior to the dawn of speculative Masonry in France. The violence released by the Revolution, the Commune and the two World Wars, not to speak of post-war examples, indicate a certain Gallic volatility underlying French logic and civilization and liable to boil over in disregard of either.

Bro. Michel Brodsky wrote:

The article by Françoise Weill mentioned by Bro. Litvine quotes extensively from the pamphlet to which he directs our attention and emphasizes the political aspect of the anti-masonic movement from its inception until today. That religious motivations have been involved is quite certain but the arguments always find their origins in political objectives. Among other interesting considerations on the state of French Freemasonry before 1743, Mme Weill quotes from a letter of 12 July 1737, addressed to the Duke of Richmond from the Minister, Comte de Saint Florentin (later Duc de la Vrillière): 'I would be too happy, my dear Brother, to be of any assistance to you'. And in a postscript he adds: 'It is true that one has slightly disapproved of the assemblies and receptions, but I believe that the Grand Master who was here has incautiously received all sorts of persons; many talked too much and made too much noise.'

Françoise Weill identifies the 'Grand Master' as Ramsay (which of course he never was) and quotes from one of his letters:

You have no doubt heard of the rumours our French Free Masons made. I was the orator and had great views, if the Card. had not wrote to me to forbede [*sic*]. I sent my discourse made at the acception at different times of eight dukes and peers and two hundred officers of the first rank and highest nobility to his grace the duke of Ormond. George Kelly is to translate it and send it to M. Bettenham to be printed. You'll see there my general views for learning but my particular views for the good of my country, I'll tell you when at meeting. If the Card. had deferred one month longer, I was to have gone to the 'merite' to harangue the king of France as head of the confraternity and to have initiated His Majesty into our sacred mysterys (Bodleian, Carte 226, f.398).

The *Examen de la Société des francs-maçons* is especially interesting as it demonstrates the stratification of public opinion in France, where the cultural and religious exclusiveness

of the Roman Catholic Church breeds a spirit of repression, regardless of the merits of the case. The pamphlet shows that, though in 1745 the Craft was still in its infancy, it had in France no organization – only a nominal Grand Lodge which exercised no control over its constituent lodges. The chaotic introduction of Freemasonry into the country gave rise not only to all sorts of deviant lodges and, soon after, *Écossais* chapters, but also and most importantly suspicious questions about the real purpose of the institution. Ramsay, for his part, contrived to present the Craft in such a way that it would appear more adaptable to the classes of French society within which he sought a place above his own station in life.

On the one hand Ramsay is credited with the inception of the masonic fantasies of the '*Écossais*' system; on the other it could be said that he and others provoked the anti-masonic reaction which Bro. Litvine has brilliantly revealed in his paper.

Bro. A. C. F. Jackson wrote:

I am sorry that I was unable to be present when Bro. Jacques Litvine's interesting paper was read. It is a comprehensive history of the relationship between Freemasonry and the French government from the former's inception in France until the Revolution. It makes it clear that the freemasons were treated in France as a sort of 'political football' which was kicked between the French and the Papacy. While the Papal Bull of 1738 shows the antipathy of the directing body of the Roman Catholic Church, there does not seem to be any evidence that the French monarchy held any strong views about a comparatively small body of no real political importance. There were of course several senior Roman Catholic clerics in France who held the papal view but there were also many who did not, some actually being freemasons. However by playing hot and cold with Freemasonry the French monarchy, from time to time with a strange bedfellow, the French Parliament, was able to irritate the papal authorities and score some political advantages. All this indicates that Anti-Masonry in France at this time was limited in importance and can be put into a proper perspective.

