

bring glory and honor to our noble Order. You will be judged by an impartial world by your acts, and he that practices our beautiful moral lessons will receive honor rather than he who prates of *virtue* and practices vice.

EVERYTHING IN ITS PLACE.

THERE are some discussions going on at the present time which seem to require notice, in order that the brethren may know what dangers surround them, and consider the proper course to follow, that Masonry may not be moved from its propriety, nor its enemies be able to arrest the beneficent work it is doing.

Every Mason knows, and every person not a Mason may know, if he takes the trouble to inquire, that Masonry is not a religious system, in the sense of being a worship, or having a form of religious adoration or a creed, but that on the contrary it only claims to be an association of men of good repute for the promotion of morality, virtue and good order. That while it always acknowledges and plainly teaches that man's first and highest duty is to the Creator of all things, and allows no infidel to enter its fold, it leaves every man to seek the heavenward path under the inspiration of his own conscience, and by such mode as may have been taught him in youth, or have been acquired as the result of his matured judgment. Whatever this may be, no Mason owes the institution any explanation, and the society has not the most remote idea of ever inquiring, for the oft reiterated reason that we are not associated for religious purposes, but are simply an aggregation of men of the world, without other qualification or purpose than being men of fair reputation, and being united for the prosecution of a good design, we should, as a matter of course, leave all distinctions, whether religious or political, at one side. Nevertheless, we have to meet a series of opponents who insist that we should preach Christ crucified or give up the ghost.

Now we have never undertaken to do anything of the kind; we have never made any profession as a society that should call upon us to do anything of the sort; we are now, and always have been, the exponents and the arbitrators of a morality to which all men can subscribe, and never the exemplars of any religious faith whatever. Yet men will insist that we shall be of their creed; that we shall use our organization to promote their views; that we shall preach their doctrines, or, as we said before, stop our work, and give up the mission upon which we have entered. Why, we ask in all sincerity, should we do this? Why are we required to take any part in the religious differences of the day? Why may we not go on with our work, seeking to unite good men for a good purpose without being required to preach or practice—as a whole—any particular mode or faith; why, we ask again, should it be expected of us that we be Jews or Gentiles, Musselmen, or any other form or belief, any more than it should be asked of any other association of men, that, eschewing all special forms of religious belief, they, nevertheless, do espouse one, out of the many, as *the* one which is to receive the benefit of their particular organization?

Clearly, there is no reason for this, yet we find the Catholic Church condemning us as outcasts from all social and religious favor, and, *mirabile dictu*, the Protestant Church doing the same thing for the same reasons. Not only the Pope of Rome, but the gentlemen (*sic*) who compose the church of Mr. Thinangbob, out in Ohio, and his congeners; but now the *Church Herald*, published in England, comes down on us as separated from all that is good, because we will not undertake the work of all work that we are specially bound not to do.

We can understand that each church organization should seek to promote its own interest, and to make the most strenuous efforts to add to its members; we are even willing that each one should believe that it alone possesses the keys of Paradise. It being understood that we are to have the same privilege; but, for the life of us, we cannot see in what corner of a disordered brain men find the justification for asking us to join in their special work, or for vilifying us because we will neither be cajoled nor coerced into giving up our calling for theirs.

There are some people in the world whose tongues confer no scandal because of their evident ignorance, presumption, and bigotry; they throw off epithets by the shovelful, but they are only dust and ashes, and fly back in their own faces. Sensible people measure the work by the workmen, and conclude that these blatant representatives of *religion* had better lave their own skirts before they commence at their neighbors. But then, again, there are many earnest, serious, well-meaning people who are led astray by the specious representations of these narrow-minded zealots, and we would be glad to have all such understand that there is a place for all things, and that the place of religious instruction is in the respective churches, or under their direction, and not in the lodges of this institution of Masonry, formed to promote the moral and social virtues, and to let creeds and modes of faith alone.—*Masonic Tidings*.