

the termination of this term of solitary probation he was visited by a band of masked men, who put his courage to the test in every imaginable manner. Should the ordeal be successfully passed, the candidate was admitted into the society and entrusted with a secret, which they assured the traveller had never been revealed, as the penalty for treason would be certain death. The initiated were known in the villages, where they dwell, as the *Almousseri*, and were consulted as possessors of knowledge, unattainable elsewhere. Victor Hugo took deep interest in this curious race, which, like the Mandans in the far west, have entirely disappeared with their mysterious practices. —*Masonic Chronicle*.

MORAL USES OF FREEMASONRY.

Several illustrations of the power and usefulness of the Masonic organization are given in a little work entitled "The Genius of Freemasonry," published at Providence, R. I., in the year 1838. One incident therein narrated greatly impressed our thought. It was told as an actual occurrence which took place in a Southern lodge, presided over by a brother of distinction, whose honored name is still familiar as a household word throughout our whole country. We give the account substantially as it appears in the book named.

Toward the close of an evening's labor, when the charge was about to be given to one who had that night been initiated into the mysteries of the Craft, and he had been brought to the chair to receive it, the quick eye of the Worshipful Master saw sitting at a distance, the brother of the candidate, sitting dark, moody and silent. Between the two brothers there had long been a deadly feud—one that had eaten like a cancer into their hearts, and spread a leprosy over their lives, tainting all around them, or connected with them.

The one about to receive the charge, though of good reputation in the community, was generally regarded as the more obdurate in this unhappy alienation. The Master began his charge. He said he would depart somewhat from the ritual generally used, and would quote from the language of Him who spake as never man spake: "Therefore, if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." The miseries of contention and discord were strongly depicted by the Master. He dwelt upon the deadliness of the moral poison of family contentions—a poison that earth cannot suck up or time destroy—a poison that often springs afresh from the grave of those who concocted it to curse their descendants for succeeding ages.

The candidate trembled as he listened to these earnest words; his soul was a witness to their truth; he looked wistfully and wildly around the room, fearing, yet wishing, to catch the eye of his brother between whom and himself there had been long continued and bitter opposition of feeling. The Master noticed the effects of his words and changed his tone, portraying the kindly influences of brotherly love, telling how far it softened the calamities of earth and plucked the sting from death itself. He dwelt upon the new obligations the initiate has assumed, and reminded him that the place where he then was, should be considered sacred to fraternal sympathies, a place in which every pledge was given to cultivate purest affections, to quench at once in the overflowing of love and forgiveness all heart-burnings of enmity, and to wash away the long scenes of rancor and bitterness which so much degrade the soul. The brother who had sat retired, as he heard sentence after sentence of the eloquent charge, had moved by timid steps nearer to the altar, and