It is difficult not to get the impression that the real influence of such documents as the pamphlet dealt with in this paper seem to be less material than the writer suggests. It is not difficult to suggest a reason. The papal antipathy to Freemasonry started in Italy with the Bull of 1738. Unfortunately no one knows the reason for this document. It has been the subject for discussion by masonic scholars almost ever since it first appeared. I would draw the attention of anyone interested to *Nos Frères Séparés* by Alec Mellor who devotes half his book to the subject. In a recent article on Anti-Masonry in the *Masonic Square*, I quoted Borrow, the eminent writer of the last century, who wrote that 'the Popish Church respects nothing that it does not fear'. This suggests fears of some sort of competition from a tiny but growing organization which might, in the future, provide competition. The French authorities could have had no such fears so its relations with Freemasonry were pragmatic and geared to fit its own political needs.

It is essential to show that this is all guess work but it allows people like the writer of the pamphlet to accuse Freemasonry of crimes not even mentioned in the Papal Bull. Until the Vatican archives are opened – if ever – the reasons for the Bull must remain a matter of speculation and guesswork.

The paper suggests that there is some connection between the Kadosh degree of Ancient and Accepted Rite (Scottish) and the pamphlet. I cannot agree. The Kadosh degree almost certainly came from Germany and there is no evidence that those writing it were aware of this obscure and rare French pamphlet or similar ones.

Bro. Litvine's conclusions may be correct as far as France is concerned, though I would have thought that masonic political interference in that country was less than in the last century. However while Freemasonry has been accused of many crimes, religious and social, in English speaking countries, I have made it clear in my article in the *Masonic Square* that political interference in politics is not one. (The only exceptions to this is that there was a judicial inquiry into secret societies in South Africa in

1965 at which Freemasonry was completely exonerated from being concerned in local politics.)

It would seem that the Bro. Litvine made full notes which are only separately available. This is a pity as, in a number of cases, unless the reader is a student of this period of French history, he will find the paper difficult to follow. I refer, for example, to the meaning of Jansenism, the Fronde insurrection, the *Dragonnades*, the *Droit de Regale*, ultramontanism and some other phrases. I suggest that notes would be helpful in such cases. Fowler's *Modern English Usage* describes Jansenites as those who hold that a national branch of the Roman Catholic Church is entitled to a certain independence of the authority of the Pope. This is rather different from what Bro. Litvine describes but no doubt the matter is made clear in his notes. He does not give the meaning of Ultramontanism at all. According to Fowler, the description works both ways in raising the Pope in all matters to the highest level. 'The mountains are the Alps, and beyond the mountains means, to an Italian, outside Italy, and to others, in Italy. So when there are differences in the Roman Catholic Church about the right relations between the Italian bishops and the extra-Italian, each party could describe the other as Ultramontanes, which makes the historical use of the word confusing.' It is not therefore necessarily the opposite to 'Gallicanism' which rejected 'Rome's power other than in matters of dogma', which Bro. Litvine seems to suggest.

Bro. Alain Bernheim wrote:

Having studied a copy of the 1744 edition of the pamphlet (obtainable from the offices of Q.C.C.C.), I can perhaps more fully comment on Bro. Litvine's paper. Besides those alluded to, other editions of the *Examen* are mentioned in masonic books with various title and pagination. For instance in Benimeli's *Bibliografia de la Masoneria* (Caracas, 1974, p. 148, No. [280]): '*Examen de la Société des Francs-Maçons où l'on fait voir son opposition aux Maximes du Christianisme*, s.L., 1746, 55 pags.'; same title and date in the 'Catalogue of Books ... in the Library at Freemasons' Hall' (Edinburgh 1906, No. 443); in Charles Porset's paper '*L'Antimaçonnisme en France vers 1750*', included in the French yearly publication *Dix-Huitième Siècle* (1987, No. 19, p. 119): '*Examen de la société des francs-maçons où l'on fait voir son opposition avec le christianisme, 1754*' (the author assured me in a letter of 21 September 1991 that '1754' was a misprint for '1745').

