

and parted them to all men, as every man had need. And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat in singleness of heart, praising God and having favour with all the people." No wonder that the next sentence is, "And the Lord added to the church daily of such as should be saved." (Acts ii. 44-47.) Once more it is said of that happy time of "first love,"—"And the whole multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul." (c. iv. 32.) If you read such chapters as the 12th of Romans, from which monarchs may learn graciousness, slaves dignity, and all ranks and conditions of men the perfection of social morals and manners;—or the 12th of 1st Corinthians, with its exquisite elaboration of the frequent comparison between the church and the human body;—or the 13th of the same Epistle, whose very language is attuned to melody as it speaks of charity—chief of the Christian graces;—or the 4th of Ephesians, in which the apostle Paul pours forth his impassioned yearning for the unity of Christians; or the 1st Epistle of John, where the beloved disciple can speak of nothing but love,—the love of God to us, our love to Him, and our love to one another;—or finally, what John saw when "a door was opened in heaven," and that celestial state appeared to him as a "Father's house," where all the children, though composing a great multitude that no man could number, dwelt together, and He that sat on the throne dwelt among them;—if, we say, you read these, and many like passages, you cannot doubt that He who said when Adam was first created, "It is not good that the man should be alone," has framed the whole structure of his religion, its spirit and its institutions, in conformity with the social nature which He imparted to us.

Now the highest form of church sociality is that which most closely corresponds with this divine ideal,—that is, when we seek out each other, visit and meet together, not merely as men and women, gentlemen and ladies, or friendly neighbours,—but as Christians; when the image of Christ in any one is that which most attracts us to him as a friend; when our conversation—not because it ought, but because we love to have it so—falls on things divine; when "they that fear the Lord speak often one to another," "take sweet counsel together, and walk to the house of God in company," "confess their faults one to another, and pray one for another, that they may be healed." Between those possessed by such a spirit, there is a grip in the right hand of fellowship, which no Freemasonry can rival.

What can be done to cultivate a sociality of this high character? In our Sabbath worship and preaching-services, there is no personal intercourse, except the few greetings that may be exchanged as we come and go. We sacrifice that benefit for the sake of the greater one, of commanding silence for worship and the reading and exposition of the Word of God. Though not a little can be done by the brief welcome given to one another and to strangers, these are not the occasions on which the social feeling has the freest play.