Far from supporting the date of 1742 for a legendary first edition of the well-known French exposure, *Le Secret des Francs-Maçons*, the *Examen* brings a valuable argument to disprove it. The year-date 1742 was born out of Wolfstieg's No. 29956 (see *The Early French Exposures*, hereafter abridged as EFE, p. 43), whose indication was usefully clarified in Beyer's *Erster Ergänzungsband* (1st Supplementary volume), 1926, to Wolfstieg's *Bibliographie*. One reads under Beyer's No. 8412: '*Sécrets des francs-maçons. Genève 1742. 6 Bl. 8°. 21.*'. '6 Bl.' means that the pamphlet here referred to was six pages long, '21' that it was extant in the library of Bayreuth's Lodge *Eleusis zur Verschwiegenheit* in 1926. To my knowledge there is nothing else in masonic literature which supports the theory that the pamphlet published under an almost similar title in 1744 as 12mo of more than hundred pages (between 108 and 160, in the various editions) was a later edition of a pamphlet which was indeed printed in 1742. Prof. Gordon Silber, in '*Poèmes et chansons maçonniques du 18è siècle*' (*Travaux de Villard de Honnecourt*, vol. 11, 1975), shared the same opinion and included a useful bibliography of *Le Secret des Franc-Maçons* which, he writes (p. 25, note 2), 'is more complete and more accurate than Wolfsteig'. The *Examen* bears admittedly the date 1744 on its title-page, and specifies on page 6 that *les Secrets des Francs-Maçons* (here in plural form though in all subsequent foot-notes but one, referred to as *Secret* or *Secret des Francs-Maçons* in the singular) in 'a 12mo of 125 pages ... issued at the beginning of this year'. The mention of the battle of Dettingen (EFE, p. 57, written 'Ettingen' in *Examen*, p. 15) which was fought in June 1743, and that of 'the Service for the repose of the soul of the last Grand Master' (EFE, p. 83) – Antin died on 9 December 1743 – both render hardly credible the alleged existence of a 1742 first

edition of the *Secret* (1744). A further argument: the *Nouveau Catéchisme des Francs-Maçons* (*À Jérusalem ... M.CCCC.XL. Depuis le Déluge*) mentions, p. 69 of its second part, *Pièces Mêlées pour servir à L'HISTOIRE de la Maçonnerie., le Livre intitulé le Secret des Francs-Maçons, imprimé en 1744.* (in English: 'the book entitled *le Secret des Francs-Maçons*, printed in 1744').

Sundry assertions made in the paper about French Freemasonry should not remain uncorrected. Minor ones include the mention of a lodge in Dunkirk in 1726, the existence of which is unsupported by documentary evidence; naming the Comte de Saint-Florentin 'duc de la Vrillière' in 1743, since the dukedom dates only from after June 1770; referring to 'Thomas Le Breton' instead of 'Thomas-Pierre', his correct Christian name (see Pierre Chevallier, *La Première Profanation du Temple Maçonnique*, 1968, pp. 24–5), or specifying that the Chauvelin, whose surname is found among the eleven members listed on f° 130 of vol. 184 of the collection Joly de Fleury as a Freemason, was 'Louis de Chauvelin, advocate-general of the Parliament' thus confusing Germain Louis Chauvelin, State Minister, State Secretary and Lord Chancellor (*Garde des Sceaux*), who was not a member of the Craft, with his cousin, the freemason Jacques-Bernard Chauvelin de Beauséjour, intendant of Tours and Amiens, State Counsellor.

Further inaccuracies include: 'A law strictly forbidding association ... in particular those of the "société des frimaçons"' never existed in France under Louis XV. These words presumably allude to the 'Sentence de Police' dated 14 September 1737 (facsimile in Luquet's *La Franc-Maçonnerie et l'État en France au 18^e siècle*, 1963, pp. 40–2). However a police 'sentence' is very different from a law. My opinion is supported by non-masonic historians such as Pierre Chevalier (*La Première Profanation du Temple Maçonnique*, 1968, p. 58: 'Here again ends a legend of masonic history. Not a single decree [*arrêt*] of the King's Council, not a single array [*ordonnance*], not a single decree [*arrêt*] of the Parliament of Paris, has ever struck the Order under the old monarchy. Only the restaurant-keepers [*traiteurs*] were subjected to the condemnations [*encoururent les foudres*] of Hérault and of Feydeau de Marville'); Alain Le Bihan (*Histoire des Francs-Maçons en France*, 1981, p. 33–4: 'Presumably it was stated at the King's Council that ... meetings which were not authorized by the King were unlawful [*illicites*] ... Which might have intended to result in an interdiction of masonic assemblies. But this was never carried out'), and Michel Antoine (*Louis XV*, 1989, p. 441). Not a single freemason was imprisoned on 10 September 1737, as asserted in the paper (see Luquet, op. cit., p. 38 & Pierre Chevalier, *Les Ducs sous l'Acacia*, 1964, pp. 107–9).

It is surprising to read twice a reference to 'Charles Radcliffe, *soi-disant* Earl of Derwentwater', implying that he used the title irregularly. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 14th ed., has under 'Derwentwater': 'On the death of the 3rd earl's son, John Radclyffe, in 1731 his uncle Charles (1693–1746), son of the 2nd earl, took the title of earl of Derwentwater'. Among English masonic sources, an identical mistake was made by Bro. Tuckett (*AQC* 27 1914, p. 63) after an incorrect reading of a paper by Bro. Hextall (*AQC* 26, 1915, p. 22). It was corrected by Bro Moss (*AQC* 47, 1934, p. 107). A remark once made by M. Pierre Chevallier (describing Charles Radcliffe as 'Lord Derwentwater' at the date of 4 May 1731, in *Les Ducs sous l'Acacia*, 1964, p. 26) would appear to substantiate the charge that Charles assumed the title before John died. However it is easy to verify that M. Chevallier had misunderstood a few lines from the *Internationale Freimaurer-Lexikon* (1932) of Lennhoff & Posner, a fact that I mentioned in 1974 (in a paper reprinted in *Travaux de la Loge nationale de recherches Villard de Honnecourt* No 17 [1988]; see p. 80, note 29).

Equally surprising are two comments made about Ramsay's *Discours* 'never in fact given as an oration in lodge'. Folio 7 of MS 124, *Bibliothèque Municipale d'Eperney*, records: '1736 *Discours de M^r Le Ch^{er} de Ramsay* Prononcé à la Loge de S^t Jean le 26 X^{bre}, (1736 Oration ... given in the St. John's Lodge on 26 December); 'published in 1741' Jouaust in his *Histoire du Grand Orient de France* (1864, facsimile reprint 1989, p. 63) mentioned that the earliest-known printed version was issued in 1738 (or 1739) in *Lettres de M. de V ...* (see Taute, *Maurerische Bücherkunde* No. 2166; Fesch's *Bibliographie* col.

854; Begemann in *Die Tempelherren und die Freimaurerei*, 1906, p. 82, note 14; Tuckett in *AQC* 32, 1919, p. 7; Lantoine, *La Franc-Maçonnerie Écossaise en France* 1930, p. 26).

Remarkably the many allusions to contemporary events, included in the *Examen*, are not commented upon in the present paper. The 1744 issue of the *Secret* has already been mentioned. Another – page 3 of the pamphlet – is that of an unnamed Parisian prelate, described as enjoying the confidence of his clergy and of his flock as well as being a supporter of Jansenism. This might well have been Louis Antoine de Noailles (1651–1729), Archbishop of Paris in 1695, made a Cardinal in 1700, whose family name was possibly familiar to contemporary freemasons since both his grand-nephews, Louis de Noailles, Duc D'Ayen (1713–93), and Philippe, Comte de Noailles and Duc de Mouchy (1715–94), were listed as Masters of lodges in 1750 and 1751 under the first Grand Lodge of France.

Bro. Litvine replied:

I must thank Bro. Batham for his comments on my first paper in English. In a longer version of it I made it quite clear that Freemasonry neither sponsored nor encouraged the French Revolution. On the contrary, the Grand Master of the Scots Philosophic Rite in 1793 ordered his lodges to close and reminded them of their allegiance to the King.

Of about 7,000 freemasons officially registered some 5,000 died at the guillotine; at the end of the 'Reign of Terror' very few remained. Pierre Chevallier has given a detailed account in his *Histoire de la Franc-Maçonnerie* (vol. 5, chapter 1).

Limited space compelled me to restrict discussion of the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. While Lodge *La Constance d'Arras* and the lodge at Dunkirk probably never existed, that of *Louis d'Argent* was (according to Bord, who never gives his sources) founded on 12 June 1726. But these dates in my paper were intended only to highlight the speedy onset of the ultramontane Catholic clergy's opposition to the Craft.

Bro. Sandbach's very interesting comments, for which I am grateful, enable me to develop some minor points. I agree with his view that the author(s) of the pamphlet brought together ideas which were already in circulation in France. I made no claim to have discovered the actual source of French opposition to Freemasonry – only the first printed attack against it which has so far been found.

Opposition came from various directions: from the state and, above all, from the Catholic Church. Reasons for the antipathy include

- that Freemasonry came from England, a country with which France was often at war;
- that Freemasonry took its inspiration from the Reformed Church, while Catholicism was the state Religion
- that Freemasonry transgressed against the right of association, reserved strictly to the Church and subject to the king's authority; masonic meetings were unlawful and, under the supposed veil of secrecy, could conceal plots against Church and state;
- that Freemasonry openly praised tolerance and this was dangerous both for an absolute power and, above all, for the Church.

Therefore both state and Church welcomed any accusation which, in printed form, could be disseminated to the people. The pamphlet was a product of Catholic hatred for that 'devilish invention' of the Reformed Church – Freemasonry. The most vehement arguments possible were based upon

- Calvinism and Jansenism (France was still torn between two Catholic factions – the Molinists and the Jansenists);
- an assumption that the Craft was open to Jewish membership (which was not true but could have been; France was openly anti-semitic);
- claims that freemasons were heathens, supporters of Islam, worse than the Templars, atheists, and so on, and that – because their obligations were not genuine – they were not trustworthy;

- claims that freemasons sought only personal benefit, in war as well as in peace, and that they tried to ruin the state and outweigh Church influence;
- an accusation that freemasons were openly intending to usurp the government of the state.

As has been observed in more than one comment, these allegations have been updated and used again and again up to recent times.

I am not sure that I can entirely agree with Bro. Sandbach's idea that 'we have not perhaps been sufficiently alert in our duty. . . .' and his proposal for 'constructive work'. None of this will influence the anti-masons – even in England – for they have always ignored and still do ignore the proofs that the regular Craft is innocent of their charges. It is the *existence* of Freemasonry that is the cause of offence and not what freemasons may or may not do.

Our only course is to keep to our path to the Light in a world where, for us, tolerance, virtue, charity and truth are the guiding principles. We must learn from the masonic jurisdictions, such as those in France and Belgium, who looked for a political solution and, in doing so, lost their soul and their place in the family of regular Freemasonry.

Bro. Seal-Coon's comments are important. The French approach is inevitably very different from that of the British because of the influence of the Roman Catholic Church in almost every aspect of national life. In 1744 the differences were even more obvious. The dependence of the French state upon the Church and that of the Church upon the state had no parallel in England. Within that dependence, the nobility enjoyed enormous privileges and the royal power was absolute. New ideas which could put privileges and power at risk were firmly rejected. For centuries the only recourse for those of lower rank was revolution and this again engendered a way of thinking very different from that of the British people. England had long experienced a more democratic political climate, with a more tolerant Church and a nobility less greedy.

Countries where the Catholic Church is prominent have always presented and will always – I fear – present strong contrasts in so many human respects with countries in which other Churches play a major role.

I am grateful to Bro. Brodsky for his comments and also for his kindness in reading my paper in lodge. His references to the writings of Françoise Weill have brought out interesting points about Ramsay and remind us that – in so often mentioning his 'oration' we overlook the man. He was not, it seems, popular with the French intelligentsia of his day. While pretending to masonic leadership he maintained liaison with the Minister, submitting to him advance copies of his speeches and advising him on how to infiltrate the fraternity with his agents.

Voltaire did not admire him and expressed in his *Philosophical Dictionary* – in the chapter on forgeries – some derogatory views which included accusations of plagiarism from Fenelon (*Les Voyages de Cyrus*) and the Abbé Ragueneau.

I would disagree with Bro. Brodsky to the extent that, in my opinion, if French Freemasonry had been more effectively controlled and structured it would also have been the target of much stronger opposition.

Bro. Spurr's comments are important but do not, I think, call for a reply from me. Those of Bro. Beresiner speculate upon a possibility but I would hesitate, without being given the time to look more closely into the idea, to suppose that anti-masonic writing in England was a major influence on those in France who similarly committed themselves to paper.

Bro. Jackson deserves both my gratitude and my apologies. Although the Vatican's archives have been partially researched by Ferrer-Benimeli and he has revealed some reasons for the Papal Bull, he leaves an area of uncertainty. The Catholic Church cannot accept the taking of an obligation on the Holy Bible and the 'secrets' which are covered by it are therefore regarded as harmful. All historians must regret that the Vatican records of the Holy Inquisition are unavailable for study.

It was not my intention to suggest a direct connection between the degree of Kadosh and the pamphlet. The Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite did not exist in France in 1744. I sought to demonstrate that the legend of the Templars' vengeance might not, later, have been written into the degree if this pamphlet and others had not been published. I believe that the degree may well have fuelled the anti-masonic movements which were initiated in 1744. It is noteworthy that authors such as Le Couteux, Taxil, Marqués-Rivière and Peyrefitte have used the Kadosh legend for their own purposes.

I must admit to having 'specialized'. My original paper was fully developed and, with many footnotes, tried to explain the peculiarities of the relevant period of French history. It was, however, much too long for publication in *AQC* and the editor very reasonably asked me to reduce it by some two-thirds!

Lastly I come to Bro. Bernheim's remarks and I must thank him for the additional information which he has provided. It is unfortunate that the authors whom he mentions provided only inaccurate bibliographical notes rather than comments upon the pamphlet. I necessarily limited my paper to the 1744 edition of that work. *Le Secret des Francs-Maçons* is of course interesting to some students but to have been able to deal with it in this paper would have required a great deal of research (which perhaps another might undertake!) and would have used a great deal more space than I could have been allowed.

About Charles Radcliffe let us be clear. Only the *de facto* Sovereign of England had (and still has) the exclusive power to confer titles of nobility upon British subjects. James Stuart, in exile and as the pretender to the British throne, may have awarded such titles to his followers but could scarcely expect them to be recognized at home. Radcliffe had no right to assume the earldom of Derwentwater for that had ceased to exist with the execution of his elder brother for his part in the Jacobite attempt of 1715. That is history and is confirmed by *Encyclopaedia Britannica* and other reliable sources.

On Ramsay, I would refer Bro. Bernheim to Bro. Cyril Batham's paper in *AQC* 81 (1968). The Chevalier gave 'orations' in some lodges, but not the one published in 1738 in the *Lettres à Monsieur de V...* [Voltaire, who despised Ramsay], and later in the *Almanach des Cocus* of 1741. The oration which is associated with Ramsay was never read at a lodge meeting. It was composed for delivery at Grand Lodge on 24 March 1737 and was in advance submitted, unsuccessfully, to Fleury for approval. Its printing ended Ramsay's masonic career.